

# Substance Abuse and Addiction



## The Cost of Addiction

If you or someone you know has suffered from addiction, you likely know how much of an emotional toll it can take on you and your loved ones. In addition to the emotional cost, any addiction—whether it's substance abuse, gambling, shopping or something else—is costing money.

Addiction can cause financial problems not only for the sufferer but for his or her family as well. Substance abuse, including the use of illegal drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, costs the U.S. more than \$550 billion each year. The cost of illegal drug abuse to the nation is similar to the cost of fighting cancer or diabetes.

### Costs of common addiction expenditures:

- Smoking a pack of cigarettes each day costs around \$2,200 per year, and nearly 30 percent of smokers are already living below the poverty level.
- Drinking a six pack of cheap (≈\$6) beer daily costs around \$2,200 annually.
- Using illicit drugs can easily cost upwards of \$10,000 per year.

### Other ways addiction can take a toll on finances:

- **Debt issues** – Spending too much money on addiction can impact the ability to pay bills. It's not uncommon for those struggling with addiction to need to borrow money from friends and family or even declare bankruptcy. Bad credit, missed payments, toxic debts, and late fees can all put further strains on finances.
- **Job issues** – Those struggling with addiction can miss too much work and risk poor performance rating and even job loss. Addiction can also get in the way of getting a new job. Over a lifetime, addiction can cost thousands of dollars in lost productivity.
- **Healthcare costs** – Many addictions cause lifelong health issues, increasing premiums and out-of-pocket costs.
- **Auto insurance costs** – Getting arrested for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol can increase car insurance premiums up to 300%.
- **Life insurance costs** – Life insurance premiums are higher for smokers. Insurance companies will also decline to provide coverage without clearing a physical exam, potentially leaving family without any financial security.
- **Legal costs** – While exact costs vary by location, bills and fines from DUI and/or other legal fees can range from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Sources: forbes.com and drugabuse.com