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New ways to control drug addiction

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Drug addiction manifests as a compulsive drive to take a drug despite serious adverse consequences. This aberrant behavior has traditionally been viewed as bad 'choices' that are made voluntarily by the addict. However, recent studies have shown that repeated drug use leads to long-lasting changes in the brain that undermine voluntary control. This, combined with new knowledge of how environmental, genetic and developmental factors contribute to addiction, should bring about changes in our approach to the prevention and treatment of addiction.

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