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Remember
About 2.3 million emergency room visits were made in 2010 because of reactions to drugs. Narcotic pain relievers, also known as opioids, accounted for over 400,000 of these visits.

(SAMHSA, 2012).

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Employee Wellness: Drug Free Workplace

Alcohol and drug abuse by employees cause many expensive problems for business and industry ranging from lost productivity, injuries and an increase the health insurance claims. The prescription drugs most often abused include painkillers, sedatives, anti-anxiety medications and stimulants.

Abuse of alcohol and other drugs not only impacts performance at work, it also affects people emotionally, behaviorally and physically. Notify your supervisor immediately if you suspect someone may have an addiction problem.

Performance Effects:

- Inconsistent quality of work
- Lowered productivity
- Increased absenteeism
- Careless mistakes
- Errors in judgment
- Taking unnecessary risks
- Disregard for safety
- Long lunch periods and early departures

Emotional Effects:

- Aggression
- Burnout
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Paranoia
- Denial

Behavioral Effects:

- Slow reaction time
- Impaired coordination
- Slowed or slurred speech
- Irritability
- Excessive talking
- Inability to sit still
- Limited attention span
- Poor motivation and lack of energy

Physical Effects:

- Weight loss
- Sweating
- Chills
- Smell of alcohol

Seeking Help

What Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are available

- An EAP can help employees decide what to do if they have a problem with alcohol or other drugs
- An EAP also can help an employee decide what to do if someone in his/her family or workgroup has a problem
- Conversations with an EAP are confidential

If EAP services are not available, help may be available from:

- Community hotlines
- Self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, etc.
- Community mental health centers
- Private therapists or counselors
- Addiction treatment centers





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The earlier you identify a repetitive motion problem, the more likely you are correct the problem.

Report discomfort, pain or numbness to your supervisor immediately.



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Ergonomics: Understanding Musculoskeletal Injuries

A musculoskeletal injury (MSI) is an injury or disorder of the muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, nerves, blood vessels or related soft tissue arising from exposure to risk factors such as awkward postures, repetitive motions and forceful exertions.

The following are some of the most common MSIs:

- **Tendonitis** - inflammation of the tendons
- **Tenosynovitis** - inflammation of the synovial sheath
- **Carpal Tunnel Syndrome** - results when the median nerve is compressed, either from the swelling of tendons and sheaths or from repeated bending of the wrist

Risk factors that may lead to MSIs are:

- **Repetition** - long or concentrated hours of repetitive motion including typing
- **Posture** - long hours of sitting in the same position while typing, especially if it is in an uncomfortable or poorly supported position
- **Lack of Rest** - intensive hours at the keyboard with few breaks

Symptoms of MSIs:

- Tingling or numbness in the hands or fingers
- Pain in fingers, hands, wrists, or even shooting up into the arms or forearms
- Loss of strength or coordination in the hands
- Numbness or discomfort in the hands which wakes you up at night

Stages of cumulative MSIs:

Stage 1: Mild discomfort, present while working but disappears when not working. Does not affect work performance or daily living tasks.

Stage 2: Pain is present while working and continues when not working. Begins to affect daily living tasks.

Stage 3: Pain is present all the time. May not be able to complete simple daily tasks.

The best prevention is to limit the time you spend doing the same motion over and over.

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Remember

With many fall-from-height incidents involving the misuse of ladders, it's becoming increasingly important to be educated on their proper usage.

Preventing falls from a height

Don't take shortcuts when it comes to safety

When there's a job that needs to be completed, we often feel a pressing need to get it done fast. It's important to remember, however, that the job will not be done well if it is not done safely. Here are some tips to help you prepare when working from a height, whether it be a ladder, roof or scaffolding.

Plan Ahead

- First, determine if working from a height is absolutely necessary or if there are any engineering controls that could be used to remove the risk
- Before starting working, divide up the tasks among your coworkers and determine what safety equipment will be needed
- Make sure you have the necessary equipment available to do the job safely and are properly trained on how to use it
- Scan your work area for potential hazards before starting the job
- Make sure you have level ground to set up your equipment
- If working outside, check the weather forecast ahead of time in case of inclement weather

Use the Right Equipment

- Not every ladder or scaffold is appropriate for every job – use the correct tool for the job
- Use equipment as intended—never use a folding ladder when it is closed, don't create makeshift scaffolding out of ladders and boards, etc.
- Ensure that stepladders have a working locking device to hold the front and back open
- Never use old or worn equipment
- When trying to reach a roof, make sure the ladder extends three feet higher than the roof's edge
- Ladders used to access another level should be securely tied
- Never tie multiple ladders together to make them longer, unless they are designed for such a purpose
- Follow the same safety standards at work and home:
 - Do not stand on a chair or other piece of furniture, especially one with wheels, when trying to reach something high
 - If you do not have the proper equipment available, look into purchasing or renting it from your local hardware or home services store—do not attempt to make it yourself
 - Keep ladders in good condition and inspect them before use – for example, a stepladder with missing feet could cause it to be unsteady and hazardous to use

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Driving Safety

Understanding the distracted brain

The brain cannot process two complex thinking tasks simultaneously. As it switches from a cell phone conversation to driving and back again, the brain becomes overloaded.

