

# The First Rule of Recovery

Remember that recovery from addiction doesn't stop when you stop using drugs.

**Creating a new life** for yourself is what makes your abstinence easier and long-term. By building a new life, you lessen the possibility that you will go back to old behaviors. This means acknowledging the things, people, and behaviors that used to get you into trouble.

Taking responsibility for your own actions is also important. This can be demanding, but satisfying.

**You have an opportunity** to transform your life. You will discover that the road of recovery leads to an inner peace and harmony that nearly everyone craves.

Here are some things to remember as you cope with the challenges of recovery and relapse:

## TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

If you have become dependent or addicted to prescription drugs, whether through recreational use or because of misuse of your own prescription, it may be very important to be carefully weaned off of those high doses of medicine.

Certain prescription drugs are very important in helping a person manage pain, but treatment needs to be adjusted by a doctor depending on a person's specific condition.

If a patient just stops taking the drug "cold-turkey", very dangerous withdrawal symptoms will occur.

The safest and healthiest way to recover is to "taper" the dose: a way to slowly lessen a drug's amount over time to prevent withdrawal reactions.

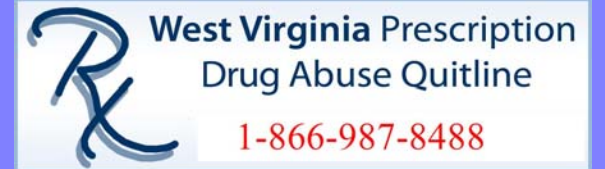
There are many resources for you to use when quitting prescription drug abuse. It is very important to have a support network of friends, family, and doctors to get you through this difficult time.

Call **1-866-WV-QUIT** for referral to a treatment center



West Virginia University  
Dept. of Community Medicine  
P.O. Box 9190  
Morgantown, WV 26506

Phone: 1-866-WV-QUIT  
Website: [www.wvrxabuse.org](http://www.wvrxabuse.org)



## Tools for Recovery

**WEST VIRGINIA PRESCRIPTION  
DRUG ABUSE QUITLINE**

Toll-free: 1-866-WV-QUIT  
24 hours, 7 days a week

## Take Care of Your Mind

You may feel as if there is a battle going on in your mind: part of you wants to use but part of you wants to stay clean. It is important to be alert to the thoughts and behaviors that signify mental relapse:

- Thinking about people, places, and things that remind you of drug use
- Glamorizing your past use
- Lying
- Hanging out with “friends” who use
- Daydreaming about using
- Thinking about going back to your “old self”
- Planning to use again and how to hide it from others

To help cope with these urges, remember these tips:

- Take your recovery one day at a time
- Wait: most urges do not last very long
- Talk to someone about your urges
- Distract yourself: be physically active, read, watch TV, play with your kids
- Attend self-help meetings like NA or AA

When you are feeling distressed and tempted consider **HALT**.

**Hungry**  
**Angry**  
**Lonely**  
**Tired**

If you are experiencing one of these, you are at risk for relapse. If you are experiencing two of these things, you are at *very high risk* for relapse.

Instead of masking the problem, think about why you feel the way you do and solve the problem the best you can. You're most likely hungry because you haven't eaten properly. You may be angry because you've had an argument with a family member or had a difficult day at work. You could be lonely because you are cut off from family or friends (maybe even because of your drug-using behaviors or because your family and friends are risk-factors for your drug use).

It is the end of the day when your strongest cravings occur, when you're tired mentally and physically. The reality of life prevents us from always avoiding these situations but if you are aware of them, you can solve them.

Visit [www.wvrxabuse.org](http://www.wvrxabuse.org) for more information

## Triple T: Tell The Truth

Addicts lie about getting drugs, using them, hiding the consequences and planning to use again, but you aren't just lying to your family, friends, employers, or the law. You are lying to yourself.

That is why recovery can be so hard: you don't know who you are or what you care about beyond drugs. Underneath your addiction could be a wonderful, interesting, loving person. When you are completely honest, you don't give your addiction anything to hide behind. Then, there are no trap doors to relapse through.

Remember, recovery is a “we” process.

### PP&T's to watch out for:

- People
- Places
- Things

Steer clear of your friends that use, your drug network, driving by your dealer's neighborhood, and your family's medicine cabinet. Keeping away from those things helps you to create a new life and new routines that make it easier not to use.

Toll-free: **1-866-WV-QUIT**  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
Visit [www.wvrxabuse.org](http://www.wvrxabuse.org) for more help with relapse prevention

## CHILL Chilling out Helps Increase Long Life

The main reasons people use drugs and alcohol are to avoid problems, relax, and reward themselves. In other words, people use drugs and alcohol to relieve stress and feel good.

Since the essence of recovery is that you must change your life, focus on what you need to change: the way you relieve tension.

It is not always easy to get rid of the things that cause us stress, but you can develop the coping skills that make a happy life possible. Addicts don't know how to do this without using, but you can learn. Relapse prevention depends upon learning coping skills.