

# The "A" WORD

## Language Matters

When words are used inappropriately to describe individuals with a substance use disorder, it not only negatively impacts the cultural perception of their disease, but creates stigma that can stop people from seeking help. Language matters. Let's replace terms like "addict" and "junkie" with smarter language that aligns with the science. Replace the "A" word with "individuals with a substance use disorder."

Dos	Don'ts
Substance Use Disorder	Substance abuse/dependence
Individual with a Substance Use Disorder	Addict; Drug abuser; Junkie; Druggie
In recovery; In remission	Clean; Staying clean
Has a Substance Use Disorder	Drug habit
Negative drug test; Not currently using substances	Clean drug test
Positive drug test; Currently using substances	Dirty drug test



Sources: