



Alcohol & Drug
Treatment

Get Control Before Stress Takes Its Toll

Before recovery, you may have wanted to drink or use drugs when you felt stressed out. For many, substance abuse is a common response to chronic stress however it is not a helpful remedy—it actually aggravates stress. With April being National Stress Awareness Month, let's take a closer look at how stress can affect your body, mood and behavior and healthy ways to relieve stress.

Most people need a certain amount of stress. In the right amount, it can give you an edge. Keep you sharp and alert. On the other hand, living in a constant state of stress isn't a good idea. Constant stress produces high levels of cortisol, a hormone released from the adrenal gland in times of stress, which has been shown to impair cognitive functioning and weaken the immune system.

Without a doubt, stress symptoms can affect your body, your thoughts and feelings as well as your behavior. Being able to recognize common stress symptoms can give you a jump on managing them.

continued inside

If you know a family member or friend struggling with alcohol or drug abuse, Gateway Foundation can help.

24-Hour Helpline
877-505-HOPE (4673)
RecoverGateway.org



In This Issue

- Common Signs of Stress
- Top 10 Ways to Volunteer
- Ask the Expert: Robitussin DM Abuse
- Reflections on Recent Connections
- Books & Movies about Recovery
- Alumni Meeting Schedule
- Mark Your Calendar: Alumni Events

Interested in more Alumni news? Visit RecoverGateway.org/Alumni for Alumni events, meeting schedules and past newsletters. If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please send an email to contactus@recovergateway.org.

Get Control Before Stress Takes Its Toll

The ideal is to have just enough stress to remain focused; but to also have an outlet that can regulate stress and keep it from overtaking your life. Following are a few healthy ways to help you defuse stress.



Relax

Take short meditation and mindfulness breaks.



Sleep

Don't skimp on sleep. Try and get a good 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night.



Go Outside

If you have one, play with your pet, or go outside for a quick 5-minute break.

Find more information and helpful tips on stress reduction online at RecoverGateway.org/Stress

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF STRESS...

...ON YOUR BODY

- Headache
- Muscle tension or pain
- Chest pain
- Fatigue
- Change in sex drive
- Stomach upset
- Sleep problems

...ON YOUR MOOD

- Anxiety
- Restlessness
- Lack of motivation or focus
- Irritability or anger
- Sadness or depression

...ON YOUR BEHAVIOR

- Overeating or under eating
- Angry outbursts
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Tobacco use
- Social withdrawal

Source: American Psychological Association's "Stress in America" report, 2010

10 Ways to Give Back and Help Others

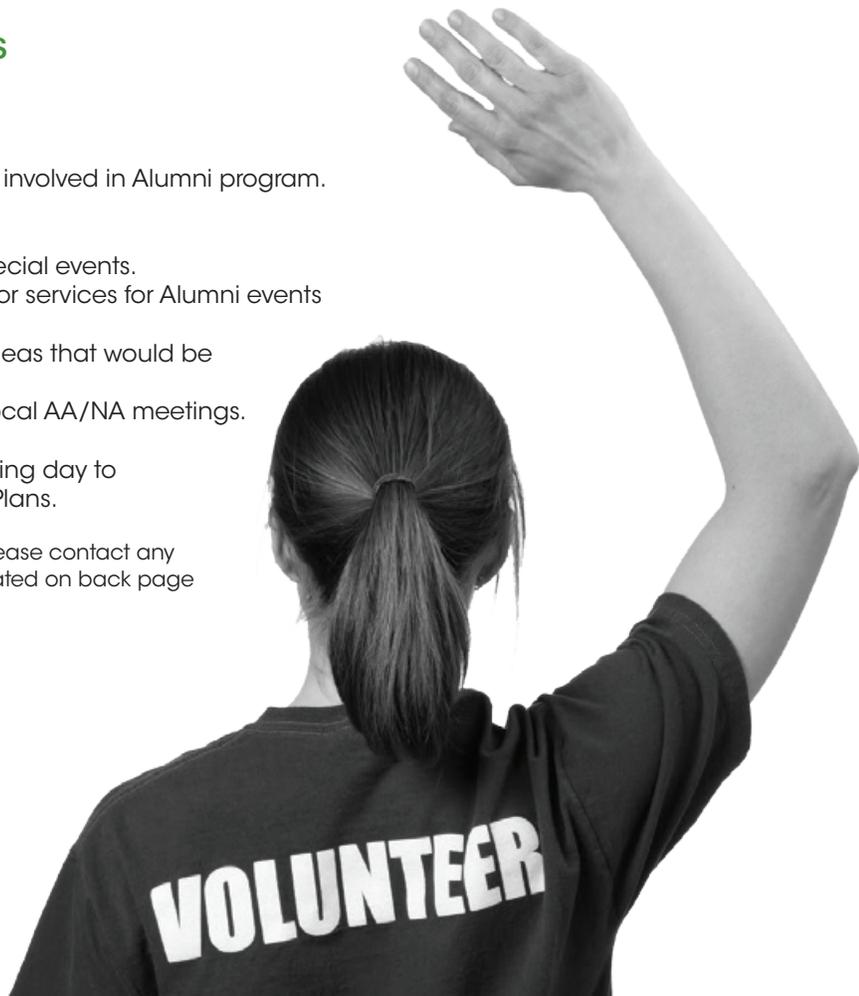
Top 10 Easy and Fulfilling Ways to Volunteer:

