

Impact of narcotics is greater on mentally ill

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Narcotics have an irreversible effect on the brains of people already suffering from mental illness, according to Dr. Stéphane Potvin of the Université de Montréal affiliated Centre de recherche Fernand-Seguin at the Louis-H Lafontaine Hospital.

According to his research, some 33 to 50 percent of psychiatric patients also suffer from drug addiction. The study has shown that drug consumption leads to the deterioration of the cerebral structures. Dr. Potvin who has presents his findings as part of a conference at the Louis-H Lafontaine Hospital this week.

His research has shown that people suffering from mental illness, and more specifically schizophrenia, are more sensitive to the effects of drugs. "They become dependant more quickly and they tend to abuse drugs more easily. It is evident that drug use can worsen the symptoms of mental disease," says Dr. Potvin. "The odds that a mental disorder manifests itself in an individual can increase if he or she consumes drugs."

Dr. Potvin is also interested in the support that people suffering from mental illness and drug dependence can get. Resources aren't the same for both and detoxification centers have a very different approach than centers devoted to those suffering from mental disease.

As part of his presentation, Dr. Potvin and colleagues will address the issue of integrated treatment for those suffering mental disease and drug abuse.

Source: University of Montreal

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