

The Meta Addiction Treatment Guide to: **Life After Rehab**



Meta
Addiction
Treatment

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Thank You

Thanks for downloading this guide on life after rehab. If you have recently completed an addiction treatment program, congratulations! If you are on your way to finishing a program, stay strong and know that you are on your way to a new life.

Many of our clients here at Meta Addiction Treatment wonder about what their life will be like “after rehab.” The truth is that addiction recovery is a lifelong process. To help walk you through your next steps, we’ve put together this guide on best practices we’ve found helpful.

Looking for more support as you head into your post-treatment life? Reach out to us anytime. You can contact us directly at [1-844-909-2560](tel:1-844-909-2560) or info@metaaddictiontreatment.com.

Wishing you a strong and lasting recovery,

The team at Meta Addiction Treatment



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Life After Rehab: What To Expect

Life after rehabilitation will be different from life before drug and alcohol treatment. Some of the changes you'll deal with will be minor, while other changes will feel monumental. As you deal with these changes, remember that life and growth tend to happen at the end of your comfort zone.

After you complete drug and alcohol treatment, you can expect to:

Develop A New Day-To-Day Routine

Creating a new routine is a key part of life after drug and alcohol rehabilitation. The old habits you had and the way you lived before treatment won't help you maintain your sobriety. Instead, you'll need new, positive habits. For example, to help keep your physical body strong, you'll need to eat well-balanced, nutritious meals. You'll also want to make sure you're getting adequate amounts of sleep, exercising regularly, practicing self-care, and taking time to manage stress, relax, and visit with supportive family members and friends.

The schedule you decide to create is up to you, but healthy habits you should consider including into your routine include:

- **A morning and nighttime routine**
- **Downtime and sober leisure activities**
- **Spending time outdoors**
- **Practicing gratitude**

As you develop a new routine, you should also expect to keep participating in certain aspects of drug and addiction recovery..

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Keep Attending Recovery Activities and Sessions

Even though you've completed a formal treatment program, you need to continue participating in recovery activities. Remember, addiction is a chronic condition. This means that just as you would continue to see a doctor to manage a heart condition or diabetes, you should keep attending recovery activities, treatment sessions, and follow-up and check-in meetings to manage your addiction.

This could look like:

- **Working with a therapist and attending weekly counseling sessions**
- **Attending group therapy meetings**
- **Visiting a doctor that specializes in addiction treatment**
- **Receiving injections that block the effects of drugs and alcohol**
- **Participating in biofeedback therapy sessions that help you manage stress and triggers**

All of these options represent continuing support, which is key to avoiding relapse. Continuing support can also include joining 12-step peer groups that celebrate sobriety and help individuals stay alcohol and drug-free. Even after you've finished drug and alcohol rehab, the accountability, support, inspiration, motivation, and encouragement you'll receive from continued participation in recovery activities can be significant and, in some cases, life-changing.

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Quit Hanging Out With Old Friends

Spending time with friends who encourage you to use drugs or alcohol won't help you maintain your sobriety. In fact, hanging out with these types of friends can quickly lead to relapse. So you should expect to stop hanging out with those friends and form a new group of friends that can support your recovery and sobriety journey instead.

Having a set of good sober friends can help you:

- **Let go of toxic, unhealthy friendships**
- **Avoid loneliness and boredom**
- **Develop and settle into a healthy, sober routine**
- **Enjoy sobriety by introducing you to different types of sober fun**
- **Stay motivated when recovery becomes challenging**
- **Stay on track and remain abstinent**

If you're not sure how or where to find sober friends, look for support groups, recovery meetings, volunteer opportunities, or at some of the places you visit for sober fun. Start by getting involved in your community. The wider your circle of support, the more secure you'll feel in your recovery.

