

## Who can I contact for help?

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### Substance Abuse Service Helpline

 (844) 804-7500

### Alcoholics Anonymous

 [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

### National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence

 (800) 622-2255

### Families Anonymous

 (800) 736-9805

### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

 (800) 273-8255

### Alcoholics Anonymous—Online Chat Meetings

 [aa-intergroup.org/directory\\_chat.php](http://aa-intergroup.org/directory_chat.php)

# Overview of Co-occurring Alcohol Use Disorder Treatment



## What is COD-alcohol?

A person who often drinks large amounts, drinks frequently, and/or has difficulty controlling or quitting drinking may have an alcohol use disorder (AUD), sometimes called alcoholism or alcohol addiction. A person with AUD may also have a mental illness.

**Co-occurring alcohol use disorder (COD-alcohol)** means that a person has both a mental illness and AUD.

## Treating COD-alcohol

Successful COD-alcohol treatment involves treating **both** the AUD and the mental health condition. Mental health disorders can influence AUD and vice versa.

## Do I have to treat my mental illness and alcohol use disorder at the same time?

It is best to treat both disorders at the same time, but this is not necessary. Some people may not be ready to start treatment for both conditions at the same time. These people may choose to treat one disorder first and then the other.

## What does a recovery program look like?

**A recovery program can include some or all of these components:**

- Medical detoxification to remove alcohol from the body before starting medication treatment
- Therapy to help talk through issues caused by alcohol use, the reasons for drinking, how to reduce drinking, and how to support mental wellness
- Peer support
- Medicines to help with the mental illness, alcohol use, or both.

A specialized recovery program depends on each individual's readiness, desire, and the recommendations of their health care team.

## Treatment options

A specialized treatment plan will be created based on the client's specific life situation, preferences, and needs.

**Medication options:**

- Naltrexone (oral or injectable)
  - Oral naltrexone is a tablet taken once a day to help reduce alcohol cravings
  - Long-acting injectable naltrexone is an injection given once a month to help reduce alcohol cravings
- Other medications to reduce alcohol
- Medications for mental health conditions

**Therapy options:**

- Individual therapy sessions
- Group sessions
- Family sessions
- Peer support groups

## Residential versus non-residential treatment

**Residential treatment** involves staying overnight in a recovery program for one to six months (or more) under constant supervision. This type of program will help by working to improve family and social functioning, talking through problems, and creating a recovery network outside the program.

**Non-residential treatment** involves going to a recovery program a few times a week to gain similar skills as would be learned in a residential program. There is not constant supervision by staff, but they will check in frequently.

## Therapy

Alongside medication treatment, talking to someone throughout recovery can be very beneficial. Some recovery programs may offer therapy sessions within the facility, while others may refer someone elsewhere for mental health counseling. Therapy is a good way to learn how to best control and live with a mental illness and understand the root causes of alcohol use.

**How do I get started?** Talk to your doctor or therapist today about your options.