1. Speak at a graduation ceremony.
2. Share your story with clients and encourage them to be involved in Alumni program.
3. Coordinate a holiday dinner.
4. Run support groups.
5. Help with set-up, decorating and cleanup for Alumni special events.
6. Ask local businesses if they are willing to donate goods or services for Alumni events or prizes for fund-raising activities.
7. Share with Alumni Coordinators creative Alumni event ideas that would be fun and supportive of Alumni in recovery.
8. Hand out flyers about upcoming Alumni events at the local AA/NA meetings.
9. Promote Alumni events at the local recovery homes.
10. Come to Gateway on a day other than an Alumni meeting day to sit with a few clients to discuss their Relapse Prevention Plans.

To take advantage of opportunities to support others in recovery please contact any Gateway Foundation Alumni Coordinator. Contact information located on back page in the Alumni Group Meeting Schedule.

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Ask the Expert:

Dr. Phil Welches

Clinical Director, Gateway Foundation

Alumni Question:

How can you help someone who is abusing Robitussin DM in liquid and pill forms?

Answer:

Abuse of Robitussin DM is not rare, especially among teenagers but also some younger adults. It's sometimes called "Robo-tripping." The "D" in the "DM" refers to dextromethorphan (a cough suppressant), and that's what causes the "high." Robitussin DM is available over-the-counter and it's not very expensive. That, along with the effects users seek, make this a high potential drug for abuse.

The effects of Robitussin DM vary a little from person to person, but commonly they include altered time perception and visual hallucinations. Signs of abuse include: anxiety, excitability, slurred speech, sweating and obvious altered perception of reality in speech content and response. For some, the effects can include relaxation or drowsiness.

Finally, as to your question, what can be done to help someone stop abusing Robitussin DM? This will depend on the person. Since the drug is over-the-counter, some mistakenly believe that it is harmless. Some individuals, when they learn the risks, are motivated to stop using it. For others, even ones who are motivated to stop, actually quitting can be a struggle.

There can be serious side effects when one uses more than the suggested amount and even for some who use the suggested amount of Robitussin DM. These side effects can include: difficulty breathing, allergic reactions (sometimes with swelling of the face, lips, tongue or throat), dizziness (which can be severe), anxiety/restlessness, confusion and shallow breathing.

If the person has been using high doses fairly regularly, there can be withdrawal symptoms, much like from narcotic drugs, and these can include: restlessness, insomnia, muscle and bone aches, diarrhea and vomiting. If the person's addiction is severe, then the withdrawal process may need to be medically monitored as, in some cases, it can be life threatening.

From your question, I don't know the extent of this person's Robitussin DM use pattern: how much, how frequently and how long? If learning the risks isn't enough to cease abuse, I recommend that you encourage him/her to be evaluated as to the most effective kind of treatment, such as outpatient, residential substance abuse treatment or hospitalization with medical monitoring.

This person can get a free and confidential assessment at a Gateway Foundation treatment center by calling us at 877-505-4673. Thanks for your question and your concern for this individual.



Dr. Phil Welches

Reflections On Recent Connections

Valentine's Day Dinner

Gateway Foundation Aurora hosted about 20 Alumni and their guests as well as a few clients at their Valentine's Day Dinner on February 14. The Alumni speaker talked to the group about living life and doing more in recovery than just not doing drugs. Guests appreciated getting together for an evening of fellowship and a delicious dinner with all the fixings.



Speaker Jam

Gateway Foundation Springfield hosted a Speaker Jam on January 19, which had an impressive turnout of more than 70 guests. The speakers—who ranged from 9 months sober to 34 years of sobriety—shared their moving stories of sorrow, strength, triumph and the sense of freedom recovery has given them. In addition to dinner and door prizes, attendees enjoyed an evening of fellowship and mingling with new friends, familiar faces and Gateway staff.

Books And Movies About Recovery

STAFF PICKS!

