

Introduction

Narcotics can be termed as drugs that cause an immediate sense of euphoria in the people who consume them. The main purpose of them, however, is to perpetuate a state of pain relief. The people's codependency on them to function and carry out normal day to day activities adds to their affliction and fuels their addiction which is at the end detrimental for their well being. So are narcotics really good or bad? That depends on the person who is consuming them and on their ability to shrug off their negative side effects.

Heroin :

Drugs may help the addict to forget their worries for the time being or can pretend to boost their creativity. But in reality, the only thing drugs have proved to do is destroy the person's physical and mental health. For a short time, it may make one feel invincible but in the longer run, they have high toxic outcomes. If overdosed, it can also lead to complications and even death, in many rather most cases. One of the most dangerous narcotics is Heroin. It is made from opium that comes from a poppy plant before refined as morphine, Later chemically converted into Herion. Once heroin is ingested, it converts into morphine that binds the Opioid receptors of the brain. The affected nerve cells then release dopamine, a neurotransmitter that releases the feeling of pleasure. It has hazardous effects on health like the sensation makes the user get addicted to it. Regular uses of this drug causes collapsed veins and infections of the blood vessels. The long term effects include tuberculosis and arthritis (Kelly, Wells, Pawson, Leclair, & Parsons 2014).

Ever since 2007 heroin use has steadily increased. This is due to the reason that there has

been a shift in the misuse of prescription pain relievers to heroin as its easily available and cheaper alternative. Heroin is an illegal drug processed from the morphine (naturally occurring substance extracted from the seed of poppy plants). It is sold as a brownish or white powder that is cut with starch, sugars, quinine, or powdered milk. Pure heroin is a bitter, white-colored powder that originated from South America and Southeast Asia. It dominates the US markets. Pure heroin can be smoked or snorted and is more alluring to new users because it eradicates the stigma associated with injection substance use. The black tar heroin is very sticky like hard coal or roofing tar and is mainly produced in Mexico and sold in U.S. areas of the west Mississippi river. The dark black color of black tar heroin is because of crude processing methods that leave the impurities behind. Impure heroin is usually dissolved, diluted, and injected into veins, muscles, or under the skin.

Problems

Heroin is an extremely addictive narcotic and its use has consequences that extend far beyond the individual user. The social and medical repercussion of heroin abuse includes HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, crime, violence, fetal effects, and disruptions in the workplace, educational environment, and family. All these issues have a devastating effect on society and cost billions of dollars each year. The number of heroin abusers has steadily increased since 2007. Drugs may help the addict to forget their worries for the time being or can pretend to boost their creativity. But in reality, the only thing drugs have proved to do is destroy the person's physical and mental health. For a short time, it may make one feel invincible but in the longer run, they have high toxic outcomes. If overdosed, it can also lead to complications and even death, in many rather most cases (Pollini, et al. 2011).

The key element of a society is healthy relationships. When a person is addicted to heroin,

it can destroy relationships and can lead to strained friendships, divorces, and neglected children. Heroin addicts tend to be unable to maintain loyal and honest relationships with people around them, and they have the potential to exhibit dangerous behavior that negatively affects relationships. Heroin use has led to domestic violence, financial problems, and loss of custody of kids that can lead families of heroin addicts to experience everything from needing financial assistance to being homeless. Heroin itself may not directly make people aggressive, although it can worsen underlying mental illness and conditions. It also leads to crime and violence. Many people will start to commit crimes including stealing or robberies to pay for their addiction to heroin, and it's not just heroin addicts that are more likely to indulge in criminal activities. There has been a steady increase in gang violence because of Mexico drug cartels that bring heroin into the U.S. people who are addicted to heroin are at a higher risk of many illnesses as well, which impact the cost of medical care at the societal level and also leave more people exposed to communicable diseases. Heroin can increase the risk of a range of health issues from heart and respiratory illnesses, to the likelihood of an overdose. Also, people who use heroin and inject it are at a higher risk of infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis. These people often don't have insurance, so ultimately the government pays for the treatment of their health conditions (Lankenau, et al. 2012).

Heroin changes the response of the brain and nervous system. Over time, these changes in the brain affect the ability to make decisions self-control. The natural system in which the body and brain works is a process. When this is altered it adversely affects the whole nervous system. Taking drugs and even medications form a hindrance to the natural phenomena. It is better to prevent indulging in drug use. Once a person gets in drug abuse, to overcome addiction strong medications are used in the treatment. Prescription drugs cause adverse damages that range from

minimal to life-threatening. However, today people survive infections that used to kill them, and children with cancer are often cured and grow up to live normal lives. People live longer and more productive lives due in part to the benefits of prescription medications. This although it helps overcome addiction, but does come with a sack of salt. Awareness campaigns and social activity should work in preventing people to indulge in tobacco or drug use. Medications itself is not the only way to stop addiction. Therapy and constant motivation also are needed in the treatment process. Patience is the key (Freed 2010).

Studies show that drug addiction is triggered by social settings. Poverty causes conflicts in the households causing fights at the same time, forcing the members to indulge in deviant acts. Family conflicts and nonchalant behavior towards drug-taking also promote drug abuse. All these factors increase the compulsion to substance seeking behavior. The settings and environment that are deprived of basic needs and disarrayed societies are reported to have a higher rate of drug abusers according to the "Advisory Council for Misuse of Drugs (ACMD)". Miller and Carroll mention that social norms affect an individual's perceived evaluation of various circumstances that are acceptable and desirable

Treatment

Like other chronic diseases, heroin addiction can also be treated. Medications are available that treat heroin addiction by reducing drug cravings and withdrawal symptoms, thus improving the odds of achieving abstinence. Many medications are available that can be customized to a person's recovery needs while taking into account co-curring health conditions. Medication along with behavior and physical therapy is quite effective, giving hope to heroin addicts and those around them (Büttner 2011).

