

What is Alcohol and Drug Detox?

Detoxification is a medical procedure for managing the withdrawal from alcohol and/or drugs in a medically safe and effective manner with as little discomfort as possible. The success and safety of outpatient rather than inpatient detox is significantly enhanced not only with the appropriate medical care and supervision, but also with support from family members and/or friends. That's why we encourage you to enlist the help of a family member or friend during the detox process.

It is important to recognize that medical detoxification by itself does not constitute complete treatment for addiction, but only a first step. Detoxification is NOT designed to address the psychological, social, and behavioral issues that are often intertwined with addiction. In fact, one of the important roles of medical detoxification is to serve as a transition for entering aftercare treatment. Ideally, medical detoxification should enhance your motivation and readiness to begin the recovery process in earnest.

Who is Eligible for Outpatient and In-Home Detox?

Your medical eligibility for our outpatient and in-home detox services will be evaluated by our medical team. You will be given an extensive medical and psychiatric evaluation as well as laboratory tests, EKG, and any other diagnostic procedures deemed medically necessary to assess your eligibility. With your permission, we will encourage available family members and/or significant others to assist you through the detox procedure, as this often enhances the safety and success of the procedure.

What are the Advantages of Outpatient and In-Home Detox?

As compared to inpatient treatment, at-home detox offers greater freedom, privacy, and confidentiality. It is also more convenient, less expensive, and less disruptive to your daily life. Instead of being cut off from the outside world confined to a locked ward, you will be able to stay in your own home and maintain your contact with family, friends, and business associates while getting the medical help you need to end your physical addiction to alcohol/drugs—safely and effectively.

How Does the Detox Process Work?

Our medical team will help you withdraw from alcohol, opioids, and other drugs on an outpatient basis, while you continue to enjoy the privacy and comfort of your own home, without going into a rehab or hospital. Our outpatient and in-home medical detox services are provided by licensed physicians (MDs) specializing in the treatment of addiction. You will be seen every day during your medical detox either in your home or in our office. In addition to 24/7 on-call coverage by our medical team, we can provide in-home nursing care, if needed, to further insure your safety and comfort.

The course of the outpatient detoxification process is highly individualized and depends on a variety of factors. Among the most important of these are: (a) the particular types of substances that you are currently using; (b) the amount and frequency of your use; (c) the current status of any co-existing medical and/or psychiatric problems you might have; (c) the level of support available to you from significant others; (d) your history of medical complications in previous detoxification attempts; and, (e) your ability to follow prescribed medication regimens and other guidelines given to you by our medical team.

The first step in the detox process is to place you on a medication regimen that keeps your withdrawal symptoms under good control and stabilizes your medical status. This will help you feel more comfortable and less anxious. Subsequently, the detox medication(s) are reduced on a schedule that is determined by a day-to-day medical assessment of your progress. Completion of the detox is often defined as being medically stable and no longer experiencing significant withdrawal symptoms after the detox medications are discontinued. In most cases, detox from alcohol can be accomplished within a week whereas detox from opioids or benzodiazepines (tranquilizers) can take several weeks.

How do I Transition to Aftercare Treatment?

While you are going through the detox and/or immediately following its completion, you will be given the option of getting involved in one or more of our private substance abuse treatment services as described in more detail elsewhere on this website. You can join one of our substance abuse recovery groups, enter individual and/or couples therapy with one of our psychologists, or participate in a combination of outpatient substance abuse services designed to address your individual needs. You also have the option of seeing one of our psychiatrists, when needed, for medication to treat depression, anxiety, and/or other psychiatric conditions.