



SpecialCare Hospital
Management

“Kratom is Addictive, Too”

-M. Walters, RN
Director of Clinical Services

Clinical Newsletter- Quarter 1, 2019

Kratom: Understanding the Next Generation of Developing Drugs

What is Kratom?

Kratom is a substance derived from the *Mitragyna Speciosa* trees found in tropical Southeast Asia. Kin to the coffee plant, Kratom has long been used in Asia for its stimulant effects- brewed as a tea or taken as a powder.

When taken in small doses, Kratom produces a stimulant effect. When taken in larger doses, sedative effects, much like with opioids, results in lethargy and depression of the central nervous system- which can lead to respiratory depression, nervousness, hallucinations, and constipation.

History of Kratom

Kratom has been present in the United States, first appearing around 2012. The substance was marketed to the college population as a “concentration” drug. Headlines in early 2017 reflected Kratom as a “savior” of the Heroin and opioid epidemic- citing that it can help Heroin addicts obtain sobriety and treat opioid addiction. Little was known at that point as the substance has yet to show promising results in the treatment of opioid addiction; rather, it has proven to be just as addictive and even contribute to relapse. Drugabuse.com refers to trading opioids for Kratom as “jumping from the fire into the frying pan.”

Developing Kratom Dependency

Kratom’s chemical properties closely resemble opioids in the way it binds to key opioid receptors. Since

Kratom has been promoted as a savior to addicts, the idea has been promoted that it is a mild drug which can help lessen the use of more iconic drugs like Heroin and Dilaudid. Subsequently, repetitive use through teas, caplets, or powders has resulted in a trade off between opioid dependencies. Kratom is now known to be physically addictive, too.

Kratom Withdrawal

In one study conducted by the NCBI, participants who reported Kratom use for 6 months or more were evaluated for withdrawal symptoms following cessation of the substance. Over half of the participants were noted to experience severe opiate withdrawal symptoms.

Symptoms of Kratom withdrawal include: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, restlessness, agitation, anxiety, hallucinations, tremors, muscle aches, and insomnia.

Legality

According to the Kratom Legality Map, Kratom is illegal in select states or counties. For state specific information, visit: www.Speciosa.org

New Vision™ and Kratom

New Vision™ can provide services to clients seeking relief from Kratom withdrawal through individualized evaluation and treatment plans. Recognized as an opioid-like withdrawal, the *Opioid Stabilization Protocol* would be appropriate for treatment of withdrawal symptoms. Medication tapers should be selected based on individualized need and used in combination with as needed medications.

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1. NIDA- WWW.NIDA.COM
2. SAMHSA- WWW.SAMHSA.COM

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Cascade of Care Model for Addressing Opioid Crisis

Defining the Cascade of Care Model?

The Cascade of Care Model (CCM) was developed in 2017 to manage patients with HIV and AIDS. It is believed that the associated tiers support addressing the crisis seen today.

In January 2019, NIDA published information that offered insight into an improved structure for identification and treatment of clients with an opioid use disorder. The structure encompasses four domains: prevention, identification, treatment, and recovery.

The CCM structured domains are aimed at early prevention, rapid identification, implementation of treatment and



maintenance of recovery. Each step has identified challenges which can be used to evaluate complications and promote clinical and policy interventions through state and federal initiatives. Research shows that each domain promotes improved treatment outcomes and reduces related diseases and deaths.

Identification of Inherited Traits in Addiction

Scientists have concluded that the risks associated with development of addiction is complex and includes both genetic and environmental influence.

Inherited variants change genetic function, very similar to development of other disease processes. Commonly known variances that place individuals at risk are seen in heart disease, cystic fibrosis, and even cancers.

A NIDA funded study made new discovery by checking recorded data of roughly 1.2 million people, while observing substance use behaviors and cross-referencing genetic make-up. Through the established databases, researchers from an international group measured behaviors which influenced addiction such as age of onset, duration of use, and regularity of consumption and compared it to life events like: education, physical characteristics, and diseases both active and at risk for development.

According to NIDA, “researchers found that there were over 400 locations in the genome and at least 566 variants within these locations...” that influence substance use and dependency.

NIDA hopes these efforts will bring scientists closer to identifying genetic clusters which are active in addiction.

Interested in learning more about New Vision™?

Contact Matthew Walters, Director of Clinical Services to schedule an introductory call.

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Coosa Valley Medical Center

-Autumn Byrd, BSN, RN

Region 1- AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, TX

Autumn was nominated by New Vision™ staff for her leadership, integrity, and patience. Service Coordinator, Donnell Lewis said “Autumn is a leader whom leads by example.



IC- Ida Jennings; Nurse: Autumn Byrd

She does not mind at all talking to the patient.” Autumn has been recognized for her willingness to go above-and-beyond to assure the New Vision service goes as smoothly as possible. New Vision™ at Coosa Valley Medical Center would like to

tell Autumn “ through your leadership and selfless giving of your time, you have really impacted the patients that utilize the service in such a way, other patients have felt comfortable reaching-out for help.”

Mena Regional Health System

-Terah Phillips, RN

Region 2-AR, IL, MO

Terah was nominated by New Vision™ staff for her patience and understanding. Intake Coordinator, Kelsie Jagers said “ Terah always sees our clients as deserving of care.” A



IC- Kelsie Jagers; Nurse: Terah Phillips

recent patient reported to New Vision™ that Terah had been compassionate and listened to her story, even when she was very busy. Terah has been recognized by several patients for her kindness.

Additionally, Terah’s compassionate care of patients has resulted in a better hospital perception of our population. New Vision™ at Mena Regional would like Terah to know “ we are so lucky to have you as part of the New Vision™ team! Thank you for all you do and keep up the good work!”

AllianceHealth Durant

-Bunnie Strand, BSN, RN

Region 3-KY, OH, OK, UT

Bunnie was nominated by New Vision™ staff for her compassion and empathy. Service Coordinator, Amanda Miller said “Bunnie took the time to sit and listen to the patient. She had a deep awareness of and showed sympathy for his suffering.” Bunnie has been recognized for her patience, empathy, and leadership. Bunnie said “I respect that they are here seeking help and I’ll do whatever I can to help the patient succeed on their road to recovery!” Bunnie empowers New Vision™ clients through good communication and positivity sayings “ It’s not easy, but worth the struggle!”



SC: Amanda Miller; Nurse: Bunnie Strand; IC: Michael Hempstead