

## Addictions

### What is addiction?

Addiction is a state of psychological or physical dependence (or both) on the use of substances such as alcohol or drugs. The term is often used as an equivalent term for substance dependence and sometimes applied to behavioural disorders, such as sexual, internet, and gambling addictions. People with addictions usually continue with a particular behaviour despite its negative consequences. They usually have impaired control over the behaviour, physically depend on it, experiences social problems and does it at risky levels.

### What addictions are common in Malawi?

Various forms of addictions exist in Malawi among people of various age groups. While many studies have looked at alcohol use disorders as a common addiction among the general population, many other unexplored addictions exist. Marijuana smoking, uncontrollable sexual urges, drug abuse, overuse of internet, online and physical gambling are emerging forms of addictions in Malawi. Lately there has been many concerns for the rising number of young people that are engaging in problematic online gambling such as sports betting.

### Who is at risk?

Addictions are complex. So many factors can lead to an increase in likelihood of particular addictions. For instance, alcohol and substance use disorders are linked to both external and internal risk factors. Internal factors include **genetics, psychological conditions, personality, personal choice, and drinking history**. External factors include family, environment, religion, social and cultural norms, age, education, and job status. While the same factor may play a role in other forms of addiction such as online gambling, other factors such as poverty also greatly contribute to gambling related addictions.

### Can you prevent addictions?

While there is no one way or guaranteed way to prevent someone from being addicted to a particular behaviour or substance, there are things that everyone can do to prevent these addictions. One has to understand how addictions develop, avoid temptation and peer pressure, seek help for mental illness or any other physical illness, examine the risk factors and keep a balanced life.

### Why should you worry about addictions?

Addictions such as alcohol and substance use have high potential for physical and psychological complications. They can cause serious emotional, physical, and economic impacts. Also, addictions affect the health and well-being of friends, loved ones, co-workers, and the community. Usually, the impact of addictions extends beyond the individual who is addicted to a particular behaviour and can be felt by everyone around them. Addictions are also associated with increased rate of suicide and suicide attempts.

### Need help? Or know someone who does?

Addictions are a recognised mental health problem, and not as a result of being cursed or bewitched by someone. To conquer and break the chain of addiction, one need to seek appropriate and timely care. Usually, your attending physician or mental health counsellor will help you on how to overcome the behaviour and reduced the associated complications.

### Suggested reading

1. American Psychological association; Alcohol, substance use and addictions;  
<https://www.apa.org/topics/substance-use-abuse-addiction>

### Chizolowezi chopha bongo (Adikishoni)

#### Kodi Adikishoni ndi chiyani?

Adikishoni ndi chizolowezi maganizo kapena thupi (kapena zonse ziwiri) chopha umunthu chomwe chimadza pakugwiritsa ntchito zinthu monga mowa kapena mankhwala osokoneza bongo. Mawuwa nthawi zambiri amagwiritsidwa ntchito ngati liwu lofanana ndi kudalira zinthu zina zoti siziri mchibadidwe cha thupi ndipo nthawi zina amagwiritsidwa ntchito pazovuta zamakhalidwe, kufuna kugonana moonjeza, osachoka pa intaneti, komanso chizolowezi chotchova njuga. Anthu omwe ali ndi zizolowezi zambiri amapitilirabe ndi khalidwe lawo ngakhale zotsatira zake ndi zoipa. Nthawi zambiri amakhala ndi vuto la kuwongolera khalidwe lawo, podalira zomwe akuchita ngakhale kuti zawaika paziwopsezo.

#### Ndi zizolowezi ziti zomwe zafala ku Malawi kuno?

Pali mitundu yosiyanasiyana ya zizolowezi za Adikishoni m'Malawi mwa anthu amisinkhu yosiyanasiyana. Ngakhale kuti akafukufuku ambiri ayang'ana za vuto la kumwa mowa ngati chizolowezi chofala pakati pa anthu wamba, zizolowezi zina zambiri zomwe sizinadziwike zilipo. Kusuta chamba, zilakolako zosalumulirika za kugonana, kugwiritsa ntchito mankhwala osokoneza bongo, kugwiritsa ntchito intaneti mopitirira muyeso, masewero pa intaneti komanso kutchova njuga m'thupi ndi njira zomwe zikukula m'Malawi. Posachedwapa pakhala pali nkhwana zambiri chifukwa cha kuchuluka kwa achinyamata omwe akuchita nawo njuga zovuta pa intaneti monga kubetcha pamasewera.