What We're Reading

Addictive Thinking and the Addictive Personality
by Craig Nakken

A Child Called "It", Help Yourself, and A Man Named Dave
by Dave Pelzer

The Science of Addiction
by Carlton Erickson

The Selfish Brain: Learning from Addiction
by Dr. Robert L. DuPont

What We're Watching

"28 Days" starring Sandra Bullock, Viggo Mortensen and Dominic West
"Drunks" starring Richard Lewis, Liza Harris and Liam Ahern
"Hope Floats" starring Sandra Bullock and Harry Connick Jr.
"When a Man Loves a Woman" starring Meg Ryan, Andy Garcia and Ellen Burstyn

Have a Question? Ask the Expert.

Visit RecoverGateway.org/Alumni and click on "Ask the Expert." Fill out the short online form and your question will be submitted to one of our staff experts. If we choose your question you may see it answered in this newsletter!

Alumni Group Meeting Schedule

Maintain your connection with Gateway Foundation, other Alumni and the recovery community through upcoming fellowship events.

Aurora

400 Mercy Lane
630-966-7400

Contact Pamela Gomez Scott

2nd Tuesday &
4th Thursday
1st Friday Alumni Café
(w/Open Mic)

10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Carbondale

1080 E. Park St.
618-529-1151

Contact Andy Greer

3rd Monday

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Caseyville/Belleville

(Meetings in Caseyville)
600 W. Lincoln St.
618-345-3970

Contact Jason Ford

Adults - 3rd Thursday

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Chicago Northwest

4301 W. Grand
773-862-2279

Contact James Medrano

3rd Friday

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Chicago West

3828 W. Taylor St.
773-826-1916

Contact Gabriela Raijjer

Adults - 3rd Saturday

5:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Teens - 2nd Thursday

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Lake Villa

25480 W. Cedarcrest Ln.
847-356-8205

Adults and Young Men -
3rd Friday

7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Contact Kelly Hay

Teens - 3rd Wednesday

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Contact Bennie Haywood

Springfield

2200 Lake Victoria Dr.
217-529-9266

Contact Mercedes Kent

Adults - 3rd Wednesday

7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Teens - 3rd Wednesday

6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Please note that dates and times may change periodically. It is recommended that you call to confirm the meeting time and date.

Mark Your Calendar

NORTHERN ILLINOIS

Memorial Day Party

Saturday, May 25, 5–7 p.m. (Adults 18+)
Gateway Foundation Chicago West
3828 W. Taylor St., Chicago, IL 60624
RSVP by 5/21/13 to Gabriela Raijjer at 773-826-1916 ext. 2850

Summer Solstice Picnic

Thursday, June 13, 6–8:30 p.m.
Gateway Foundation Aurora
400 Mercy Lane, Aurora, IL 60506
RSVP by 6/7/13 to Pamela Gomez-Scott at 630-966-7436

Barbeque Picnic

Saturday, June 15, 1–5 p.m. (Youth)
Gateway Foundation Lake Villa on Back 40
25480 W. Cedarcrest Lane, Lake Villa, IL 60046
RSVP by 6/11/13 to Bennie Haywood at 847-356-8205 ext. 3201

CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Graduation Party

Wednesday, May 15, 7–8:30 p.m.
Gateway Foundation Springfield
2200 Lake Victoria Dr., Springfield, IL 62703
RSVP by 5/10/13 to Mercedes Kent at 217-529-9266 ext. 2625

Summer Cookout

Saturday, June 22, 12–4 p.m.
Gateway Foundation Springfield
2200 Lake Victoria Dr., Springfield, IL 62703
RSVP by 6/19/13 to Mercedes Kent at 217-529-9266 ext. 2625

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

Bowling Outing

Wednesday, April 17, 6–8 p.m.
Gateway Foundation Belleville & Caseyville
Off-Site Location:
St. Clair Bowl
5950 Old Collinsville Rd., Fairview Heights, IL 62208
RSVP by 4/12/13 to Jason Ford at 618-345-3970 ext. 3416

Mexican Dinner

Thursday, May 16, 6–8 p.m.
Gateway Foundation Belleville & Caseyville
Off-Site Location:
Caseyville Park
40 W. Reynolds St., Caseyville, IL 62232
RSVP by 5/10/13 to Jason Ford at 618-345-3970 ext. 3416

Recovery Fun in the Sun Picnic

Monday, June 17, 6 – 8 p.m.
Gateway Foundation Carbondale
1080 E. Park St., Carbondale, IL 62901
RSVP by 6/12/13 to Andy Greer at 618-529-1151 ext. 2937

For more information or to RSVP for an Alumni event, please call the contact listed for each event.