A

Alcohol Dependence

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Synonyms

[Alcoholism](#)

Definition

This diagnosis no longer exists and has been replaced by “Alcohol Use Disorder” in DSM-5

As described in DSM-IV, alcohol dependence is a set of symptoms encompassing dysfunction in cognitive, behavioral, and physiological domains caused by continued alcohol use. A pattern of repeated alcohol ingestion exists, resulting in increasing amounts consumed in order to obtain the desired effect (i.e., tolerance) and characteristic symptoms if use is suddenly suspended (i.e., withdrawal). There is a perceived loss of control

over drinking, exhibited by repeated failed attempts to decrease or quit drinking. Individuals may spend increasing amounts of time in drinking-related behaviors without being able to stop, despite being aware that drinking is causing, or exacerbating, psychological or medical problems. Cognitive consequences can include memory loss, difficulty performing familiar tasks, poor or impaired judgment, and problems with language.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Alcohol Abuse](#)
- ▶ [Alcohol Dementia](#)
- ▶ [Alcoholic Brain Syndrome](#)
- ▶ [Substance Abuse](#)
- ▶ [Substance Abuse Disorders](#)
- ▶ [Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome](#)

References and Readings

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.