



ADDICTION

UNDERHANDED - OVER THE COUNTER

There is a dangerous belief that over-the-counter (OTC) medication is safe to abuse because it is so readily available. This is not the case. Many medicines that can be bought without a prescription can still be addictive and even lethal if not used as prescribed.

In Botswana, substance abuse and dependency has been notably on the rise according to The Botswana Substance Abuse Support Network (BOSASNet).

This may include OTC medication.

1. OTC drugs that are commonly abused

- Cough mixtures that contain dextromethorphan or codeine-Cold and flu medicine that contains pseudoephedrine
- Pain medication that contains ibuprofen, acetaminophen and codeine
- Motion sickness pills that contain dimenhydrinate

All of these can be habit-forming when used inappropriately.

2. The dangers involved in abusing OTCs

Misusing or overdosing on OTC drugs can cause:

- Blacking out
- Vomiting
- Kidney damage/failure
- Heart failure
- Vomiting

- High blood pressure
- Heart palpitations
- Insomnia
- Drowsiness
- Seizures
- Brain damage

3. Lifechanging – Not in a good way

Many people have come forward to testify that their OTC drug addictions have had serious repercussions in their lives.

Some addicts attributed failed relationships, loss of income, unemployment and other traumatic events to their struggle with these easy to access drugs.

Numerous OTC medication addicts have shared they also felt motivated to seek bigger and more potent highs that have then caused them to develop addictions to stronger illegal drugs like cocaine, crystal methamphetamine and heroin.

4. Get help

If you or someone you know is struggling with an OTC addiction (or any type of drug addiction) you can contact BOSASNet:

Cell : +267 72659891

Tel : +267 395 9119/ 391 3490

email : admin@bosasnet.com