



Employee NEWSLETTER

Employee Assistance Program
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The Workplace Opioid Addiction Crisis

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When we think of opioid addiction, emaciated addicts shooting heroin in alleys may come to mind. But according to the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), surprisingly it's working adults who make up the majority in the surging opiate epidemic, addicted by way of a doctor's prescription.

Pain medications such as hydrocodone, oxycodone, vicodin, dilaudid, and morphine, are having a devastating impact on people who fall under its addictive spell, and one in three opioid prescriptions are being abused.

In fact, in 2012 alone there were 259 million opioid prescriptions written. With today's population, that's enough for 80% of Americans to each have their own bottle! What may have started as an honest attempt at pain management has escalated for many into a health crisis.

Opioid addiction's damage is extensive, impacting individuals and their families and friends, and costing employers billions through an addicted person's absenteeism, poor productivity, mistakes, and workplace accidents. Drug-influenced workers are not only hazardous to themselves, but their actions can significantly endanger their co-workers, especially if they hold safety-sensitive positions.

Do you think you know someone who is addicted to opioids? If so, here's how you can help:

Recognize the Signs of Opioid Addiction

Use Symptoms	Withdrawal Symptoms
<p>PHYSICAL: Marked drowsiness, confused or disoriented, constricted pupils, dramatic mood shifts, social withdrawal</p> <p>ON THE JOB: Declining productivity and performance, frequent absences, prolonged lunch hours and breaks, work accidents, carelessness with safety, poor memory</p>	<p>FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS: Nausea, muscle aches, runny nose, abdominal cramping, and excessive sweating</p> <p>OTHER SYMPTOMS: Sleeplessness, anxiety, high blood pressure, dilated pupils, blurry vision</p>

Refer to the EAP for Help

If you, a co-worker, or someone else you know is struggling with opioid addiction, please know that there is help. Don't wait until something disastrous happens--accidents, injuries, job termination, or a relationship break-up--reach out to your EAP for support and treatment resources.

The EAP is a confidential and free service staffed by licensed professional counselors who are available 24/7 to offer guidance, telephonic support, and resources. For many people, calling the EAP is a first step towards hope and help.

So, while it may be difficult to talk about your own addiction or your concerns about someone else, you might actually be saving a life.

<http://www.seattlemag.com/article/pain-point-taking-opioid-addiction-problem-seriously>

<http://www.castlighthouse.com/typ/the-opioid-crisis/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/11/health/prescription-painkillers-seen-as-a-gateway-to-heroin.html>



Healthy Employees. Healthy Companies.™

Your EAP service is free, confidential and available 24/7 to help you balance your work, family, and personal life.