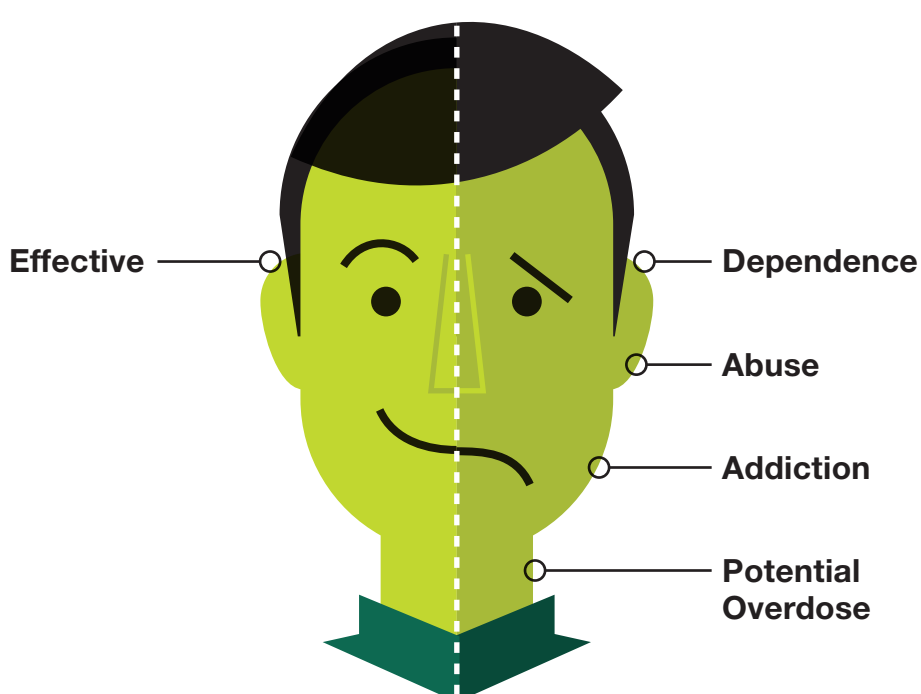


A Hidden Workplace Epidemic

Opioid prescription painkillers' impact on employers and their employees

Prescription painkiller abuse continues to impact healthcare costs, workplace safety and employee productivity.

The two faces of prescription medications

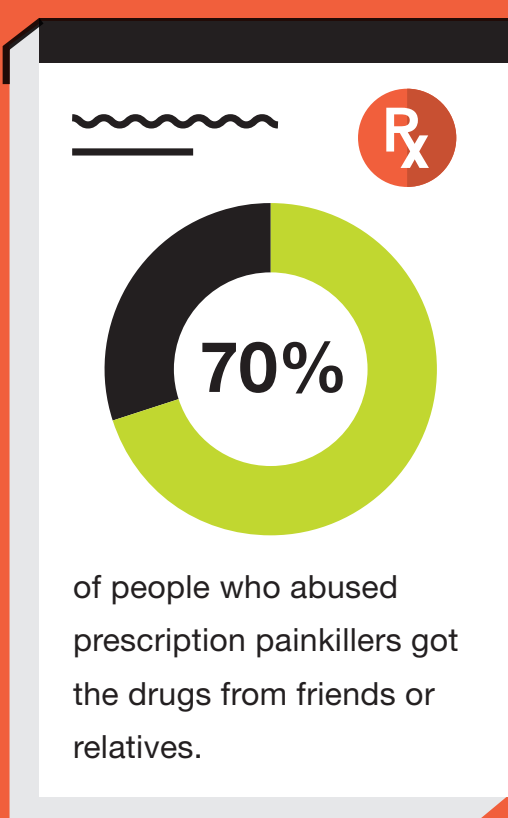


In 2010, **7 million Americans** reported using prescription drugs in ways other than prescribed.



Drug overdoses now cause more deaths than car crashes, and prescription painkillers contribute to more deaths than any other type of drugs.

Common brands of opioid painkillers: **VICODIN** **PERCOCET** **OXYCONTIN**

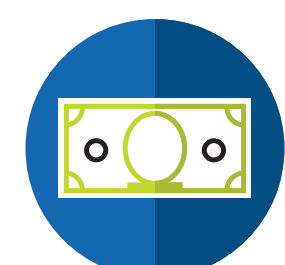


Employees may be struggling with an addiction they never intended to have.

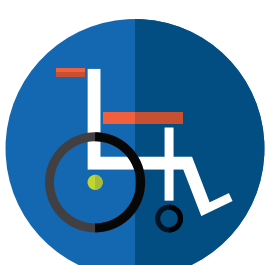


Prescription painkillers' effect on the workplace

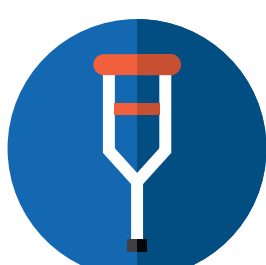
When painkillers are misused in the workplace, there could be an increase in:



Worker's compensation costs



Length of disability



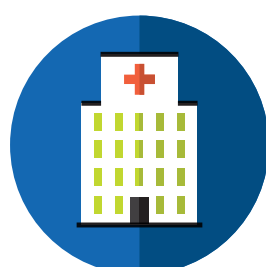
Risk for incidents, injuries and errors



Cost of insurance fraud



Cost for screening and testing



ER visits and other medical care



Cost for intervention and treatment

A costly issue

Prescription drugs account for about **19%** of worker's compensation medical costs.



In 2009, Oxycontin was the top drug in worker's compensation, as measured by dollars paid.

Common workplace risks associated with prescription painkiller use:



Driving vehicles to / from / at work



Operating machinery / equipment



Making critical errors



Productivity (pace, focus and concentration)

What can employers do?

- Partner immediately with your prescription and health plan providers to help gate-keep, monitor and intervene on the use of these prescription drugs.
- Revise your Drug-Free Workplace Policy to protect your employees and reduce liability. Require employees to report their use of prescription medications that can cause drowsiness or impairment.
- Ensure that employee drug testing includes the most commonly prescribed opioid painkiller drugs.
- Remind employees of confidential help available through an Employee Assistance Program.
- Educate employees about safe storage of these medications, proper disposal and risks of sharing these powerful drugs.



Get the facts. Learn how to help your employees and your company, and promote a safe work environment.

Sources:

- Injury Facts®, 2013 edition, published by the National Safety Council
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
- NCCI Research Brief — Workers Compensation Prescription Drug Study: 2013 Update
- Prescription for Peril — Coalition for Insurance Fraud
- Business Insurance White Paper — Opioid Abuse and Workman's Comp 2012

