

**EASTERN
WYOMING
COLLEGE**

About Alcohol

And

Other Drugs on Campus

EWC Employees

EWC CHEMICAL ABUSE POSITION STATEMENT

EWC is committed to helping all students and staff to fully realize their potential. To do this it is necessary that the educational process allow students and staff to make informed decisions about significant life issues.

One increasingly important issue in our society is the use of mood-altering chemicals. EWC realizes that college students are at a transitional period in their lives. This fact, coupled with the stress of academics and the independence of the college environment often leads students to experiment with alcohol and other drugs. We know that students cannot make full use of our total college program if they are harmfully involved with chemicals. Involvement with chemicals can seriously inhibit their capacity to learn and to function effectively in our college.

The primary responsibility of helping a student who is seriously involved with chemicals rests with the student himself. However, the potential for lasting personal damage exists unless the college acts in conjunction with the individual and his family to help all involved understand the complex nature of chemical dependency. It is necessary that our students, their families, and our instructors and staff be made aware of the danger inherent in making unwise choices about chemical use. It is also the intent of EWC to uphold state and federal laws pertaining to chemical use, and to provide students and staff a chemical awareness program.

Therefore, the EWC Board of Trustees supports the following three major components of EWC's assistance program:

1. Drug abuse prevention education and the promotion of wise choices concerning individual health.
2. An early intervention in the abuse process for the purpose of identification, evaluation, and when appropriate, referral for treatment.
3. A supportive college environment for students and staff who have been harmfully involved with drugs and/or alcohol, including those whose families are disrupted by chemical abuse.
*Chemical includes any mood altering substance, including alcohol.

EWC's Administrative Rule for Chemical Abuse 3.21.1

The following regulations of Eastern Wyoming College conform to the City of Torrington and Wyoming State Laws and Regulations affecting drug and alcohol use.

1. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited at EWC. Such an act is a crime under Wyoming State Laws.

2. Any person who sells, furnishes, or causes to be sold, furnished or given away any alcoholic liquor or malt beverage to any person under the age of 21 years, who is not his legal ward, medical patient, or member of his own immediate family, is guilty of a misdemeanor under Wyoming State law. Possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on the EWC campus, in dormitories, or at any college sanctioned events.
3. Any person under the age of 21 years who has any alcoholic or malt beverage in his possession or who is drunk or under the influence of alcoholic liquor, malt beverages, or a controlled substance on any street or in any public place is guilty of a misdemeanor under Wyoming State law.

Procedures for Enforcement

Any member of the College community who observes a violation of this policy or becomes aware of an individual with a chemical-related problem on campus is encouraged to seek assistance from the appropriate resources:

- Counselors
- Office of Student Services
- Office of Personnel

Procedures Regarding Violation of Chemical Abuse Policy

Employees whose unacceptable behavior is a result of substance abuse must undergo an evaluation in accordance with EWC policy 3.21. An immediate supervisor, appropriate Dean, and/or the College President shall decide following an evaluation, determination of consequences. The consequences for choosing to engage in behavior violating the rules for chemical abuse are as follows:

1. It has been determined that the employee has chosen unwisely and is in control of his/her behavior. He/She can choose to effect a change in the behavior. A warning, in writing, will be issued.
2. It has been determined that the employee has demonstrated a lack of control over behavior choices. College policy mandates identifying the cause so that he/she may regain control. Any one of the conditions may be imposed:
 - a. Referral for drug education
 - b. Referral for substance abuse treatment

- c. Verbal and written commitment of 90 days of abstinence from all mood-altering chemicals, and individual and/or group counseling
 - d. Suspension from work without pay until such time an evaluation proves worthiness to return
3. It has been determined that the employee's behavior is not appropriate for continued employment at this time and employment will be terminated.

Medical Withdrawal

Employees manifesting behavior dangerous to self or to others may voluntarily withdraw from employment or they may also be withdrawn from employment by official action from the college.

Information About Drugs

We live in a society where drug use is commonplace. We casually take aspirin, cold pills, and other over-the-counter medications. Many of us use caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol daily without a moment's thought that we are using drugs.

