



ARC Mental Health Information Series

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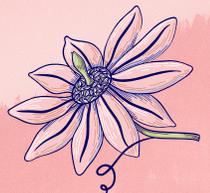
Substance use disorder in women

As measured in 2012, about 21.6% of Canadians (6 million) met the criteria for substance use disorder during their lifetime. Alcohol was the most common substance for which people met the criteria for abuse or dependence at 18.1%. Women with substance use disorder describe unique reasons for using drugs, including controlling weight, fighting exhaustion, coping with pain and attempts to self-treat mental health problems.



Unique factors for women

- Women can become addicted to substances after consuming a smaller amount than men.
- Women may have more drug cravings and may be more likely to relapse after treatment.
- Women who use drugs may also experience more physical effects on their heart and blood vessels.
- 70% of women who enter treatment are mothers. Women often need support for handling the burdens of work, home care, child care and other family responsibilities to be able to seek treatment.
- Women who are victims of domestic violence are at increased risk of substance use.
- Divorce, loss of child custody, or the death of a partner or child can trigger women's substance use or other mental health disorders.
- Treatment for women can be less effective since in the past they were not included in clinical research that led to proven treatment methods.



Screening

Screening questionnaires (e.g., the CAGE) can help to quickly identify a substance use problem or determine the level of dependence.

CAGE questions:

- Have you ever tried to **C**ut down on your drinking or other drug use?
- Have you ever felt **A**ngry at or annoyed by someone else's comments about your drinking or other drug use?
- Have you ever felt **G**uilty about your drinking or other drug use?
- Have you ever used alcohol or other drugs as an **E**ye-opener—that is, have you used first thing in the morning?

Treatment

- Harm-reduction and safe injections services
- Detoxification and rehabilitation services
- Social support groups

Resources available

Aire Ouverte for youth 12-25 years of age. 5811 Taschereau Blvd., suite 30, Brossard, QC J4Z 1A5
Drop-in services: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 1:00-8:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. By appointment from Monday to Friday. Telephone: (450) 445-4474

Alcoholics Anonymous

83 Churchill Blvd., Greenfield Park, QC J4V 3L8

Telephone helpline: (514) 376-9230 available 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. - 7 days a week

Website: www.aa87.org

Portage – mother and child, adult, adolescent and mental health programs available

865 Square Richmond, Montreal QC H3J1V8

Telephone: 1 (800) 939-0202

Website: www.portage.ca

Psychosocial support available through the CLSC and through your primary care physician

CLSC St-Hubert - (450) 443-7400

CLSC Richelieu - (450) 658-7561

CLSC Brossard - (450) 445-4452

811 Info-Sante, press 9 for English

CLSC St-Jean-sur-Richelieu - (450) 358-2572



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