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Mental health and substance use
information you can trust

Questions and Answers

People have questions about mental health, substance use, and well-being. They need answers from people they trust in a way they can understand.

In this section, we answer common questions we receive by email. Our information and resource experts regularly post answers, share helpful related resources on this website, and provide information about other programs and services available to British Columbians. We're here to help you find help, support a friend or loved one or learn more about mental health and substance use.

If you have a question or need more information, [contact us](#) to work with one of our information and referral specialists.

Ask Us...about managing mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic

- [Why do I need to keep informed?](#)
- [How can I tell if health information is good or bad?](#)
- [Why do I need a plan?](#)
- [How can I maintain social connections? What if I feel lonely?](#)
- [How can I take care of my physical health?](#)
- [How can I use distraction to manage difficult thoughts or feelings?](#)
- [How can I reframe the situation and find more balanced perspectives?](#)

- How can I challenge thinking traps?
- How can I manage grief?

Ask Us...about finding help

- How can I find a doctor, psychiatrist, psychologist, or counsellor?
- How can I see a psychiatrist?
- How can I see a psychologist?
- How can I see a counsellor?
- How can I find a support group?
- Where can I find child and youth mental health services?
- Where can older adults find help for mental health concerns?
- Where can I find self-help materials for depression?
- Where can I find self-help materials for anxiety?
- I'm having a hard time coping with a physical health problem. Where can I find help?
- When is substance use a problem? Where can I go for help?
- How do I know if someone has a problem with gambling and what can I do to help?

Ask Us...about supports to get the help you need

- Where can I find free or low-cost counselling?
- Can I get help paying for prescription medications?
- How can I pay for mental health care?

- How do I apply for income assistance?

Ask Us...about understanding the system and treatments

- What is MSP?
- What is a referral?
- What's the difference between a psychiatrist and a registered psychologist?
- What's the difference between psychotherapy and counselling?
- What's the difference between CBT and DBT?
- What's the difference between antidepressants?
- I received a diagnosis but I don't think it's right. What can I do?
- I was prescribed an antidepressant or other psychiatric medication but I don't think it's working. What can I do?

Ask Us...about supporting someone else

- An adult in my life seems ill and won't find help. What can I do?
- I'm worried about my child or teenager. Where can I find help?
- Someone I care about has a brain injury. Where can I find more information?
- Someone I love has been diagnosed with depression. How can I help?
- Someone I love has been diagnosed with schizophrenia. How can I help?
- I'm a young person and one of my parents has a mental illness. What can I do?

- I have thoughts of suicide, or someone I care about is talking about suicide. What should I do?
- Cannabis is legally allowed to 19+ but there are doctor groups saying it's potentially harmful to age 25. Any use or certain use? What's myth and what's fact? If I'm a parent, what should I tell my young adult?

Ask Us...about mental health and mental health problems

- What's the difference between mental health and mental illness?
- I have thoughts of suicide, or someone I care about is talking about suicide. What should I do?
- Where can I find more information about depression?
- What's the difference between anxiety and an anxiety disorder?
- What's the difference between anxiety and stress?
- What's the difference between sadness and depression?
- What is dysthymia or persistent depressive disorder?
- What is cyclothymic disorder?
- What does rapid cycling mean?
- Where can I find information and help for borderline personality disorder?
- What is schizoid personality disorder?
- What is antisocial personality disorder?
- What is obsessive-compulsive personality disorder?
- What is binge-eating disorder?

- What's the difference between dissociative identity disorder (multiple personality disorder) and schizophrenia?
- What's the difference between psychosis and schizophrenia?
- What are positive and negative symptoms?
- What is a prodrome?
- I'm an adult and I think I might have ADHD. What can I do next?

Ask Us...about substance use

- When is substance use a problem? Where can I go for help?
- What's the difference between substance use and addiction?
- How can I find help for an alcohol or drug use problem?
- How do I know if I'm drinking too much?
- If cannabis is dangerous, why are we legalizing it?
- How can I convince my kids not to use drugs?
- What is the legal status (and evidence) of CBD oil?
- Cannabis is legally allowed to 19+ but there are doctor groups saying it's potentially harmful to age 25. Any use or certain use? What's myth and what's fact? If I'm a parent, what should I tell my young adult?
- What is the evidence on vaping?

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Need help or support?

Email us and our information referral experts will answer your questions and help you find resources, services, programs, or other supports in BC.

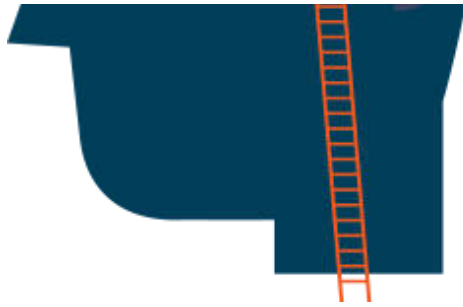
Disclaimer

Q&A is not medical advice. While we strive to provide quality information and refer you to helpful resources, our responses may not apply to each person's unique situation. Please talk with your health care team if you have treatment-related questions or concerns.



Stay Connected

Sign up for our various **e-newsletters** featuring mental health and substance use resources.



 your email address

@HeretoHelpBC

HeretoHelp is a project of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Substance Use Information

We are a group of seven leading mental health and substance use non-profit agencies. Since 2003, we've been working together to help people live well and better prevent and manage mental health and substance use problems. [Learn more.](#)

- [Anxiety Canada](#)
- [British Columbia Schizophrenia Society](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division](#)
- [Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research](#)
- [Institute of Families for Child and Youth Mental Health](#)

[Jessie's Legacy eating disorders prevention and awareness \(a Family Services of the](#)

- [North Shore program\)](#)

- [Mood Disorders Association of BC \(a branch of Lookout Housing and Health Society\)](#)

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