A huge variety of drugs are available to us. It is important to realize that every drug acts on many different locations in your brain and nervous system and can cause multiple effects. Some of these effects can be very serious, even deadly. No drug whether it is legal, illegal, prescription, or non-prescription is entirely safe. The decision to use drugs is a personal one, but should be based on a general awareness of the risks associated with the use of each drug.

Psychoactive or mood-altering drugs act on the central nervous system. They may increase activity (stimulants), decrease activity (depressants), or cause hallucinations (hallucinogens). The effects of a drug will depend on the dosage taken and the manner in which the drug is taken. In general, a higher dose will intensify the effects, both good and bad. Smoking or snorting a drug allows it to reach the brain in about 7 seconds; faster than an intravenous injection, and much faster than taking it by mouth.

An understanding of some terms is necessary when discussing drugs and their effects:

Tolerance means that your body has adapted to the drug and you need increasingly larger amounts to produce the original effects.

Dependence, or addiction, can be either psychological or physical, and is identified when a person cannot or feels they cannot function without the drug. In physical

dependence the body has made actual physical adjustments for the presence of the drug. Without the drug the person goes through physical withdrawal symptoms, which can be unpleasant, painful, and sometimes deadly. In a psychological dependence, a person may feel restless and anxious without the drug and actively seeks to use the drug repetitively. Psychoactive drugs may cause one and frequently both types of dependence. Whereas recovery from the actual withdrawal symptoms of a physical addiction takes place in a matter of days, recovery from a psychological addiction can take months, even years. More and more, the lines between physical addiction and psychological addiction are blurring. It is recognized that both factors must be addressed for a successful recovery.

Many who use drugs are poly-users, that is they use more than one drug at a time. If these drugs are of the same class, such as caffeine and nicotine, which are both stimulants, the total effect is much stronger. This potential effect is called synergism. Remember, combining drugs means you are also combining their dangerous effects. For example, the effect of combining alcohol and sleeping pills, two depressants, is synergistic, and the brain can be sedated to the point of death.

Depressants or "downers" depress the brain and nervous system. These drugs can reduce anxiety, induce sleep, and promote relaxation. They also cause slowed response time, impaired judgment, and poor coordination and motor skills. Undoubtedly, alcohol is the most common and frequently used depressant in our society. Other common depressants include tranquilizers such as Valium and Librium, and barbiturates such as Seconal, Nembutal, and Quaalude (Ludes). Users of depressants can develop tolerance and both physical and psychological dependence. Withdrawal symptoms can be serious. Driving or operating machinery while using these drugs is dangerous.

Narcotics are a class of drugs derived from the opium poppy and are used primarily for their pain relieving (analgesic) action. Opium, morphine, heroin, and codeine are in this class of drugs. Other analgesic drugs such as Demerol, Talwin, and Darvon and classified as synthetic narcotics. Recreational users of narcotics seek the euphoric and relaxing effects of these drugs. Narcotics can be taken as pills, injections, or smoked. Tolerance develops quickly, and physical dependence develops in a short time. Psychological dependence is also common.

Stimulants increase central nervous activity causing an increase in awareness, depressed appetite, and mild euphoria. They also increase heart rate and blood pressure, and can result in nervousness and hyperactivity. Insomnia, malnutrition, and even psychosis can result from long-term use of stimulants. Caffeine and nicotine are the most widely used stimulants in our society. When someone says they need a cup of coffee or a cigarette to "calm their nerves" they are actually seeking to stop withdrawal symptoms.

Cocaine and “crack” cocaine are intense short-acting stimulants. Cocaine products can be snorted, smoked, or injected. A frequent result of using cocaine is the “coke blues” – intense downs that occur after the euphoria or “high” wears off. Coke blues can cause the user to take repeated doses of cocaine and use alcohol and barbiturates between doses. Poly-use of drugs is common in cocaine users, and can lead to multiple dependencies.

