What is addiction?

But addiction is also a social disease.
Outline
- Definitions
- Scope of the problem
- Screening in women and men
- Office based brief intervention
- Referral to specialty treatment
  - Special considerations in pregnancy

The Spectrum of Substance Use

Substance Dependence
3 or more of the following in a year:
- Tolerance
- Withdrawal
- Use of more than intended or for longer than intended
- Inability to cut down or control substance use
- A great deal of time getting or using the substance, or recovering from use.
- Important activities given up or reduced due to substance use
- Continued use despite knowledge of health problem

Substance Abuse
1 or more of the following in a year:
- Recurrent use resulting in failure to fulfill major roles or obligations
- Recurrent use in hazardous situations
- Recurrent continued use despite social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by drugs
- Drug-related legal problems

LOSS OF CONTROL

CONSEQUENCES
The Spectrum of Substance Use

- Dependence
- Abuse
- Risky Use
- Low Risk Use
- Abstinence

Risky Use

**Women**
- More than 3 drinks in a sitting
- More than 7 drinks in a week

**Men**
- More than 4 drinks in a sitting
- More than 14 drinks in a week

Special populations

- **Pregnant women**
  - Any alcohol use is considered high risk

- **People with medical contraindications or on medications that interact with alcohol**
  - Any alcohol use is considered high risk

- **People over the age of 65**
  - Same guidelines as women (>3 and >7)
The Spectrum of Substance Use

- Abstinence: 86%
- Low Risk Use: 9%
- Risky Use: 3%
- Abuse: 2%
- Dependence: 5%

Substance Abuse Related Mortality

- Nearly 590,000 deaths—about a quarter of all deaths in the United States—are caused by addictive substances
  - 105,000 from alcohol abuse
  - 446,000 from tobacco use
  - 39,000 from other addictive drugs

Mortality and Morbidity Attributable to Use of Addictive Substances in the United States
Proceedings of the American Association of Physicians; 111; 2:109-118

Abuse and dependence rates

- Alcohol leads to earlier and more severe:
  - Liver disease
  - Cardiomyopathy
  - Brain atrophy
- Illegal substance abuse increases risk of:
  - Domestic violence
  - Depression
  - Pregnancy related morbidity
  - Disrupted parenting
Morbidity in pregnancy

- Alcohol:
  - Fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder
- Cocaine and methamphetamine:
  - Low birth weight (OR 5.3)
  - Preterm birth (OR 4.0)
  - Abruption (OR 10)
- Opiates:
  - Infections: HIV, HCV, skin and soft tissue infections
  - Withdrawal
  - Neonatal abstinence syndrome

Outline

- Definitions
- Scope of the problem
- Screening in women and men
- Office based brief intervention
- Referral to specialty treatment
  - Special considerations in pregnancy
Single Item Alcohol Screen for Women

How many times in the past year have you had 4 or more drinks in a day?

≥ 1 = positive screen

82% sensitive, 79% specific


Single Item Drug Screen

How many times in the last year have you used an illegal drug or taken a prescription medication for non-medical reasons?

≥ 1 = positive screen

90-100% sensitive, 73% specific


Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment

- Abstinence
- Low Risk Use
- Risky Use
- Abuse
- Dependence

Brief Intervention → Consumption → Referral to Treatment → Consequences

What is a brief intervention?
What is a brief intervention?

- **Ask**
  - Screen and assess
- **Advise**
  - Give results of screen, advise of safe limits
- **Assess readiness**
  - “How does that strike you?”
- **Assist**
- **Arrange follow-up**

The question is not what to do, but how to do it.

- A nonjudgmental, non-confrontational approach is most effective in both men and women.
- 75% of substance abusing women report a lifetime history of physical abuse
- 30-50% of them experienced sexual trauma as children

Confrontation vs. Collaboration

- Confrontational counseling styles can re-activate trauma
- Can engender feelings of powerlessness and distress
- Self efficacy and confidence are two strong predictors of successful change
- Your goal is to get patients to verbalize reasons for change
  - Not to get the physician to verbalize reasons for change

Components of a brief intervention

- **Ask**
  - Screen and assess
- **Advise**
  - Give results of screen, advise of safe limits
- **Assess readiness**
  - “How does that strike you?”
- **Assist**
  - Empathetic, non-judgmental approach
  - Discuss pro’s and con’s—consider a change ruler
  - Summarize negative consequences
  - Ask a key question
  - Negotiate a plan
- **Arrange follow-up**
Is Brief Intervention Effective?

- 6 sites
- 459,599 screened
- 6 month f/u vs baseline
  - Drug use 67.7% lower
  - Alcohol use 38.6% lower
  - Self reported improvement in general health, mental health, employment, housing and criminal behavior

Madras et al., 2009 Drug and Alcohol Dependence

Outline

- Definitions
- Scope of the problem
- Screening in women and men
- Office based brief intervention
- Referral to specialty treatment
  - Special considerations in pregnancy

Women are significantly less likely to engage in treatment than men

Women with substance use disorders are more likely than men to have psychiatric diagnoses

- Depression
- Anxiety
- PTSD
- Personality disorders
- Bipolar

Brady, K.T 1999
Use patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tend to use or drink</td>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>In groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation and relapse often associated with</td>
<td>Life stressors Loss</td>
<td>Social group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent entering alcohol treatment who identify alcohol as their main problem</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Social Context
- More instability of family of origin
- More likely to have substance abusing partner
- More opposition from family and partners
- More childcare responsibilities

Ideal setting for substance abuse treatment
- Childcare available, if applicable
- Psychiatric care available
- Support and education for families
- Provision of coping strategies for managing stress and self-esteem building skills
- Gender-specific treatment setting

Pregnancy as a barrier to treatment
- Fear of losing child or CPS involvement
- Some states consider substance abuse during pregnancy child abuse or delivering drugs to a minor
- Some states mandate reporting as child abuse
Pregnancy as an opportunity for treatment

- Future-oriented life transition
- Sense of responsibility
- New role

Neonatal Outcomes:

- Screen positive, No Assessment
- Screen positive, Assess positive
- Screen positive, Assess positive, Treat
- Screen negative (Control)

Identify risky use early

A single question screening tool is effective

Small interventions do make a difference

References

- Institute of Medicine Workshop Summary. The role of co-occurring substance abuse and mental illness in violence, 1990