



Longbranch
Recovery

INTENSIVE OUTPATIENT PROGRAMS

The Comprehensive Guide to Healing From the Roots On Your Own Terms

When caring for a plant, more isn't always better. Too much sunlight or too much water can turn the hardiest specimen into a wilting shadow of its former self. In a similar manner, healing the mind, body, and spirit of a human being from the roots requires a delicate balance of nourishment, pruning, and care.

Addiction treatment that is more expensive, more time consuming, and more complicated isn't always more effective. In fact, intensive outpatient programs consisting of just nine hours per week have been proven to be just as powerful as comprehensive residential treatment for some individuals. Could intensive outpatient programming be a good fit for you or a loved one struggling with addiction? What happens in IOP, anyways? Consider this your comprehensive guide to everything you need to know.



What is IOP?

Intensive outpatient programs for substance abuse are more of a recent development than residential rehab – but they’ve still been around for many decades. At the core, IOPs offer the same kind of robust, dual-diagnosis programming as residential treatment, but on a reduced schedule with less support.

Intensive outpatient program patients attend sessions several days a week, for a few hours each time. In total, the weekly commitment can range from nine to 15 hours. In between sessions, each client returns to their home environment. This structure allows patients to continue working, attending school, caring for family, and otherwise completing their daily responsibilities while pursuing addiction treatment.



Because of that structure, there is much less support from the treatment program as compared to residential addiction treatment. For example, a patient attending nine hours of IOP per week still has 159 hours per week to contend with. Patients lacking structure and a safe home environment may struggle with that kind of freedom. On the other hand, this format allows patients to practice their new recovery skills in the real world immediately. IOPs do provide a measure of structure and accountability to support early recovery, while also allowing for autonomy.

Attending a local IOP in between the responsibilities of “normal” life also makes the transition out of treatment smoother. When you finish treatment, you’ll already have built a support network and recovery relationships right in your own backyard, making the next phases of life in recovery that much easier.

What Happens in IOP?



Intensive outpatient programs are built upon the same principles as residential addiction treatment. Upon beginning treatment, each patient's clinical team meets with him or her to learn more about their challenges, needs, goals, and treatment history. From there, the clinical team develops an appropriate treatment plan.

A typical treatment plan involves a mix of modalities designed to approach addiction from a trauma-informed, dual diagnosis perspective. For example, IOP clients meet one-on-one with counselors, participate in group therapy sessions, receive extension education on relapse prevention and life skills, and more.

The entire IOP treatment plan also includes aftercare — planning for life after treatment. The clinical team works with clients to identify local recovery resources like 12 Step meetings, medical care, and more resources for early recovery.





Who Should Consider IOP?

For the right candidate, IOP can be just as effective as residential addiction treatment. In some cases, however, opting for IOP over rehab could be disastrous. The best way to learn whether IOP is appropriate for you or a loved one is to call our caring admissions team to discuss your needs. In the meantime, these checklists could be a helpful start.

You're a Good Fit for IOP if You Are...

Stepping down from residential treatment. IOP is often an excellent next step in the continuum of care.

Able to stay clean and sober with a little extra support. Abstinence is essential for realizing the maximum benefit from your treatment.

Dealing with some mental health challenges. IOP for substance use disorder addresses the roots of substance abuse, including mental health issues.

Able to find transportation to your scheduled sessions.

You're Not a Good Fit for IOP if You Are...

In need of medically managed detox.

Suffering from significant medical issues.

Lacking a safe, recovery-supportive home environment.

Unable to stay clean and sober for at least a few hours at a time.

Of course, IOP is not the only option for effective and healing addiction treatment. If IOP is not a fit for you, reach out to our team and we'll help you find an appropriate solution that can help you heal.

Does IOP Work?

Many peer-reviewed scientific studies have found that IOP can be just as effective as residential addiction treatment – for the right people. Our veterans in particular can benefit from the support of an intensive outpatient program. According to one national study, veterans who attend IOP after detox are more likely to be alive two years later than those who don't.

IOP doesn't just help you cut down on your drinking or drug use; it helps you heal your body, mind, spirit, and family – from the inside out. The end result is not just a life without addiction, but a happier, more peaceful life and one that you're grateful to live.



How Can I Pay for IOP?

IOP is a wonderful option for people with financial concerns regarding treatment. Not only are intensive outpatient programs much less expensive than residential treatment overall; but also, they are more commonly covered by insurance companies as well. In fact, some insurance companies may request that people attempt a course of IOP before leveling up to residential treatment if required.

Every insurance plan is different, though, so the best way to learn about your options is to speak with the experts. Our admissions team has years of experience working with a variety of insurers to help make addiction treatment affordable for those who need it.



Ready to Get Started?

If you have more questions about IOP or are ready to explore intensive outpatient programs for yourself or for a loved one, reach out to us at the phone number below. Our caring team is standing by to help – whenever you're ready.



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