

UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 4.26.2024

Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu) to change your communication preferences. Thank you.

Thank you for your interest in the Center for Addiction Research - our mission is to accelerate scientific progress in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders and their consequences by fostering research collaborations across: 1) UC departments, colleges, and centers including Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; 2) Local, regional, and state community and governmental partners; and 3) Other academic institutions and industry."



UC/ Regional News

News from the Ohio Valley Node - IMPROVE Studies in Progress!

In October 2023 the NIH IMPROVE initiative approved funds to conduct four projects under the overall leadership of **Dr. John Winhusen [Director, Center for Addiction Research]**, current Lead Investigator of the CTN 0080 MOMs study. CTN investigators are preparing to conduct three research studies and one dissemination activity, described below:

CTN 0150: Personally-Tailored Opioid-overdose and Medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) Education (TOME; LI – Winhusen, OVN): This study is an intent-to-treat, open-label, randomized controlled trial planning to (1) evaluate the ability of TOME to increase MOUD and opioid-overdose knowledge in Pregnant and Post-partum (PP) persons; and (2) evaluate the ability of TOME to decrease MOUD-related internalized stigma and expected difficulty in avoiding drug use.

CTN 0080 A-1: Successful Recruitment and Retention in A Randomized Controlled Trial of Pregnant and Post-Partum People With Opioid Use Disorder (SUCCESS Study; LI – Smid, GIN). This ancillary study plans to perform qualitative interviews to identify successful strategies, facilitators, and barriers to recruiting pregnant individuals with opioid use disorder (OUD) and retaining them through the first year postpartum in the MOMs trial.

CTN 0080 A-2: Promoting Research with Mothers receiving OUD Treatment; a focus on Equity (PRoMOTE; LI – Schiff, NEC Node). This ancillary study plans to apply mixed-methods to investigate facilitators and barriers to treatment initiation of

medications to treat opioid use disorder (MOUD), trial engagement, and study retention in CTN-0080, with a focus on race and equity.

CTN 0080 A-3: Improved Messaging Strategies for MOUD For Underserved Populations of Pregnant and Postpartum Individuals With OUD (LI – Kropp, OVN). This project (not a research study) plans to develop innovative and meaningful education/messaging strategies that will target areas such as (1) addiction disease & NOWS, (2) the role of medications in the management of OUD and overdose prevention, (3) stigma and health system mistrust, and (4) PP persons rights to treatment. This project plans to involve researchers, patients, and community advisors to develop products specific to the target population (Hispanic, Black, and Native PP women, and those living in rural areas).

A personal look at substance abuse disorder and recovery

Most people in recovery will tell you that the decision to enter recovery must be made on one's own, but it is sustained through community. Mid-December 2017 was the moment for me. I find winters to be brutal in general. When the sun dwindles down to nothing, my muscle memory tends to revisit the depths of my past traumas, most with anniversaries in the late fall. And that particular winter, I felt like I barely had a fighting chance to make it through. It was also when I decided, smack-dab in the middle of the holiday season, that I needed help and needed to get control of my alcoholism once and for all. I was in my mid-thirties, fully employed, with a supportive family, and able to drive myself to my 12 Steps...

'Like a heroin horror story:' Kratom overdose risks on the rise in west Kentucky

PADUCAH — Over the years, the number of kratom retailers have been on the rise, with the pseudo-medication now available at smoke shops and convenience stores around the country. Kratom is derived from the kratom plant, which is native to Southeast Asia and has been used for centuries as a stimulant and to help people sleep. Marketed today as a dietary supplement, many manufacturers claim it can treat depression, pain, insomnia, and even opioid addiction, but physicians say in high doses it can be fatal. Dr. Allison Rains is a physician and the director of Emergency Services at Baptist Health Paducah and said they see several instances of kratom overdose every week. "Often, we'll see patients come...

