



Local Rehab Exposes Reality of Post-Acute Withdrawal Syndrome in Opioid Recovery

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Greeneville, TN ? ReVIDA® Recovery is a local rehab that recently released a blog diving into post-acute withdrawal syndrome (PAWS) in opioid recovery. They have multiple facilities across Eastern Tennessee and Western Virginia, connecting many to medication-assisted treatment for opioid use disorders.

?PAWS refers to a series of withdrawal symptoms that continue to occur after the primary withdrawal period. To better understand the condition, it?s essential to differentiate between acute withdrawal and post-acute withdrawal.

?Acute withdrawal symptoms occur immediately after you stop taking a substance that you?re physically dependent on. Your body has become accustomed to functioning with your substance of choice as a part of your daily routine, and now it has to readjust. Acute withdrawal causes largely physical symptoms along with psychological side effects and usually lasts a couple of weeks at most.

?Post-acute withdrawal continues after the substance has left your body entirely. During PAWS, your brain has to adjust to functioning without substances and the hormonal changes they cause. These symptoms are primarily psychological and cognitive. The severity of the condition varies widely depending on the individual and their substance use history,? the article reads.

PAWS occurs as the brain attempts to reverse the effects of substance dependence. In opioid use disorder, opioids flood the brain with high levels of dopamine and endorphins by binding to specific receptors. Over time, the brain develops a tolerance, requiring increasingly larger amounts of opioids to achieve the same effect. Since the brain also produces these chemicals naturally during pleasurable experiences, opioid tolerance causes those naturally occurring levels to feel significantly lower, making it difficult to feel relaxed or emotionally balanced without them.

During recovery, the brain begins to relearn how to function without opioids, a process that varies widely depending on individual health and history with substance use. This adjustment period can lead to PAWS, marked by symptoms that come and go as the brain tries to stabilize its chemical balance. The experience often includes emotional ups and downs, with some days being more difficult than others.

?There are a variety of symptoms associated with PAWS. Recognizing your symptoms for what they are is the first step towards overcoming them. As stated above, the intensity of your symptoms will depend on your personal history with OUD. The longer you take opioids and the larger the quantities, the more likely you are to experience symptoms of this condition. Other factors may also impact how you experience PAWS, like co-occurring mental health conditions,? the article continues.

Symptoms of PAWS include cravings for opioids, difficulty focusing, poor memory, sleep disturbances, including insomnia and vivid dreams, anxiety or depression, intense mood swings, poor impulse control, brain fog or trouble thinking things through, irritability, aggression, or hostility, sensitivity to stress, trouble with fine motor skills, and low enthusiasm or a general sense of apathy.

There are effective ways to manage PAWS throughout recovery. A key way to do so is through medication-assisted treatment. Suboxone works using buprenorphine and naloxone. It provides similar feelings of opioids at a lesser level, while naloxone creates a ceiling effect. This can reduce symptoms of PAWS and reduce cravings. Therapy is also a component of successful recovery, both in group and individual settings.

ReVIDA® Recovery specializes in the treatment of opioid use disorders. Each of their locations offers Suboxone treatment as well as outpatient therapy programs. Their team helps with transportation, securing housing, food resources, and job connections. Scholarships are also available for those who qualify.

For those interested in learning more about ReVIDA Recovery, please call 423-631-0432 or visit their website.

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ReVIDA® Recovery Greenville

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