#### Ndani ali pachiwopsezo?

Kuledzera mwa Adikishoni ndizovuta kumvetsa. Pali zinthu zambiri zomwe zitha kupangitsa kuti chiwonjezeko chazovuta zi zichitike. Mwachitsanzo, kusokonezeka kwa mowa ndi zinthu zoledzeretsa kumalumikizidwa ndi ziwopsezo zakunja ndi zamkati mwa moyo wamnthu. Zinthu zamkati zimaphatikizapo majini, mikhalidwe yamalingaliro, umunthu, zosankha zamunthu, ndi mbiri yakumwa. Zinthu zakunja kwa thupi zikuphatikizapo banja, malo, chipembedzo, chikhalidwe, zaka, maphunziro, ndi ntchito a munthu. Pomwe zinthu zomwe zitha kutenga nawo gawo pazovuta zina monga kutchova njuga pa intaneti, zinthu zinanso monga umphawi zimathandiziranso kwambiri chizolowezi chotchova njuga.

#### Kodi mungapewe zizolowezi zoipa?

Ngakhale kuti palibe njira imodzi kapena njira yotsimikizirika yoletsera munthu kuti asakhale ndi khalidwe linalake kapena zinthu zina, pali zinthu zomwe aliyense angachite kuti apewe izi. Munthu afunika kumvetsetsa mmene Adikishoni imadzera, kupeŵa ziyeso ndi chisonkhezero cha ena, kufunafuna chithandizo cha matenda a maganizo kapena matenda ena alionse akuthupi, kufufuza zinthu zowopsa pa Adikishoni ndi kukhala ndi moyo wolinganzika.

#### N'chifukwa chiyani muyenera kuda nkhwana ndi zizolowezi zoipa?

Adikishoni monga kumwa mowa ndi kugwiritsira ntchito mankhwala osokoneza bongo kuli ndi kuthekera kwakukulu kwa zovuta zakuthupi ndi zamaganizo. Adikishoni ingayambitse mavuto aakulu a maganizo, thupi, ndi zachuma. Komanso, Za Adikishoni zimakhudza thanzi ndi moyo wa abwenzi, okonedwa, ogwira nawo ntchito, ndi anthu amudzi. Nthawi zambiri, zotsatira za zizolowezi zimadutsa munthu yemwe ali ndi vuto li mkukhudza anthu ena womuzungulira. Adikishoni ikudzetsanso kuchuluka kwa anthu ofuna kudzipha.

#### Mukufuna thandizo? Kapena mukudziwa wina amene amatero?

Adikishoni ndi vuto lodziwika bwino la m'maganizo, osati chifukwa chotembereredwa kapena kulodzedwa ndi wina. Kutu mugonjetse ndi kuthetsa vutoli, munthu amafunika kupeza chisamaliro choyenera komanso panthawi yake. Nthawi zambiri, dokotala wanu kapena mlangizi wa zamaganizo adzakuthandizani momwe mungagonjetsere khalidweli ndikuchepetsa zovuta zomwe zimadza.

#### Kuwerenga koyenera

1. American Psychological association; Alcohol, substance use and addictions;  
<https://www.apa.org/topics/substance-use-abuse-addiction>

**Malawi Health Weekly.** Registered under Printed Publications Act of Malawi



CLINICAL RESEARCH EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Anderson House, Area 43  
P.O Box 31045  
Lilongwe  
Malawi

Phone : +265 9 768 519  
Fax : +278 651 73541  
E-mail : [info@creamsmw.com](mailto:info@creamsmw.com)  
[info@malawihealthweekly.com](mailto:info@malawihealthweekly.com)