Amphetamines such as Benzedrine (Bennies), Dexadrine (Dexies), and Methadrine, are known as speed or uppers. Many find themselves feeling fatigued and slowed after using amphetamines. A very dangerous new street drug known as “ice” or methamphetamine is making its way through our society. Ice is smoked and highly addictive. A hit of ice produces a high that can last as long as 14 hours compared to 15 minutes from crack cocaine. Ice also causes hallucinations, paranoia, and subsequent violent behavior. Severe depression and fatigue follows an ice high. The need for more of the euphoric feeling becomes very strong resulting quickly in addiction to the drug. Prolonged use can lead to dangerous reactions such as severe high blood pressure, respiratory and cardiac problems, and possible death.

Tolerance and psychological dependence to stimulants is common. Mounting scientific evidence points to actual physical dependence to stimulants as well.

Hallucinogens produce hallucinations or dream-like perceptions. The most common hallucinogens are LSD (acid), mescaline (peyote), psilocybin (mushrooms) and PCP (angel dust). Depending on the potency and dosage of the drug, effects can last from 8-12 hours to days. Sometimes panic reactions occur producing horrifying experiences. LSD can result in “flash backs” or re-experiencing some part of a trip – usually panic – days, months, or years later. PCP is a particularly dangerous drug because of its unpredictable effects. The psychotic episodes resulting from PCP are often unexpected and may cause violent and dangerous behavior. Because PCP is also an anesthetic, the user may feel little or pain during violent episodes.

Tolerance to hallucinogens can develop. Although dependence is not usually associated with these drugs, they are considered dangerous because of their unpredictable results. Since these drugs cause perceptual distortions and misperceptions, people using them can put themselves or others into dangers, even life-threatening situations.

Ecstasy is a psychoactive drug possessing stimulant and hallucinogenic properties. Ecstasy possesses chemical variations of the stimulant amphetamine or methamphetamine and a hallucinogen, most often mescaline. Ecstasy is frequently used in combination with other drugs. However, it is rarely consumed with alcohol, as alcohol is believed to diminish its effects. It is most often distributed at late-night parties called “raves”, nightclubs, and rock concerts. Ecstasy is taken orally and its effects last approximately four to six hours. Users of the drug say that it produces

profoundly positive feelings, empathy for others, elimination of anxiety, and extreme relaxation. Ecstasy is also said to suppress the need to eat, drink, or sleep, enabling users to endure two- to three-day parties. Consequently, Ecstasy use sometimes results in severe dehydration or exhaustion. While it is not as addictive as heroin or cocaine, it can cause other adverse effects including nausea, hallucinations, chills, sweating, increases in body temperature, tremors, involuntary teeth clenching, muscle cramping, and blurred vision. Ecstasy users also report after-effects of anxiety, paranoia, and depression. An overdose is characterized by high blood pressure, faintness, panic attacks, and, in more severe cases, loss of consciousness, seizures, and a drastic rise in body temperature. Overdoses can be fatal, as they may result in heart failure or extreme heat stroke.

Marijuana and its derivatives, hash and hash oil, are produced by the hemp plant. Marijuana is also known as grass, weed, pot, and dope, and is usually smoked in a cigarette form known as a “joint”. Marijuana produces a euphoric feeling and relaxation. The high will last 2-4 hours depending on the dose and potency of the marijuana. Short-term effects of this drug include distortion of time perception, increased heart rate, dilation of blood vessels, loss of short-term memory, and hunger. Psychomotor skills and visual perception are distorted as well, so driving or operating machinery while under the influence of this drug is dangerous. The long term effects include loss of motivation, lung damage, and an increased risk of lung cancer. In men marijuana decreases the level of testosterone, reduces the amount of sperm produced, and causes an increase in abnormal sperm. Heavy use in women and especially in teenagers can cause disruptions in the menstrual cycle. Smoking marijuana like smoking tobacco is linked to early fetal death, decreased birth weight, and increased infant death after birth. Tolerance and psychological dependence do develop with marijuana use.

A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO WOMEN: It has been well documented that alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, and cocaine use during pregnancy can cause serious and permanent damage to a developing fetus. A pregnant woman should avoid all drugs, legal or illegal, unless approved by her physician.

A WORD ABOUT DRUGS AND AIDS: Intravenous drug users are at risk for contracting AIDS through sharing needles and syringes with others. AIDS can also be transmitted through sexual activity and the effects of drugs can cloud our ability to make wise decisions about “safe sex”.