



# Overview of Co-Occurring Disorders

## KEY TERMS



### WHAT IS A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD)?<sup>1</sup>

A diagnosed pattern of symptoms resulting from the use of a drug that you continue to take, despite experiencing problems as a result.



### WHAT IS A MENTAL ILLNESS?<sup>2</sup>

A **mental illness (MI)** is an umbrella term for a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder that can vary in impact and impairment.

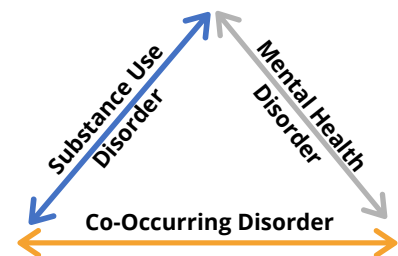


### WHAT IS A CO-OCCURRING DISORDER (COD)?<sup>3</sup>

A condition when a person has both a mental health disorder and an alcohol or drug problem.

## WHY THE CONNECTION?<sup>4</sup>

- **Overlapping risk factors** (e.g., genetics, exposure to trauma, environmental factors, etc.)
- **Self-Medicating** (Individuals with a MI may use substances to cope with symptoms)
- **Drug-Induced Brain Changes** (Heavy substance use can cause changes to areas of the brain and increase someone's likelihood of developing symptoms of a mental disorder)



Visit our website <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/c3od2a/>

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# References

- 1 Defining substance abuse and substance use disorders. Rural Health Information Hub. <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/substance-abuse/1/definition>. Accessed August 28, 2021.
- 2 NIDA. Common Comorbidities with Substance Use Disorders. National Institute on Drug Abuse website. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/common-comorbidities-substance-use-disorders>. April 1, 2020. Accessed April 10, 2020.
- 3 Co-occurring disorders and other health conditions. SAMHSA. <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/medications-counseling-related-conditions/co-occurring-disorders>. Accessed August 28, 2021.
- 4 Kelly, R. Co-occurring disorder and dual diagnosis mental health treatment centers. AmericanAddictionCenters.org. <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/co-occurring-disorders>. Published August 5, 2021. Accessed August 28, 2021.