

Why Medications for the Treatment of Alcoholism and Addictive Disorder?

Addiction is a 'brain' disease that affects the pleasure system. There is complex interaction of messenger chemicals, receptors, memory, motivation and emotions. This understanding has led to the development of highly effective medications that when combined with behavioral therapies, restore the disruption caused by drugs and alcohol.

The new classes of anticraving medications are radically different than the drugs used in the past. How are they different? These medications are safe, effective and are either non-addicting or have a low abuse potential and have to be used for a limited period of time – three to six months.

Medications like naltrexone, acamprosate, buprenorphine, varenicline have been approved by the FDA to treat addictive disorders, while other medications like ondansetron, topiramate, baclofen, modafinil used for other disorders have been found to be effective to treat addictions and the *ARCA clinicians have used them with considerable success.*

Technology is also helping to improve compliance with some of these medications. Naltrexone, one of the most effective medications to treat alcoholism is now available as a once-a-month depot injection. This injection sold under the brand name VIVITROL significantly improves compliance and reduces the ambivalence so often experienced by patients. *ARCA is one of the leading clinics in the nation offering this medication and it has made a huge difference in improving outcomes.*

While medications restore the neurochemical disruption, the advances in behavioral therapies like Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) powerfully complement the anticraving medications in helping patients achieve long-term relapse prevention.

What are the practical benefits of these advances? It is now possible to treat patients on an outpatient basis with little or no disruption of work or family and the outcomes are better because patients get well in the same environment that caused the problem.

Call ARCA's 24-Hour Information Line (314) 645-6840 for a free, confidential consultation.



Setting a New Benchmark for Treating Addictions

Frequently Asked Questions



How Does Your Program Differ from Other Programs?

We consider addictive disorders as a chronic medical disease with a strong behavioral component. Any request for help should be treated as a crisis and ARCA provides same day appointments and medical treatment. We medically detox patients to provide relief from the withdrawal, anxiety, restlessness etc. and seamlessly start you on anticraving medications to block the cravings for alcohol or drugs. One of the most effective relapse prevention therapies is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy which is utilized at ARCA.

What Can I Expect at ARCA?

A caring well-trained professional team offering you state-of-the-art individualized treatment from day one to the end of the program. Each member of the team works with you to achieve your goal of long-term recovery. You and your identified family members have access to our treatment team at the clinic on weekdays and via phone or email 24 hours a day.

Why Medications?

Medications are critical during the detox process. ARCA considers 'cold turkey' detox as inhumane which may compel the patient to discontinue treatment. The detox medications provide relief from the withdrawal symptoms and protection from potentially life-threatening effects like seizures. Medications are equally critical to blunt the cravings that can reoccur during treatment. When cravings are effectively controlled the patient becomes more engaged in long-term recovery through individual, group and family counseling.

What are some of the Medications Used at ARCA?

The medications used by the physicians at ARCA are all FDA-approved and have proven to be highly effective and safe. Medications including naltrexone, acamprostate, SUBOXONE®, VIVITROL®, CHANTIX® have been specifically approved for the treatment of addictive disorders while other medications like ondansetron, topiramate, amantidine, buspirone and modafinil, although not specifically approved for the treatment of addictions, have been found to effectively curb cravings.

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Frequently Asked Questions

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Do I Need to Take these Medications for the Rest of my Life?

The medications used presently are radically different from the older medications like Antabuse and methadone. These medications are neither non-addicting or have a very low abuse potential and are generally taken for a 3-6 month period – long enough for the brain to heal from the effects of the drugs and alcohol. Some medications can be taken for a longer time to protect the patients from relapsing.

How Do You Measure Success?

Addictive disorders impact the patient and their families in multiple ways. Measuring success is not just helping patients get off the alcohol or drugs. At ARCA we measure success by looking at several parameters including sobriety, family and social relationships, work and educational functioning and developing recovery support.

How Does ARCA Work with Insurance Companies?

The intensity and duration of treatment offered at ARCA does not fit the requirement imposed by insurance. We do not place any limits on the individual, group and family sessions and psychiatric visits and these services are offered for the full six-month duration. ARCA however will provide an itemized bill for you to claim reimbursement. The amount of reimbursement is based on the type of policy and the services used.

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