Substance Abuse: Special Topics

Class Objectives

- Describe specific types of drug abuse (e.g., tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, meth, prescription drugs) and corresponding health effects.
Tobacco
Tobacco

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of death and disease in the United States.

- Consequences:
  - CVD
  - Cancer
  - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
  - Osteoporosis
  - Early menopause
  - Infertility
  - Can worsen allergies, asthma, and other respiratory diseases
Smoking – other issues

- Worldwide problem
- Involuntary smoking ("passive smoking")
- Legal issues – restrictions on smoking
- Smoking during pregnancy

Smoking During Pregnancy

Figure 6: Percent of Mothers who Smoked During Pregnancy By Age, Selected Years, 1990-2008

Source: American Lung Association
Smoking During Pregnancy

Hookah (Water Pipe)

- Health Effects
  - Cancer (oral, lung, bladder)
  - Heart disease
  - Herpes
  - Hepatitis

- Exposure
  - In an hour-long smoking session of hookah, users consume about 100 to 200 times the smoke of a single cigarette
  - In a 45-minute smoking session a typical smoker would inhale 1.7 times the nicotine of a single cigarette

Source: American Lung Association
Marijuana
Marijuana

- **Health Effects**
  - Impacts memory, concentration, perception, coordination
  - Chronic smoking may lead to functioning at a suboptimal intellectual level at all times
  - Possible addiction
  - Connection to mental health issues (anxiety, depression, schizophrenia)
  - "gateway drug"
  - Impacts cardiovascular health by increasing heart rate
  - Exposure to carcinogens
  - Respiratory problems

Alcohol

http://www.howstuffworks.com/alcohol.htm
Complications from Chronic Alcohol Consumption

- Cancer
- Cardiovascular Effects
- Organ Damage
- Diabetes
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Impotency and Infertility
- Diminished Immunity
- Sleep Disturbances
- Women die more often from alcohol abuse than men

Alcoholism: Warning Signs

- Having five or more drinks/day
- Needing a drink to start off the day
- Denial of alcohol problem
- Changing brands to control drinking
- Depression and paranoia
- Failure to recall what happened during a drinking episode
- Dramatic mood swings
- Doings things while drinking and regretting them afterwards
Women and Alcohol

- Generally women weigh less than men
- Men’s bodies contain more water
- Alcohol is more concentrated in women’s bodies
- What is binge drinking:
  - _____ of drinks for a man
  - _____ of drinks for a woman

Advertisement of Alcohol
Prescription Drug Abuse
Prescription Drug Abuse

• Three main classes of drugs that are abused
  - __________
  - __________
  - __________

In 2009: more than 7 million Americans reported using prescription drugs for non-medical purposes

Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan

• **Education.**
  - A crucial first step in tackling the problem of prescription drug abuse is to educate parents, youth, and patients about the dangers of abusing prescription drugs, while requiring prescribers to receive education on the appropriate and safe use, and proper storage and disposal of prescription drugs.

• **Monitoring.**
  - Implement prescription drug monitoring programs (PDMPs) in every state to reduce “doctor shopping” and diversion, and enhance PDMPs to make sure they can share data across states and are used by healthcare providers.

• **Proper Medication Disposal.**
  - Develop convenient and environmentally responsible prescription drug disposal programs to help decrease the supply of unused prescription drugs in the home.

• **Enforcement.**
  - Provide law enforcement with the tools necessary to eliminate improper prescribing practices and stop pill mills.

Source: 2011 Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention Plan
Methamphetamines

http://www.drugabuse.gov/ResearchReports/methamph/methamph2.html#scope
Methamphetamines

http://www.thealabamabaptist.org/images/siteimages/12/lauren/offset/8/490%20meth%208306.jpg
Class Wrap-Up

- **Key Words:**
  - Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana, Methamphetamines, Prescription Drug Abuse

- **Individual Importance:**
  - It is important to understand the effects of a particular substance on a person’s physical and psychological well-being.

- **Public Health Importance:**
  - Substance abuse co-occurs with many other behavioral health issues for women.

- **Socio/Economic Importance:**
  - The cost to society is large for substance abuse; legal policies attempt to prohibit/limit the burden on society.