

## SUMMARY CHART OF THE AMEN CLINICS SIX TYPES OF ADDICTS

Type	Symptoms	Brain Findings/ Neurotransmitter Issue	Supplements	Medications
1. Compulsive Addicts	overfocused, worrying, trouble letting go of hurts	increased AC (anterior cingulate)/low serotonin	Serotonin Mood Support (5-HTP, inositol, saffron), or St. John's wort	SSRIs, such as Prozac, Zoloft, or Lexapro
2. Impulsive Addicts	impulsivity, bored, easily distracted	low PFC (prefrontal cortex)/low dopamine	Focus & Energy Optimizer (green tea, Rhodiola) or L-tyrosine	Stimulants such as Adderall or Ritalin
3. Impulsive-Compulsive Addicts	combination of types 1 and 2	high AC plus low PFC/low serotonin and dopamine	5-HTP plus green tea and rhodiola	SSRI plus phentermine or stimulant
4. Sad or Emotional Addicts	sad or depressed mood, winter blues, carbohydrate cravings, loss of interest, sleeps a lot, low energy, self-medicates to improve mood	high limbic activity, low PFC/check vitamin D and DHEA levels	SAME Mood & Movement Support, vitamin D, or DHEA if needed	Wellbutrin
5. Anxious Addicts	anxious, tense, nervous, predicts the worst, self-medicates to calm	high basal ganglia/low GABA levels	GABA Calming Support (GABA, B6, magnesium)	Anticonvulsants, such as Topamax, Neurontin
6. Temporal Lobe Addicts	Temper problems, mood instability, memory problems, learning disabilities	abnormal TL	GABA Calming Support (GABA, B6, magnesium) for calming, or Brain & Memory Power Boost (huperzine A, acetyl-l-carnitine, vinpocetine, ginkgo) for memory	Anticonvulsants, such as Lamictal for mood stability, Aricept or Namenda for memory enhancement

# Know Your Brain Type

## *Learn the Six Different Types of Addiction*

Based on our brain imaging work with tens of thousands of patients, we have identified six types of addicts based on brain patterns. Knowing which type you are is essential to finding the best treatment plan for your own specific needs. To help you find your type, take the Unchain Your Brain Master Questionnaire. Here is a summary. To help you find your type, take the Unchain Your Brain Master Questionnaire and write your type or types here:

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### **Type 1: Compulsive Addicts**

People with this type have trouble shifting their attention and tend to get stuck on thoughts of gambling, Internet porn, food, or some other substance or behavior. Regardless of what these people are addicted to, the thinking pattern and basic mechanism are the same. They tend to get stuck or locked into one course of action and have trouble seeing options.

The most common brain SPECT finding in this type is increased anterior cingulate gyrus activity, which is most commonly caused by low brain serotonin levels. High-protein diets and stimulants, such as Ritalin, usually make this type worse. Interventions to boost serotonin in the brain are generally the most helpful. From a supplement standpoint, 5-HTP, inositol, and saffron (found in my Serotonin Mood Support), L-tryptophan, or St. John's wort are helpful, as are the serotonin-enhancing medications, such as Prozac, Zoloft, and Lexapro.

#### ***Behavioral interventions that boost serotonin to help compulsive addicts:***

- Exercise to allow more of the serotonin precursor L-tryptophan to get into the brain.
- If you get an addiction-oriented thought in your head more than three times, get up and go do something to distract yourself.
- Make a list of ten things you can do instead of the addictive behavior so you can distract yourself.
- People with this type always do better with choices, rather than edicts. Do not tell them what they are going to do; give them choices.
- Avoid automatically opposing others or saying no, even to yourself.

### **Type 2: Impulsive Addicts**

People with this type have trouble with impulse control even though they may start each day with the intention of refraining from their addictive behaviors. The most common SPECT finding for this type is low activity in the PFC, likely due to low levels of dopamine. The PFC acts as the brain's supervisor and is involved in judgment, impulse control, planning, and follow through. When it is underactive, people can be easily distracted, bored, inattentive, and impulsive. This type is often seen in conjunction with ADD and is more common in males.

High-carbohydrate diets and serotonin-enhancing medications, such as Prozac, Zoloft, or Lexapro, or supplements, such as 5-HTP, usually make this type worse. Interventions to boost dopamine in the brain are generally the most helpful. From a supplement standpoint, green tea and rhodiola (found in Focus & Energy Optimizer), and l-tyrosine are helpful, as are stimulant medications, such as Adderall and Ritalin, which are commonly used to treat ADD.

***Behavioral interventions that boost dopamine to help impulsive addicts:***

- Exercise, which helps increase blood flow and dopamine.
- Clear focus -- write your goals in your One-Page Miracle and look at it daily.
- Outside supervision -- have someone you trust check in with you on a regular basis.
- Avoid impulsively saying yes to offers of alcohol, drugs, food, or whatever your particular addiction is. Practice saying, "No."

**Type 3: Impulsive-Compulsive Addicts**

People with this type have a combination of both impulsive and compulsive features. This type is common in people with bulimia. The brain SPECT scans tend to show low activity in the PFC (associated with impulsivity, likely due to low dopamine levels) and too much activity in the anterior cingulate gyrus (associated with compulsivity and low serotonin levels). This pattern is common in the children and grandchildren of alcoholics.

Using treatments that boost either serotonin or dopamine alone usually makes the problem worse. For example, using supplements or medications that increase serotonin only calms the compulsions but makes the impulsivity worse. Taking supplements or medications that raise dopamine levels only improves impulse control but increases the compulsive behaviors. In my experience, I have found that people with this type do best with treatments that raise both serotonin and dopamine. For example, combining green tea (for dopamine) and 5-HTP (for serotonin) or Ritalin (for dopamine) and Prozac (for serotonin) can be helpful.