Build A New Social Life

You should also expect to stop participating in activities that may have triggered or contributed to your drug or alcohol use. This can include:

- **Hanging out in bars**
- **Places that trigger stress**
- **Attending drug parties and raves**

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Now that you're drug and alcohol-free, you need to fill your time with activities that can help you avoid relapse. Some hobbies you might want to consider participating in instead can include:

- **Joining a sports team**
- **Learning to play an instrument**
- **Painting or drawing**
- **Swimming**
- **Surfing**
- **Rock climbing**
- **Writing stories**
- **Gardening**
- **Photography**
- **Cooking**
- **Singing, dancing, or making music**
- **Learning a new language**
- **Playing video games**
- **Attending conventions**
- **Watching and reviewing movies**
- **Starting and growing a YouTube channel**
- **Playing video games**
- **Volunteering**

These activities can help you relieve stress and discover passions you never knew you had. The important thing to remember is that you don't have to be high or drunk to enjoy life.



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Deal With Cravings

Unfortunately, cravings don't stop the moment you complete a drug or alcohol rehab program. They can occur weeks, months, and sometimes years after you receive addiction treatment. So you should expect to deal with them. The good news is there are several effective ways you can manage cravings without giving in to them.

In addition to knowing what triggers your cravings and avoiding those people, places, and things, some of the most effective ways to manage cravings include:

Challenging the thought.

Behind every craving, there's a thought. For example, cravings are often accompanied by the thought that "one little drink or dose won't hurt." Challenging the thought encourages you to stop and challenge that particular thought. Remind yourself that one drink and one dose can, in fact, hurt your progress, family, career, self-worth, physical health, and lifestyle, because "just one" usually leads to a lot more. Continue to challenge the thought behind the craving until the craving passes and you're able to remain sober.

Urge surfing.

This mindfulness technique believes that cravings and similar urges are like waves, rising in intensity, peaking, and then crashing. Here's how the process works. When you feel the urge to drink or use drugs, pinpoint the part of your body that's most affected by the craving. Next, explore what you feel. Is your chest tight? Is your back in pain? Inhale and exhale. Then visualize the part of the body that's affected by the craving as you continue to breathe deeply. As you focus on what's happening physically and psychologically, imagine yourself successfully riding a wave and repeat phrases such as "I can ride this out" or "I will get through this." Eventually, the craving will pass.



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Look For Signs of Relapse and Pay Close Attention To Your Mental Health

Addiction doesn't happen overnight and it doesn't go away overnight. That's why you have to have your guard up at all times. You need to understand who or what makes you vulnerable. If feeling sad and lonely makes you crave drugs or alcohol, stay connected to others. If feeling powerful and happy triggers addictive behavior patterns for you, make sure you have an accountability partner with you when you experience celebratory moments. Most of all, take care of your mental health. Having poor mental health can easily lead to self-medication which can, in turn, lead to relapse. Taking care of your mental health can help you avoid that kind of downward spiral.

Some of the best ways to take good care of your mental health include:

- **Getting good quality sleep**
- **Eating well-balanced nutritious meals**
- **Getting plenty of sunlight**
- **Managing your stress in a healthy way**
- **Doing activities you enjoy**
- **Doing things for others**
- **Asking for help when you need it**



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Learn The Significance Of Saying “No”

Addiction thrives on impulsive behavior. That’s why a huge part of developing a successful life after rehab involves learning how to tell yourself and others “no.” If you’re like most people, saying no probably feels a little awkward or wrong. But saying no can protect your mental health, preserve your energy, and help you maintain healthy boundaries. That doesn’t mean saying no will come easily to you, though.

