

Case study example

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Drug abuse in all its forms has become the bane of society today. An increasing number of people are getting addicted to pain medications, and prescription drugs. It is the family that suffers and therapy is available but the user needs to have the determination and the will to kick the habit and never go back to it. It is here that most users falter and there is the problem of going in for therapy but quitting halfway through it. Pain medications for an injury can become addictive and must therefore be taken under strict medical supervision.

Case Study

Client Identification: Jennifer, a 34 year old mother of two young children. Husband Ian is an IT professional and she is working as a teacher.

Drug of Choice: Pain medication and muscle relaxants.

History: Jennifer was in a car accident ten years ago, as a result of which she suffered back pain. Initially she took the medicine according to prescription and the pain gradually subsided and died out. However, after the birth of her kids, when she began feeling depressed due to lack of sleep and the associated never ending chores, she was reminded of how wonderful those pain medications had made her feel and wondered if she could get hold of a few to make her feel better.

History of Abuse: Jennifer visited her doctor often after that complaining of headaches and backaches and was prescribed medication. She began to take this regularly and when unable to get a prescription she turned to friends and family and finally began buying over the internet. She began to neglect her children and her usual household chores. Her husband Ian thought the strain of work and the kids was telling on her and began to give her more time and help. However things only got worse. Pain medications

are extremely expensive when bought through the internet. Slowly the family budget began to go awry and Jennifer's husband began to question her. She became defensive and denied buying pain pills referring to her purchases as vitamin pills. When the situation got worse, her parents came over to try and help. The family decided to sit down and talk things over. Finally Jennifer admitted that the birth of the kids had overwhelmed her and she had increasingly begun to use pain medication to relieve the stress. The family decided to seek help. Jennifer has started therapy and is in a residential treatment center.

Addiction is a progressive disease. Unfortunately many people do not seek help and slowly but surely harm themselves and those close to them.

Prescriptions for pain are safe but also dangerous when taken in excess. The thin line between pain relief and dependency must always be kept in mind to avoid addiction. As the website of the National Institute on Drug Abuse correctly points out " The development of effective, nonaddicting pain medications is a public health priority. A growing elderly population and an increasing number of injured military only add to the urgency of this issue."

(NIH, last updated November 2014)

References

NIH

National Institute on Drug Abuse Last updated November 2014

Prescription Drug Abuse

Chronic Pain Treatment and Addiction

Retrieved from

<http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/prescription-drugs/chronic-pain-treatment-addiction>

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