

P A V
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MEDICATION ASSISTED RECOVERY
FOR ALCOHOL



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MEDICATION ASSISTED RECOVERY: ALCOHOL

Medications can be a useful tool in the journey of recovery.

The medications that you may be offered here are those that are prescribed by addiction specialists.

These types of medications tend to work on the brain to readjust changes that have occurred during the addictive phase.

Pavilions provide medication-assisted detox in the community to suitable individuals who are physically dependent on alcohol.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN MEDICATIONS?

Chlordiazepoxide (Librium):

This medicine acts on the same receptor in the brain as alcohol. It is used to safely manage the alcohol withdrawal process on a reducing dose.

Not everyone who is drinking alcohol every day will need it. If you do, the dose and duration will be decided by one of our doctors according to your individual situation. A nurse will review your progress during a consultation each day.

Remember to tell the nurse if there is any difficulty with this medicine (for example, you are too shaky or sleepy during detox).

Vitamins

During heavy alcohol use the body can become low on vitamins that are essential to the healthy working of the body.

B vitamins are necessary for the healthy functioning of nerves in the body and in the brain and a number of complications can arise if they become low.

Vitamins are usually given by the oral route as it is more convenient but B vitamins are absorbed better by injection so this might be offered to you if you are particularly at risk of complications.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY DETOX?

Our Community Detox is called 'Forward'. It consists of:

Attending Richmond house Monday to Friday 9-12 for 2 weeks.

During this time you will be seen by a nurse who will review you on a daily basis.

This review will consist of daily breathalyser readings, administration of medication and taking of observations such as blood pressure and pulse.

After you have been seen by the nurse you will attend a recovery based group. This is an abstinence based closed group consisting only of other service users wishing to be abstinent from alcohol.

Acamprosate (Campral):

This is the 'relapse prevention medication' that tends to be the safest and most convenient to take.

There is some evidence that it might also protect the brain during detox and when taken regularly as prescribed might reduce cravings.

If we do prescribe it here it will be for the first two weeks and then your GP will be asked to continue.

WHAT ABOUT RELAPSE?

Medications as a 'helping hand' in preventing relapse

There are several medications that can help an individual to sustain their recovery.

There is no quick fix but these medications can certainly boost recovery in some situations.

Three different medications are recommended for relapse prevention in alcohol use:



Disulfiram

This is a medication that stops alcohol being broken down.

There is a severe and potentially dangerous reaction if this medication and alcohol are combined so it is important to avoid anything containing alcohol (including food, perfumes and medicines that contain alcohol).

This medication is not safe to take in some situations (for example liver failure and heart disease) and blood monitoring is needed regularly through treatment.



Naltrexone

Helps a little with relapse prevention by acting on the opioid system in the brain.

Like Antabuse it is not safe in some situations and regular blood monitoring is required. Naltrexone can also be used for relapse prevention in opiate dependence.



Acamprosate

See previous page.