

Older Adult Addiction Counsellors use a bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach, in offering services that focus on substance use for harm reduction or abstinence goals, and assist those affected by substance use.

- Individual and group counseling sessions are offered in your home, in the office or in an alternate location as requested.
- Information and Education sessions
- Support groups
- Referrals to other service providers, such as detox, residential treatment and recovery centres, or other specialized services as required.



**PUBLIC AND PROFESSIONAL  
REFERRAL LINE FOR  
VANCOUVER RESIDENTS**

**604-709-6785**

**Monday to Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

For more copies, go online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca> or email [pchem@vch.ca](mailto:pchem@vch.ca) and quote Catalogue No. GT.300.0L4  
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The information in this document is intended solely for the person to whom it was given by the health care team.  
[www.vch.ca](http://www.vch.ca)

## Older Adult Mental Health and Addictions Services



**WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU IF YOU  
HAVE CONCERNS REGARDING:**

- Alcohol
- Drugs (prescription, over-the-counter or other drugs)
- Tobacco
- Family members or friends who have problems with any of those listed.

**604-709-6785**

**Vancouver  
CoastalHealth**  
*Promoting wellness. Ensuring care.*

## Aging can be:

**ACTIVE, INVOLVED, FUN,  
HEALTHY, ALERT**

**However the use of  
alcohol and drugs can get in the  
way because:**

- As the body ages, it becomes more sensitive to the harmful effects of alcohol.
- It takes longer for the body to process alcohol and drugs as people age, which may result in a greater risk of damage to the organs.
- Some prescription medications can interact with alcohol in harmful ways.
- Seniors make up 13% of the population and account for 44.4% of all adverse drug reaction deaths.



**As alcohol and drug misuse  
can happen by mistake,  
it is important to know if you  
have a problem.**

**Some signs of an alcohol or  
drug related problem include:**

- Isolating from family and friends.
- Having trouble concentrating.
- Irritability, sadness, depression and anxiety.
- Unsteady gait, falls.
- Changes in sleeping patterns.
- Changes in appetite, digestive problems.
- Less attention to personal hygiene.
- Problems with memory.
- Unexplained bruises.

## Keep in Mind...

- There are times when even a small amount of alcohol can be too much.
- The recommended limit for people over 65 is one standard drink per day, and it is better not to drink every day. A standard drink is 12 oz beer, 1.5 oz spirits, 5 oz wine.
- Always consult your doctor or pharmacist first to find out if alcohol will negatively affect you or any medications, including herbal medications that you are taking.
- Bring a list of all medicines you are taking when you go to see your doctor or the pharmacist.
- Some medications can affect your safety when driving.
- If you have changes in your health, eg high blood pressure, you may need to make changes to your alcohol use.

