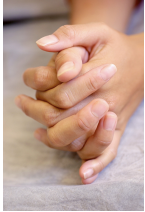


**Elizabeth Vargas, ABC '20/20' Anchor, Enters Rehab for Alcohol Dependence**

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Elizabeth Vargas, probably best known for her in-depth investigative reporting on ABC's 20/20, is in treatment for alcohol dependence, according to a statement released by the anchor on Wednesday.

"Like so many people, I am dealing with addiction," Vargas said. "I realized I was becoming increasingly dependent on alcohol and feel fortunate to have recognized it for the problem it was becoming."

Vargas, 51, hasn't appeared on ABC since mid-October. She has apparently been in an undisclosed treatment facility for a few weeks.

"I am in treatment and am so thankful for the love and support of my family, friends and colleagues at ABC News," said Vargas. "Like so many others, I will deal with this challenge one day at a time. If coming forward today gives one other person the courage to seek help, I'm grateful."