

Relapse rates for Clinical Programs

In fact, data suggest 30 days aren't nearly enough.

* Research published in 1999 by Bennett Fletcher, a senior research psychologist at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, has shown that though 90 days isn't a magic number, anything less than that tends to increase the chances of relapse. One study, of 1,605 cocaine users, looked at weekly cocaine use in the year after treatment. It found that 35% of people who were in treatment for 90 days or fewer reported drug use the following year compared with 17% of people who were in treatment for 90 days or longer. The study was published in the Archives of General Psychiatry.

* Another study, part of an NIDA-funded project called Drug Abuse Treatment Outcome Studies, followed 549 patients who had several problems in addition to their drug use and who entered a long-term residential program. Those who dropped out of treatment before 90 days had relapse rates similar to those who stayed in treatment only a day or two. After 90 days, however, relapse rates dropped steadily the longer a person stayed in treatment.

* Studies of youth also reflect the connection between longer care and a greater chance of recovery. A 2001 UCLA study of 1,167 adolescents receiving substance-abuse treatment found that those in treatment for 90 days or more had significantly lower relapse rates than teens in programs of 21 days.

Some of the earliest evidence emerged from high success rates in treatment of addicted health professionals, says Haroutunian: The Federation of State Physician Health Programs has long recommended 90-day treatments and continued follow-up care for doctors who abuse drugs.

Longer treatment reflects the fact that addiction is a chronic, relapsing disorder, says Lisa Onken, chief of NIDA's behavioral and integrative treatment branch.

"The more you have a treatment that can help you become continuously abstinent, the better you do," she says. "You have to figure out how to be abstinent. You still have cravings. You still have friends offering you drugs. You still have to figure out ways not to use. The longer you are able to do that, the more you are developing skills to help you stay abstinent."

<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/nov/10/health/he-addiction10>

Recent drug relapse statistics show that more than **85% of individuals relapse** and return to drug use within the year following treatment. Researchers estimate that more than 2/3 of individuals in recovery relapse within weeks to months of beginning addiction treatment ⁶.

Why are these drug relapse statistics so discouraging? Without a long-term drug relapse prevention plan, most people will be unsuccessful in their attempts to remain sober, so having a solid plan in place is essential.

<https://drugabuse.com/library/drug-relapse/>