National News

Alcohol-induced blackouts may be linked to how a person drinks, not just how much

Certain drinking behaviors beyond just the quantity of alcohol consumed may predict the likelihood a person will experience an alcohol-induced blackout, a condition where someone is conscious and engaging with their surroundings but will be unable to remember some or any of what occurred. While in this condition, people are at higher risk for a range of consequences, including violence or sexual assault. A study published in Alcohol, Clinical and Experimental Research found

that the speed with which college students become intoxicated, how long their intoxication levels are increasing, and their peak...

Low levels of alcohol may not be healthy after all, according to new analytical approaches

Low to moderate drinking may not be protective against certain health conditions, and "safe" alcohol use guidelines may be substantially off base. These are among the implications of a review of studies that use a novel research method. For most health conditions, the evidence that any amount of drinking increases risk is strong. For some other diseases, however, traditional data analysis yields a J-curve effect. In these findings, low-to-moderate drinking coincides with the lowest disease risk, while abstainers have a slightly higher risk, and heavy drinkers have a much greater risk. That's why a limited amount of red wine, which...

How young adults perceive the risk of a single drink versus risk in binge drinking

When drinking choices are perceived as "just one drink," with each single drink representing relatively slight risk, it may ironically lead to heavier drinking and alcohol-related harms. That's the finding of a novel study exploring the decision-making process around binge drinking. A better understanding of how people think about heavy episodic drinking could inform prevention and intervention approaches and help reduce the serious negative consequences of alcohol use. Young adults are especially vulnerable to high-risk drinking and its consequences; 29% are recent binge drinkers, and 15% meet the criteria...

Experts recommend an evidence-based public health approach to excessive alcohol use

Policymakers and public health officials have a critical role to play in reducing excessive alcohol use and alcohol use disorder, says the American College of Physicians in a new policy. "Excessive Alcohol Use and Alcohol Use Disorders: A Policy Brief of the American College of Physicians," published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, says that barriers need to be removed to accessing treatment and more needs to be done to reduce binge drinking and heavy drinking among young adults and other high-risk populations. "Excessive drinking has substantial societal costs, driving up spending on health care and the criminal..."

Stress activates brain regions linked to alcohol use disorder differently for women than men, finds study

When exposed to stress, people with alcohol use disorder engage parts of the brain associated with both stress and addiction, which may cause them to drink or crave alcohol after a stressful experience, suggest the authors of a study published in *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research*. The brain imaging study of people with alcohol use disorder also found that women's brains respond differently to stressors than men's brains, showing greater activation of the amygdala and areas

of the brain related to alcohol use disorder. The findings may improve understanding of the neural mechanisms associated with...

Drug, Alcohol Abuse Goes Untreated in Many Ex-Prisoners

THURSDAY, April 25, 2024 (HealthDay News) -- Most ex-cons are unlikely to receive substance use treatment following their release from prison, even though odds are high they are struggling with addiction, a new study finds. National estimates suggest as many as 85% of inmates leave prison with some form of substance abuse problem, researchers said. But only 17% of ex-cons on Medicaid in Virginia have been diagnosed with substance use disorders, and even fewer have been prescribed addiction-fighting medication, investigators found. "This research shows that many people aren't getting the medical attention they..."

Use of alcohol and e-cigarettes among youth 'alarming': WHO

The widespread use of alcohol and e-cigarettes among adolescents is "alarming", according to a report released on Thursday by the World Health Organization's (WHO) European branch, which recommended measures to limit access. Based on survey data from 280,000 young people aged 11, 13 and 15 in Europe, Central Asia and Canada, the WHO said it showed a "concerning picture" of substance use among young people. "The long-term consequences of these trends are significant, and policy-makers cannot afford to ignore these alarming findings," the health body said. The report found that 57 percent of 15-year-olds...

Can a drug like Ozempic help treat addictions to alcohol, opioids or other substances?