Humans are social creatures who like to be accepted and feel like they are a part of a group. The desire to preserve relationships can compel you to say yes to things you don’t want to do or shouldn’t do because you don’t want to be seen as problematic, disappoint someone, or hurt their feelings. But when you do things you don’t want to do, you can end up feeling regretful, hurt, frustrated, or resentful. Those feelings can negatively impact your mental health and increase your risk of relapse. The good news is saying no is a skill you can sharpen, and the more you do it, the more natural it will feel.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

- **Express gratitude for the request.** Phrases like “I’m honored,” “I greatly appreciate you asking,” and “You coming to me means a lot,” help convey admiration before you say no.
- **Say no nicely.** You can be kind, appreciative, and respectful when you decline a request.
- **Be clear and direct.** A wishy-washy or flimsy response can make people feel like they can bombard you with their demands. So be clear, so everyone understands what you’re trying to say.
- **Give a brief explanation, if you want.** No is a complete sentence. However, if you would like to justify your no, keep it short and sweet.
- **Offer an alternative.** Even though you’re declining a request, sharing other recommendations still allows you to be helpful.

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Learning to say no won't be easy, but developing the habit can:

- **Create space in your life and schedule for you to rest and recharge**
- **Free you up to engage in activities that align with your current goals**
- **Help you set and maintain healthy boundaries that help promote long-term recovery**

Saying no can provide you with more control so you can build a fulfilling, meaningful, and sober life on your terms.

Learn The Significance Of Saying “No”

In addition to continuing to attend therapy sessions, you'll need to start applying the skills you've learned in those sessions. Even though everyone's therapy sessions are different, you'll most likely need to develop and incorporate the following skills into your day-to-day life:

- **Problem solving skills.** You need to be able to solve problems without using substances if you want to live a thriving, sober life. So, get used to identifying the problem, developing possible solutions, and analyzing the pros and cons of each solution before acting.
- **Social skills.** You also need to know how to deal with people and maintain healthy relationships to stay sober. Social skills can help you communicate your needs and wants clearly, navigate tricky social situations, land exciting career opportunities, and feel happier overall. Don't hesitate to incorporate these skills into your home, family, and social life.
- **Stress management skills.** Even though stress is a part of everyday life, it can be detrimental to your recovery if not handled properly. Luckily, the techniques you learned in therapy can help you deal with stress without turning to drugs or alcohol. Some skills you might consider adopting include guided imagery, deep breathing, yoga, meditation, and progressive muscle relaxation.
- **Emotional regulation skills.** Knowing how to effectively manage your emotions can be the difference between long-term sobriety and relapse. That's why you should start incorporating emotional regulation skills into your daily life. Get used to noticing and naming what you feel. Practice mindfulness. Do the opposite of what you feel. Stop. Take a break. Observe what you're feeling. Proceed mindfully.

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Strengthen Your Body By Staying Physically Active

When you stop using drugs and alcohol, you may be left feeling anxious or depressed. Feeling this way can make you want to self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. Being physically active can help trigger the brain to release endorphins, making you feel better. Exercising regularly can also help:

- **Reduce stress**
- **Improve the quality of your sleep**
- **Boost your energy levels**
- **Improve your mood**
- **Strengthen your immune system**

All of these benefits can help prevent relapse. In fact, research suggests that exercising consistently can increase a person's abstinence rate for substance use by 95 percent.

Eat Foods That Encourage Long-Term Recovery

Abusing substances harms the body and often leads to irregular eating and a poor diet. Proper nutrition can help supply the body with energy and help you maintain healthy organs to fight off disease and infection. A balanced diet can also help boost your brain health. You don't have to schedule your entire day around food, but you should expect to stick to regular mealtimes. You should eat foods that can help you maintain long-term recovery, including:

