**NAME**;TUESIMI FAVOUR ORITSETSOLAYE

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**TOPIC**; DRUG ADDICTION IN YOUTHS

Drug addiction has become a worldwide problem, especially in teenagers. Many young people become dependent on different types substances and stimulating medicines that comes hand-in-hand with narcotic effect. The life of addicts becomes spoiled in all aspects, as they lose contact with their family and live in a different world. They spend lots of money on drugs, and then look for ways to earn money illegally. If we compare the health problems, there are many dangerous effects of drugs.

The most disturbing thing about drug addiction is that people in different countries of the world are becoming addicted to all kinds of drugs. There are different types of street drugs such as – cocaine, meth, marijuana, crack, heroin etc. Heroin is one of the dangerous drugs that suppress your heart’s work and is appropriate to achieve narcotic effect.

The alarming rate of drug consumption has always been a problem and has detrimental effects on the society. Personal and family problems also lead to drug abuse among youngsters who fail to deal with personal problems. The physiological effects of drug addiction can be difficult to endure and this is why the addict must be treated for their condition. The worst thing is that drugs are that they affect youth in every country of the world.

The term drug not only means medicine, but fatal narcotics with different specifications. These drugs have their evil effects on mind and body cells of the addicts. The addict becomes dependent on the drug to a great extent that he/she cannot stop using it. Despite of having full knowledge of its effects on health, addicts use it on a regular basis.

Drug addiction is basically a brain disease that changes the functioning of brain. There is an uncontrollable desire to consume drugs, as a result of which addicted people engage in compulsive behavior to take drugs. The addicts find it impossible to control the intake of drugs, as a result of which they fail to fulfill day-to-day responsibilities in efficient manner. Drug addiction is also referred as drug dependency, as the addict develops dependency for particular substance.

#### **SIGNS OF DRUG ADDICTION**

Drug addiction is a compulsive disorder that leads an individual to use substance habitually to achieve desired outcome. Millions of people in the world are suffering with drug addiction and the number is expected to increase in the coming years. If the person is using drugs for a longer period, the outcome may change. For example – early experimentation with drugs is rooted in curiosity. However, as the frequency of substance becomes frequent – the body starts to depend in it to function properly.

The most common signs and symptoms of drug addiction are – obsession with a particular substance, loss of control over the usage of drugs, abandoning the activities which you used to enjoy, etc. Drug addiction may have long term impact on life and one may develop severe symptoms such as – fatigue, trembling, depression, anxiety, headache, insomnia, chills and sweating, paranoia, behavior changes, dilated pupils, poor coordination problems, nausea etc.

**CAUSES OF DRUG ADDICTION**

**High Level Stress**

Young people who have just started their college life or moved to a new city in search of job often face problems with life change. They are more likely to alleviate stress through the use of drugs and similar substances. Finding an easy fix often seems easier than facing the real problem and dealing with it. Trying illegal drugs can lead to addiction and becomes a long term habit.

**Social Pressure**

Today, we are living in a highly competitive world and it is difficult to grow in such world. There is always a peer pressure in young and old people. However, it is never visible. A lot of young people expect to experience the pressure to use drugs, smoke and drink alcohol. Young people find it difficult to be the person who doesn’t drink or smoke. As they feel isolated and like a social outcast, they make a habit of taking drugs.

**Mental Health Conditions**

Another primary reason for trying drugs is mental health condition. People who are emotionally weaker tend to feel depressed about the facts of the world. They look for ways to feel free and live life in a normal way as they go through the period of growing up. In such situation, they make a habit of taking drugs and can lead to addiction.

**Psychological Trauma**

A history of psychological trauma appears to increase the risk of substance abuse. More than 75% of people who suffered from psychological trauma use drugs as a part of self-medicating strategy or provide an avenue towards self-destructive behaviors. Women are more sensitive to drugs than men, and hence need less exposure to similar effects. The availability of these drugs plays an integral role in perpetuation of addictive behaviors within families.

**Exposure to Drug Abuse**

Exposure to drug abuse in which the young people are raised is another cause why young people get addicted to drugs. If the individuals grow up in an area where adults use drugs, then the person is likely to try the substance themselves. Setting a good example is extremely important to keep them off drugs and related substances. Providing genuine information about drugs is the best way to prevent drug addiction.

**EFFECTS OF DRUG ADDICTION**

**Emotional Effects**

The emotional effects of drug addiction include – mood swings, depression, violence, anxiety, decrease in everyday activities, hallucinations, confusion, psychological tolerance to drug effects etc. Besides these, there are many physical effects of drug addiction that are seen in the systems of the body. The primary effects of drug addiction take place in brain, which changes the brain functions and impacts how the body perceives pleasure.

**Physical Effects**

Other effects of drug addiction include – heart attack, irregular heartbeat, and contraction of HIV, respiratory problems, lung cancer, abdominal pain, kidney damage, liver problem, brain damage, stroke, seizures, and changes in appetite. The impact of drug addiction can be far-reaching and affects every organ of the body. Excessive usage of drugs can weaken immune system and increase susceptibility to infection.

**Brain & Liver Damage**

The effects of drug addiction are seen in people because the drug floods the brain repeatedly with chemicals such as – serotonin and dopamine. The brain becomes highly dependent on these drugs and cannot function without them. The effects of drug addiction are also seen in babies of drug abusers and can be affected throughout their life.

Drug addiction can cause the liver to work harder, causing significant liver failure or damage. Regarding brain function, drugs can impact daily activities by causing problems with memory, decision making, mental confusion and even permanent brain damage.

**Short Term Effects**

Different drugs affect body in different ways. There are some short term effects that occur in drug users depending on the amount of substance used, its purity and potency. Drugs can affect the person’s thinking, mood and perception to a great extent. Drugs can temporarily impair motor functioning and interfere with decision making and even reduce inhibition. The most common substances of drug addiction include – opiates, alcohol, barbiturates, inhalants etc.

A lot of people do not realize the damage caused by drug addiction because the short term effects are not apparent at first. The individual may feel quite invincible and unaware that drugs can actually affect almost every system in the body. The long lasting effects of drug addiction may not be known to addict. If treatment is not sought in time, the physical and emotional health will deteriorate.

**PREVENTION OF DRUG ADDICTION**

**Deal with Peer Pressure**

The biggest reason why people start using drugs is because of their friends or colleagues who utilize per pressure. No one in this world likes to be left out, especially teens and youngsters. If you are in such situation, you should find a better group of friends who won’t pressure you into harmful things. You should plan ahead of time or prepare a good excuse to stay away from tempting situations.

**Treat Emotional Illness**

Individuals suffering with any mental condition such as – anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress etc. should seek help from a physiatrist. There is a strong connection between mental illness and drug addiction. Those with weak emotional status may easily turn to drugs.

**Learn to Deal with Pressure**

People of today’s generation are overworked and often feel like taking a good break. However, they make the mistake of turning to drugs and end up making life more stressful. Many of us fail to recognize this. The best way is to find other ways to handle stress. Whether it is taking up exercising or reading a good book, you should try positive things that help in relieving stress.

**Understand the Risk Factors**

If you are not aware of the risk factors of drug addiction, you should first know about drug abuse. Individuals who are aware of the physical and emotional effects of drug addiction are likely to overcome them. People take up drugs when something in their life is not going well and they are unhappy about their life. One should always look at the big picture and focus on priorities, instead of worrying about short term goals.