Heroin use of disorder has a variety of treatments including pharmacological and behavioral. Both these approaches help to restore normalcy to behavior and brain functioning, resulting in lower HIV risk, criminal behavior, and increased employment rates. Integrating both these approaches is the most efficient approach. Studies have shown that pharmacological treatment of opioid use disorder increases retention in treatment programs and decreases drug use, infectious disease transmission, and criminal activity. When people addicted to opioids like heroin first quit, they undergo withdrawal symptoms (pain, diarrhea, nausea, and vomiting), which may be severe. Medications can be helpful in this detoxification stage to ease craving and other physical symptoms that can often prompt a person to relapse. The FDA approved lofexidine, a non-opioid medicine designed to reduce opioid withdrawal symptoms. While not a treatment for addiction itself, detoxification is a useful first step when it is followed by some form of evidence-based treatment. Medications developed to treat opioid use disorders work through the same opioid receptors as the addictive drug, but are safer and less likely to produce the harmful behaviors that characterize a substance use disorder. Three types of medications include (1) agonists, which activate opioid receptors; (2) partial agonists, which also activate opioid receptors but produce a smaller response; and (3) antagonists, which block the receptor and interfere with the rewarding effects of opioids. A particular medication is used based on a patient's specific medical needs and other factors. Effective medications include: Methadone, buprenorphine, naltrexone, and suboxone.

Medications: Methadone, buprenorphine, naltrexone, and suboxone are medications used in the treatment of opioid addiction. Methadone was created by the German doctors during ww2 and later was used by the doctors for pain relief. Currently, it is being used in the treatment of heroin. Methadone, buprenorphine, naltrexone, and suboxone change the way the nervous

system and brain respond to pain so that no pain is felt and the individual feels relieved. The effects are slower compared to other painkillers like morphine. Doctors prescribe methadone for relief on extreme pain or long term illness. It is also used for an alternative of illicit drugs as it gives the same feeling and keeps away from cravings. These drugs are used as replacement therapy. It's usually just one part of your treatment plan. It isn't a cure for addiction. Its side effects include breathing issues, dizziness, weight gain, etc. This kind of treatment and medication can work as replacement therapy for drug addicts as they provide similar sensations like illicit drugs and satisfies their cravings. This is a part of the treatment and eventually reduces the need for drugs. Even though these medications have adverse effects at times, but they do increase the chance of recovery, improved social functioning, and reduction in drug addicts due to replacement therapy (Sporer 1999).

Behavioral Therapies: Many effective behavioral therapies are available for heroin addicts and can be delivered in residential or outpatient settings. Treatments and approaches like cognitive behavioral therapy and contingency management have shown effective results in combating addiction, especially along with medications. Cognitive therapy is designed to help modify the patient's hopes and behaviors related to heroin use and to increase the skills needed to cope with life stressors. A major task to get optimal results is to meet the particular needs of the patient (McCance-Katz, Sullivan, & Nallani 2010).

Future of Heroin in American Society

With the constant upsurge of drug use and abuse, it has become imperative to assert their widespread effects and put a stop to them. The cases of drug use and even medication addiction have seen first hand how they tamper in the worst ways with people's lives. As a society relying

on medications to treat addictions, pain relief or stabilizing moods has made us dependent on these. We have completely laid our trust in the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to make sure that our medicine is safe and effective, but it is also imperative that we each do our research based on our individual needs and circumstances. As many as half of all FDA-approved drugs end up being withdrawn or relabeled with black box warnings due to unanticipated side effects, despite clinical trials showing they were completely safe for use.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) "In 2016 about 948,000 Americans reported using heroin in the past year, a number that has been on the rise since 2007. This trend appears to be driven largely by young adults aged 18–25 among whom there have been the greatest increases. The number of people using heroin for the first time is high, with 170,000 people starting heroin use in 2016, nearly double the number of people in 2006 (90,000). In contrast, heroin use has been declining among teens aged 12–17. Past-year heroin use among the nation's 8th, 10th, and 12th graders is at its lowest levels since 1991, at less than 1 percent in each grade level".

Heroin addiction is on the rise in the U.S. More people are suffering from health problems that occur due to rapid use. The number of patients meeting the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition (DSM-IV) criteria for dependence or heroin use disorder increased dramatically from 214,000 in 2002 to 626,000 in 2016. Heroin use is not only now restricted to urban areas but has extended to rural and suburban communities in the U.S.

Conclusion

The main purpose of narcotics however, is to perpetuate a state of pain relief. The people's codependency on them to function and carry out normal day to day activities adds to their

affliction and fuels their addiction which is at the end detrimental for their well being. Heroin is an extremely addictive narcotic and its use has consequences that extend far beyond the individual user. The social and medical repercussion of heroin abuse includes HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, crime, violence, fetal effects, and disruptions in the workplace, educational environment, and family. All these issues have a devastating effect on society and cost billions of dollars each year. Heroin use of disorder has a variety of treatments including pharmacological and behavioral. Both these approaches help to restore normalcy to behavior and brain functioning. I believe that we are always trying to overcome the problem of drug addiction with another addictive drug. This simply aggravates and extends the problem rather than resolving it. People fighting with Heroin addiction are already trying to overcome some form of depression or stress. Giving them Kratom another numbing drug will not resolve the issue of addiction. A humane form of drug detoxification should be used along with good care and psychological therapy instead of drugs like Kratom. With the constant upsurge of narcotic use and abuse it has become imperative to assert their widespread effects and put a stop to them.

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