

EFFECTS OF DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE

Psychological dependence— This is a mental or emotional adaptation to the effects of the drug. The abuser not only likes the feeling of the drug and wants to re-experience it—he/she **FEELS** he/she cannot function normally without the drug.

Physical dependence— This is an adaptation whereby the body learns to live with the drug, tolerates ever-increasing doses, and reacts with certain withdrawal symptoms when deprived of it.

Medical complications (vary depending upon the drug used) — Medical complications may include: nervousness, anxiety, sleep disorders, muscle aches/spasms, vomiting and other gastrointestinal disorders, mental abnormalities, and changes in blood pressure/temperature/breathing rate, changes in heart rate/rhythm, cardiac arrest, convulsions, hallucinations, stroke, death, or many other dangerous conditions.

Learning Disorders - Adolescents are particularly vulnerable to the effects of drugs. Drugs threaten normal development in a number of ways, such as:

- Drugs can interfere with memory, sensation, and perception. They distort experiences and cause a loss of self-control that can lead users to harm themselves and others.
- Drugs interfere with the brain's ability to take in, sort, and synthesize information. As a result, sensory information runs together, providing new sensations while blocking normal ability to understand the information received.
- Drugs can have an insidious effect on perception; for example, cocaine and amphetamines often give users a false sense of functioning at their best while on the drug.

Help is only a phone call away:

- The Centers 24 Hour Crisis Line (352) 726-7155
- The Path of Citrus County (352) 527-6500
www.pathofcitrus.org/shelter-services.php
- Narcotics Anonymous – Nature Coast Region (352) 508-1604
- Florida Department of Health (352) 726-1731
<http://citrus.floridahealth.gov/index.html>
- Information hotline 211