

ITO 2023 Conferences: Dr Radu Tincu combats 5 false claims about drug use

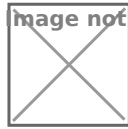


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Dr. Radu Tincu, a primary physician in Intensive Care and Toxicology, spoke at the 2023 International Meeting of Orthodox Youth (ITO) Conferences held in Timișoara, Romania, about the growing scourge of drug use among young people. On this occasion, he challenged five false claims about drug use.

“I’ve wondered if drug addiction is just a problem of the body, because we often focus on treating the symptoms of these people. And, by talking to young people and drug addicts, I have come to the conclusion that it is rather a problem of the soul,” he said.

Here are the five false claims the doctor has encountered most often in his work. He countered them with arguments on Saturday, September 2, 2023 in Timișoara, in front of a large audience of young people attending the International Meeting of Orthodox Youth (ITO) 2023.

5 false claims about drug use

“I’m free to do what I want!” FALSE

“The question is how can you be free when you are enslaved by a psychoactive substance? How can you be free when you wake up at two in the morning in withdrawal and go out in the street to buy your amphetamine pill?” answered Dr Radu Tincu.

“Freedom has nothing to do with taking drugs. On the contrary, when you become addicted to drugs, you have lost your freedom.”

“There are mild drugs that we can all take and nothing happens to us.” FALSE

“Any substance can kill you, it just depends on how much you put into your body. Thus, even the ‘ordinary’ marijuana can kill a person through overdose and especially through the vegetative complications it can cause, going as far as cardiac arrest,” explained Dr Radu Tincu.

3. “I use drugs occasionally and it is enough for me, there is no risk to use more” FALSE

“The pharmacological phenomenon called tolerance occurs. That is, the body gets used to these substances and you will consume more and more in order to get that state. Unfortunately, when you reach the maximum you can introduce into the body, you will start to diversify the substances”, answers Dr Radu Țincu.

“You saw that in the recent case of the young man from the seaside accident: six substances were identified simultaneously, which shows that, over time, you will end up making all kinds of cocktails that are extremely dangerous for your health.”

4. “Drugs are not addictive. I can quit anytime and I don’t need your help.” FALSE
“Drugs are addictive because they act on receptors, they act on our brain structures,” explains Dr Radu Țincu.

“Think about it, we develop addictions with things that don’t even enter our body: addiction to shopping, addiction to activities around us that we don’t interact with pharmacologically.”

“It’s clear that these substances, which act on brain receptors, are going to be addictive. The first addiction is psychological. You feel good, that’s why you took that drug. You feel good and you want to repeat that feeling the next day,” the doctor added.

“Later, within a few months, depending on the type of substance, you will also have a physical addiction. That is, your receptors will ask every day for the substance you have accustomed them to for so many months.”

5. “I use ethnobotanicals, or legal drugs that are not harmful.” FALSE
“Why are they dangerous and why are they preferred by young people, unfortunately? Because they are cheap. They cost around RON 10,” said Dr Radu Țincu.

“But what young people don’t know is that they are neither legal nor natural, they have nothing to do with the idea of botany. They are mostly, more than 99%, synthetic substances, which have an extremely high brain toxicity. These substances do, plastically speaking what we all know: ‘fry’ the brain.”

“They release excitatory neurotransmitters that simply destroy synapses. On the medium and long term, the effects are all the more negative the earlier we start consuming,” the doctor warned.

“If we use narcotic substances from the age of 13 or 14, when the nervous system has not completed its development yet, this will lead to an overall decrease in

intellectual capacity. All the studies tell us that the IQ of these children and their school performance are lower than those who don't use drugs."

"And on the longer term, all studies tell us that young people who use from adolescence onwards have behavioural disorders with aggression and self-harm, and the incidence of mental illness in adulthood is higher compared to the non-using population."

„The Church and the Hospital, in the fight against drugs, can make the essential synergy that we need, because one treats the body and the other the soul. And if the soul of these children is affected, the presence of the Church is needed," said the doctor.

"The Church must be part of preventive public education about drugs, because drugs are rather a matter of the soul."

More than 3,500 young people aged between 16 and 35 took part in the 2023 International Meeting of Orthodox Youth (ITO), organized in Timișoara, Romania, between August 31 and September 3, 2023.

They came from all the dioceses of the Romanian Patriarchate (including the Romanian communities around the country and those in the diaspora), but also from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Orthodox Churches of Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Poland, Albania, the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia and the Archdiocese of Ohrid and North Macedonia.

The next edition of this initiative of the Romanian Patriarchate will be held in Bucharest, in 2025, when the Romanian Orthodox Church celebrated 100 years of autocephaly.

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