

Something Can be Done to Prevent Addiction



If you knew of an easy way to help keep some member of your family from becoming addicted to alcohol or meth would you like to know how? Or if they were addicted and needed help getting free from their addictions? Or if there was something that could be done to keep them from going back into their addictions? Although no guarantee can be made that this will happen there is strong suggestive evidence that it can.

Fortunately it has been found that by making simple changes in lifestyle—what a person eats and drinks—some people can be helped. In the early 1940s scientists began doing studies on animals, especially rats, in which they gave them poor diets and let them choose between water or alcohol. Some of them began drinking alcohol instead of water.

In 1972 a study was reported in a medical journal in which rats were fed either a well balanced diet or a diet like a typical teenager would eat. The typical teen age diet is high in fat, sugar, salt and low in some important vitamins and minerals and fiber. Too many Americans, not just teenagers, eat this way.

The rats could choose to drink water or alcohol. The ones on the well balanced diet drank very little alcohol. Those on the teenage diet drank 5 times as much alcohol as the rats on the good diet. Then coffee was added to the teenage diet and the rats drank 13 times as much alcohol as the those on the good diet. In this study it was found that when a good multivitamin was added to the diet the rats drank very little alcohol. Later there was a study in which rats were fed a good diet and were given caffeine. Those rats began drinking alcohol.

As the years have gone by more studies have been done on animals and humans. It has been learned that caffeine can serve as a drug enhancer. This means that if a person uses caffeine it may increase the likelihood of becoming an addict to other drugs.

In 2008 a study was reported on 4,271 students from 10 universities in which they compared what happened if students drank only alcohol or they drank energy drinks (which contain significant amounts of caffeine) and sugar. The ones who drank the energy drinks and alcohol drank more alcohol. They also had more tragic consequences. They were more than twice as likely to take advantage of someone sexually or to be injured. In 2006 there was a study in high school students that showed that caffeine was one of the things that got them started using drugs.

Caffeine acts in the same part of the brain, what is called the nucleus accumbens, as do other drugs such as meth, and cocaine. It is just not as strong as those illegal drugs.

Since many of the animal experiments have been done in rats there are some who point out that rats are not the same as humans. Of course that is true but it is important to remember 3 things: 1. Many medical advances have come as a result of rat studies, 2. There is a significant correlation or comparison between what happens in humans, 3. The U.S. government has paid for many of these studies. They would not have done this if there was not significant correlation.

A very important illustration of the difference a change in lifestyle can make is what happened at the Appleton, Wisconsin Alternative High School over five years from 1997 to 2002. All the pop and junk food machines were taken out of the hallways. The school cafeteria changed its menu so that the only liquid served was water. Students were given fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads and meats using old fashioned recipes.

Before this change there had been violence, drugs, poor grades, people skipping school. They had to have a policeman on duty. Behavior significantly changed after the diet was changed. After this change the drug abuse level, the dropout rate, students being kicked out of school, the suicide rate, and weapons being brought to school all went down to zero. The thing that made this change was that they were getting a good diet without caffeine and soda pop. Anyone wanting to get a printed copy of the Appleton experiment can access this web site: www.feingold.org/PF/wisconsin1.html