The Facts

- Nearly one out of four crashes, or more than 1 million crashes per year, involve drivers distracted by cell phones
- Drivers talking on cell phones – handheld or hands-free – are four times as likely to crash
- Drivers who text increase their likelihood of a crash by 8 to 23 times
- Hands-free devices offer no safety benefit when driving
- Cognitively distracted drivers can miss up to 50% of their driving environment, including stop signs, pedestrians and red lights

Tips to stay safe

- Make a personal commitment to drive cell free
- Turn your phone off or put it on silent while driving so you are not tempted to answer it
- Speak up when you are in the car with someone who uses a cell phone while driving – ask if you can do it for them, or if it can wait
- Change your voicemail message to reflect that you are either away from your phone or driving, and that you'll call back when you can do so safely
- If you are talking to someone who you know is driving, tell him/her to hang up and call you later
- Pull off the road to a safe area or ask a passenger to make or take a call for you
- Allow voicemail to handle your calls and return them at your convenience

Remember

**Hands-free devices
are no safer than
handheld devices
because they
do not eliminate
cognitive distraction –
the distraction
to the brain.**

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Emergency Preparedness: In Case of An Emergency

Remember

An effective response during an emergency depends on the quality of planning and training that occurs before a situation arises.

An emergency can occur at any place or any time and the best way to be prepared is to have a plan. Your workplace should have an emergency plan and you can do your part by educating yourself on the plan and taking safety training and drills seriously.

Do you know...

- The threats or hazards your organization could potentially face, such as:
 - Natural disasters – tornados, earthquakes, floods etc.
 - Fires, chemical spills, explosions etc.
 - Medical emergencies – heart attacks, broken bones etc.
 - Acts of violence or terrorism
- What your organization's emergency plan is – for organizations with 10 or more employees, your organization must have a written plan otherwise the plan may be communicated orally
- The signs and signals of different emergencies – sirens, whistles, bells etc.
- That you should respond immediately when an alarm is sound regardless of it is a drill or a real emergency – every second counts and you should refrain from going back to your workspace to collect personal items
- The potential routes to take to evacuate your building – in case one exit is blocked in an emergency, it's always best to have a second exit to try
- To always keep exit routes free of clutter so they can be easily accessed at a moment's notice
- Where your designated meeting place is located for after an evacuation – it is very crucial to be accounted for after an evacuation so someone doesn't needlessly put themselves in danger to go back in the building to find a person who is thought to be missing
- How to report an emergency, including the proper phone number to call
- Where your nearest firm alarm and/or fire extinguisher is located and when and how to use them
- If your organization has first responders trained in first aid and CPR or who to contact in a medical emergency
- The names of people or departments to contact should you have a question about your organization's plan

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Summer Heat-related Illness

A healthy body temperature is maintained by the nervous system. As the body temperature increases, the body tries to maintain its normal temperature by transferring heat. Sweating and blood flow to the skin help us keep our bodies cool. A heat-related illness occurs when our bodies can no longer transfer enough heat to keep us cool.

Tips to stay safe during extreme heat

- Listen to local weather forecasts and stay aware of upcoming temperature changes
- Eat light – the more calories you take in, the more body heat you produce
- Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water before work and throughout the day
- Drink at least 8 ounces of fluid per half hour
- Avoid liquids that contain alcohol, caffeine or large amounts of sugar
- Choose the proper type and amount of clothing – cotton allows skin to breath and absorbs sweat
- Take frequent breaks in shady areas
- Always wear a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher
- Apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outdoors
- If you take medicines regularly, ask your doctor for advice about hot-weather activity and your risk of getting a heat-related illness
- Get trained in first aid to learn how to treat heat-related emergencies

Don't sweat through the symptoms

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Headache
- Weakness
- Heavy sweating
- Clammy skin
- Dizziness
- Light-headedness
- Confusion
- Nausea and vomiting may occur

If you or someone you know experiences these types of symptoms, lay the worker down in a cool area with his or her legs raised. Remove excessive layers of clothing. Give up to 1 liter of water. Do not give anything to drink if the worker vomits. Cool the worker with cold, wet cloths and a fan. If symptoms persist seek medical attention.

Remember

Recognizing the symptoms of heat-related illnesses can mean the difference between life and death.

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