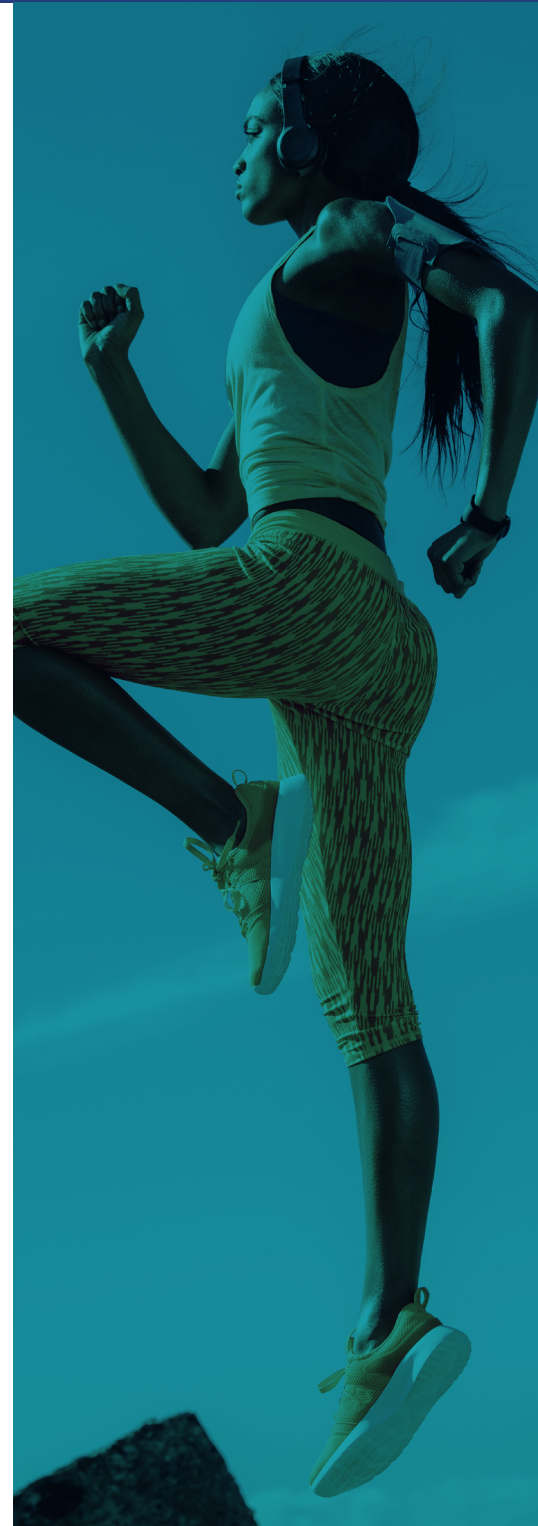
- Lean proteins such as white-flesh fish, plain Greek yogurt, beans, lentils, white-meat poultry, lean beef, shrimp, egg whites, and bison.
- Complex carbohydrates such as brown rice, legumes, black beans, oatmeal, kidney beans, green peas, sweet potatoes, and whole-grain breads and pastas.
- Foods high in dietary fiber such as broccoli, berries, avocados, apples, popcorn, potatoes, and nuts.
- Foods that have high amounts of Zinc, Vitamin A, B, and C

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Set and Accomplish SMART Goals

Last, but certainly not least, you should expect to set and accomplish goals that are SMART, meaning they should be:

- **Specific.** Ask yourself what you want to accomplish and why you want to achieve it. Be specific.
- **Measurable.** You should be able to track the progress of this goal and determine how you'll know when it's been accomplished.
- **Achievable.** Your goals should be realistic and you should have the resources to attain them.
- **Relevant.** Your goals should align with your values, desires, and personality.
- **Time-bound.** Have a deadline for your goal.



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Helping You Live An Enjoyable, Sober, and Thriving Life

At Meta Addiction Treatment, our mission is to equip and empower our clients with the knowledge and support they need to obtain and maintain long-term recovery. Sobriety is a life-long journey that will require some changes in your lifestyle. These changes may be difficult to adjust to at first, but will be worth it in the end. Our clinical resources and aftercare program can help you stay sober and live an enjoyable, healthy, purposeful, thriving, and sober life.

As always, we're available 24 hours per day at [1-844-909-2560](tel:1-844-909-2560) or info@metaaddictiontreatment.com.