Semaglutide (sold as Ozempic, Wegovy and Rybelsus) was initially developed to treat diabetes. It works by stimulating the production of insulin to keep blood sugar levels in check. This type of drug is increasingly being prescribed for weight loss, despite the fact it was initially approved for another purpose. Recently, there has been growing interest in another possible use: to treat addiction. Anecdotal reports from patients taking semaglutide for weight loss suggest it reduces their appetite and craving for food, but surprisingly, it also may reduce their desire to drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes or take other drugs. But...

Cannabis legalization has led to a boom in potent forms of the drug that present new hazards for adolescents

Eventually, most adults reach a point where we realize we are out of touch with those much younger than us. Perhaps it is a pop culture reference that sparks the realization. For me, this moment happened when I was in my late 20s and working with adolescents in school settings to help them quit smoking. When other drugs would occasionally come up, I didn't understand some of the slang terms they used for these drugs. Many people may have that feeling now when the topic of cannabis comes up—especially in its different and newer forms. As a professor of psychology, I focus my research on substance use in adolescents...

Cannabis legalization and rising sales have not contributed to increase in substance abuse, study finds

The results of a new study, utilizing the most recent data on adolescent substance use to evaluate the effect of recreational cannabis legalization and retail sales on youth's use of cannabis, tobacco, and alcohol, appear in JAMA Pediatrics. The study authors—co-principal investigators Rebekah Levine Coley, a Lynch School of Education and Human Development professor; School of Social Work Professor Summer Sherburne Hawkins; and Christopher F. Baum, chair of the Economics Department—are among the first to evaluate associations between recreational cannabis legislation and recreational cannabis...

New study confirms community pharmacies can help people quit smoking

A new study shows community pharmacies may play a key role in helping people quit smoking. The findings came out in the article "Closing the Tobacco Treatment Gap," published in the 10th anniversary special issue of Pharmacy. The results provide valuable insights into the implementation of tobacco cessation services within community pharmacies while identifying barriers to further improvements. Tobacco use remains a leading preventable cause of death. Although two thirds of people who smoke would like to quit, many individuals trying to quit on their own are not successful. To address this...

Social media use linked to tobacco initiation among youth

The tobacco industry has long appealed to youth through targeted marketing that glamorizes smoking with imagery of candy-flavored products, celebrity endorsements, social settings, and other enticing tactics. That marketing approach appears to be particularly effective on social media, according to a new study led by Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH) researchers. Published in the journal Addictive Behaviors, the study found that frequent social media use was linked to an increased risk of youth using any tobacco product—including vaping—for the first time after one year. Youth with no prior...

Smoking cessation before laryngeal cancer treatment improves survival, retention of voice box, study shows

In a study of patients who smoked when they were diagnosed with laryngeal cancer, those who quit smoking before starting chemotherapy or radiation responded better to treatment, were less likely to need their voice boxes surgically removed, and lived significantly longer than those who continued to smoke. The research, from the University of Oklahoma, is published in the journal Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. The study's senior author, Lurdes Queimado, M.D., Ph.D., said the findings underscore the importance of integrating tobacco cessation programs into treatment plans for cancer of the larynx, an area...

Few young adults could administer naloxone to reverse fentanyl overdose

Even though fentanyl-linked fatal overdoses are soaring among young adults, a new survey of American college students found that just 1 in 7 knew how to administer the overdose antidote drug naloxone. Many who took the survey "reported high willingness to intervene during an overdose, yet only a small proportion knew how to administer naloxone, an easily learnable skill," said a team led by Christina Freibott, a PhD candidate in the Boston University School of Public Health. The findings were published April 22 in the journal JAMA Pediatrics. As Freibott's team notes, U.S. fatal overdoses linked to fentanyl-laced...

It's easier now to treat opioid addiction with medication—but use has changed little, study finds

For years, even as opioid overdose deaths dramatically increased, doctors and other prescribers in the United States needed special permission from the federal government if they wanted to prescribe buprenorphine, a medication that helps patients overcome opioid addiction and prevents fatal overdoses. That requirement, called an "X waiver," was eliminated on January 12, 2023, due to an item in a major federal budget bill. This meant that suddenly, any clinician who had a license to prescribe controlled substances could prescribe buprenorphine. Now, a new study by University of Michigan researchers looks at...

