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Help for Substance Use is Available

March 25 2021 – March is National Drug and Alcohol Awareness Month. Physicians can help provide guidance and resources to manage substance usage

✖ The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on the mental health of many Americans. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 40% of the population reports that the pandemic has negatively affected their mental well-being. The CDC says that approximately 13% of adults living in the United States either began to use substances or increased their use of substances during the pandemic.

"If you or a loved one are struggling with substance abuse, know that treatment options are available, and people do recover," said Scott Walker, M.D., MPH, a psychiatrist with Broward Health Physician Group. "The journey to recovery can take many forms and may include individual counseling, support groups, and even medications to assist with cravings."

The first step is identifying the problem. "Oftentimes, friends and family members can assist with this by speaking in an open and non-judgmental manner," Dr. Walker added.

Once you or your loved one are ready to take the next step, help is available. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has a 24-hour helpline that can connect you to local care that meets your needs (1-800-662-HELP). Other options include speaking with your physician about your substance use or attending a virtual support meeting through a community-based organization such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. In cases of an emergency, call 911 immediately.

To learn more about the behavioral health services available at Broward Health, visit [BrowardHealth.org/Services/Behavioral-Health](https://www.browardhealth.org/Services/Behavioral-Health). To find a physician, please visit [BrowardHealth.org/Find-Doctor](https://www.browardhealth.org/Find-Doctor).

Broward Health, providing service for more than 80 years, is a nationally recognized system in South Florida that offers world-class healthcare to all. The Broward Health system includes the statutory teaching hospital Broward Health Medical Center, Broward Health North, Broward Health Imperial Point, Broward Health Coral Springs, Salah Foundation Children's Hospital, Broward Health Weston, Broward Health Community Health Services, Broward Health Physician Group, Broward Health Urgent Care, Broward Health International, and Broward Health Foundation. For more information, visit [BrowardHealth.org](https://www.browardhealth.org).

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