***Behavioral interventions that boost both serotonin and dopamine to help impulsive-compulsive addicts:***

- Exercise.
- Set goals.
- Avoid automatically opposing others or saying no, even to yourself.
- Avoid impulsively saying yes.
- Have options.
- Distract yourself if you get a thought stuck in your head.

**Type 4: Sad or Emotional Addicts**

People with this type often use alcohol, marijuana, painkillers, or food to medicate underlying feelings of depression, boredom, or loneliness. This type is more commonly seen in women. For some people, these feelings come and go with the seasons and tend to worsen in winter. Others experience mild feelings of chronic sadness, called dysthymia. Still others suffer from more serious depressions. The typical SPECT findings associated with this type are hyperactivity in the deep limbic system and low activity in the PFC.

When depression is mild, it can often be treated with natural supplements like SAME (found in my SAME Mood & Movement Support), in addition to exercise, dietary changes, and psychotherapy. For more serious cases, antidepressant medication may be required. Taking vitamin D can also be beneficial for people with depression, especially for people whose addictions worsen or are triggered during the winter months, a condition called seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

Having low levels of vitamin D, known as the “sunshine” vitamin, has been associated with depression, memory problems, obesity, heart disease, and immune suppression. Vitamin D deficiencies are becoming more common in our society for two reasons: we are wearing more sunscreen and spending more time indoors. In an Amen Clinics weight-loss study completed in 2010, we tested the vitamin D levels of more than thirty participants. I was shocked to discover that everybody’s levels were low, and this study took place in sunny southern California!

Other natural treatments for depression include bright light therapy, which has also been found to effectively treat SAD, the natural supplement SAME (in dosages of 400 to 1,600 mg), and the hormone DHEA. Be careful with SAME if you have ever experienced a manic episode, and take it early in the day as it has energizing properties and may interfere with sleep. DHEA is a master hormone that has been found to be low in people with depression and obesity.

***Behavioral interventions that boost mood to help sad, or emotional, addicts:***

- Exercise to increase blood flow and multiple neurotransmitters in the brain.
- Kill the ANTs (automatic negative thoughts) that steal your happiness.
- Write down five things you are grateful for every day (this has been shown to increase your level of happiness in just three weeks).
- Volunteer to help others, which helps to get you outside of yourself and less focused on your own internal problems.
- Surround yourself with great smells, such as lavender.
- Try melatonin to help you sleep.
- Work to improve your relationships.

**Type 5: Anxious Addicts**

People with this type tend to use alcohol, marijuana, painkillers, sleeping pills, or food to medicate underlying feelings of anxiety, tension, nervousness, and fear. More commonly seen in women, this type tends to suffer physical symptoms of anxiety, such as muscle tension, headaches, stomachaches, nail biting, heart palpitations, and shortness of breath. People with this type tend to predict the worst and may be excessively shy or easily startled. The SPECT finding that correlates to this type is too much activity in the basal ganglia, likely due to low levels of GABA.

Interventions that boost GABA are generally the most helpful, and include taking B6, magnesium, and GABA (found in my GABA Calming Support). Relaxation therapies can also be helpful to calm this area of the brain.

***Behavioral interventions that boost GABA and calm the brain to help anxious addicts:***

- Exercise.
- Try relaxation exercises, such as:
  - meditation
  - prayer
  - hypnosis
  - deep diaphragmatic breathing exercises
  - hand-warming techniques
- Kill the anxious ANTs.
- For sleep, try self-hypnosis or my Restful Sleep formula that contains melatonin, GABA, valerian, magnesium, and B6.

**Type 6: Temporal Lobe Addicts**

People with this type tend to have problems with temper, mood swings, learning problems, and memory problems. Abnormal activity in the temporal lobes is commonly due to past head injuries, infections, a lack of oxygen, exposure to environmental toxins or it may be inherited. The SPECT findings are decreased activity in the temporal lobes, sometimes we also see excessive increased activity.

Treatments to stabilize activity in the temporal lobes may involve boosting the calming neurotransmitter GABA or the memory and learning neurotransmitter acetylcholine, a higher protein diet, and completely eliminating sugar. Ways to boost GABA include using supplements, such as our GABA Calming Support, which contains GABA and magnesium, or anticonvulsant or anti-seizure medications, like Lamictal. Ways to boost acetylcholine in the brain which can help with memory and learning, include using either supplements, such as huperzine A and acetyl-l-carnitine, contained in our Brain & Memory Power Boost formula, or medications such as Aricept or Exelon. Together, these strategies can help with temper control, mood stability, learning, and memory.

***Behavioral interventions that normalize temporal lobe activity and boost dopamine to help temporal lobe addicts:***

- New learning.
- Preventing further head injuries.

### Do You Have More Than One Type?

Having more than one type is common, and it just means that you may need a combination of interventions to help you unchain your brain. Type 3 Impulsive-Compulsive Addicts is actually a combination of Type 1 Compulsive Addicts and Type 2 Impulsive Addicts. It is common to have Type 1 mixed with Type 4 Sad or Emotional Addicts or with Type 5 Anxious Addicts. In those cases, we may mix 5-HTP for Type 1 with SAME for Type 4 or GABA for Type 5. Again, it is always smart to discuss these options with your healthcare provider or treatment program. If he or she does not know much about natural treatments, consult a naturopath or a physician trained in integrative medicine or natural treatments.

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*Check your type or types in the left-hand column.*

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### Step 4