Adolescent Xanax exposure increases neurobiological sensitivity to opioids

A new study published in Scientific Reports sheds light on the lasting effects of the drug alprazolam, commonly known as Xanax, when used during adolescence. Using male mice as their subjects, the researchers discovered that exposure to this drug at a young age could enhance the animals' sensitivity to opiates, such as morphine, even long after the drug exposure has ceased. This research highlights the potentially negative long-term consequences of using certain medications during critical developmental stages. Benzodiazepines, including alprazolam, are frequently prescribed to treat...

Opioids During Pregnancy May Not Raise Psychiatric Risks for Offspring

THURSDAY, April 24, 2024 (HealthDay News) -- Prescription opioids taken during pregnancy are not associated with a substantial increase in risk of developmental disorders like ADHD in children, a new study has found. "A slightly increased risk of neuropsychiatric disorders was found, but this should not be considered clinically meaningful" because it was limited to mothers taking more than one opioid, prescribed high doses and using the drugs over longer periods of time, concluded the research team led by Dong Keon Yon, a professor of pediatrics with Kyung Hee University College of Medicine in Seoul, South Korea. About 7%...

A common pathway in the brain that enables addictive drugs to hijack natural reward processing identified

Mount Sinai researchers, in collaboration with scientists at The Rockefeller University, have uncovered a mechanism in the brain that allows cocaine and morphine to take over natural reward processing systems. Published online in Science on April 18, these findings shed new light on the neural underpinnings of drug addiction and could offer new mechanistic insights to inform basic research, clinical practice, and potential therapeutic solutions. "While this field has been explored for decades, our study is the first to demonstrate that psychostimulants and opioids engage and alter functioning of the same brain..."

Smartphone swabs provide convenient toxicology testing

A simple and convenient method to collect drug use data from the surface of a smartphone has been revealed for the first time in a new study published in Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (CCLM). By helping clinicians understand which drugs people are taking in certain contexts, the research could protect public health and improve the treatment of patients suspected of overdosing. Understanding the most common drugs in a particular area, who uses them, when they use them and in what contexts can help inform life-saving treatment decisions, but given the illegal nature of many recreational drugs, such...

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[PA-24-175](#)

[Mentored Research Scientist Development Award \(Parent K01 - Independent Clinical Trial Required\)](#)

[PA-24-176](#)

[Mentored Research Scientist Development Award \(Parent K01 - Independent Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[PA-24-177](#)

[Mentored Research Scientist Development Award \(Parent K01 Independent Basic Experimental Studies with Humans Required\)](#)

[PA-24-181](#)

[Mentored Clinical Scientist Research Career Development Award \(Parent K08 Independent Clinical Trial Required\)](#)

[PA-24-182](#)

[Mentored Clinical Scientist Research Career Development Award \(Parent K08 Independent Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[PA-24-183](#)

[Mentored Clinical Scientist Research Career Development Award \(Parent K08 Independent Basic Experimental Studies with Humans Required\)](#)

[NOT-DA-24-016](#)

[Phase-out and Termination of NIDA MERIT Awards for Established Investigators](#)

[NOT-DA-24-017](#)

[NIDA MERIT Awards for Early Stage Investigators \(ESI\)](#)

[PA-24-193](#)

[NIH Pathway to Independence Award \(Parent K99/R00 Independent Clinical Trial Required\)](#)

[PA-24-194](#)

[NIH Pathway to Independence Award \(Parent K99/R00 Independent Clinical Trial Not Allowed\)](#)

[PA-24-195](#)

[NIH Pathway to Independence Award \(Parent K99/R00 Independent Basic Experimental Studies with Humans Required\)](#)

[PA-24-201](#)

[Emergency Competitive Revision to Existing NIH Awards \(Emergency Supplement - Clinical Trial Optional\)](#)

[PAR-24-110](#)

[Interventions to Reduce Sleep Health Disparities \(R01 - Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

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