

Keys to Successful Addiction Treatment

Overcoming an addiction is not easy --it takes courage and commitment. However, as many people have discovered, the rewards of going clean and staying sober are worth the effort.

Starting treatment is an important first step toward overcoming drug use. If you follow the guidelines listed below, your treatment will be much more effective, and you will have a better chance of staying drug-free. These keys to successful treatment are based on medical research and the experiences of thousands of patients who successfully stopped using drugs during treatment and remained drug-free afterwards.

- ▶ Above all else, stay in treatment! Patients who stay in treatment have a much better chance of staying drug-free than those who drop out.
- ▶ Especially for the first month of treatment, you may feel very unmotivated to continue. This is normal -- most patients who drop out of treatment do so in the first 30 days. You need to be prepared for this feeling so you can better resist the urge to drop out.
- ▶ Obey the program's rules -- they're in place to help you become drug-free. Also, many programs will stop your treatment if you don't follow the rules.
- ▶ Develop a good relationship with your doctor or counselor. Many people who have gone on to become drug-free have found that trusting relationships with their counselors were important in helping them complete treatment.
- ▶ Make a commitment to your treatment and to changing your life. Don't just go to all your treatment sessions --take part in them, too.
- ▶ Follow your treatment plan and use the services that your doctor or counselor recommends.
- ▶ Don't let a lapse become a relapse. Many people *lapse* and use drugs once, twice, or even more times during treatment. If this happens to you, it doesn't mean that your treatment has failed --but it does mean that you're having trouble. Talk to your doctor or counselor about the lapse, and let them help you stop it from becoming a *relapse* --a return to drug abuse.
- ▶ Ask for help if you need it! That's what your doctor or counselor is there for.
- ▶ Be prepared to make some major life changes. It's very hard to stay sober when the people around you are still using drugs. You will need to stay away from friends who use drugs and, if possible, get out of houses or even neighborhoods where drug use is going on.

Follow these keys to treatment and you will be on your way to a drug-free life!