

OPIOIDS AT WORK

EMPLOYER TOOLKIT



Opioids: FAQs and Stats To Know

Opioid overdoses are at an all-time high, with no sign of slowing down. More than 47,600 people died in 2017 from opioid related overdose, 90% of which are accidental.ⁱ More than 130 people die every day.

SOURCE: [Injury Facts](#)

For the first time in recorded history, a person's odds of accidentally overdosing on an opioid are greater (1 in 96) than dying in a motor vehicle crash (1 in 103).

SOURCE: [Injury Facts](#)

One in four Americans has been directly impacted by the opioid crisis. Either they know someone who has an opioid use disorder, know someone who has died from an overdose or they have an opioid use disorder themselves.

SOURCE: [NSC National Public Opinion Poll, 2017](#)

For the majority of pain patients, opioids are not the most effective way to relieve pain. Research shows a combination of over-the-counter pain relievers ibuprofen and acetaminophen offers the most effective relief.

SOURCE: [Evidence for the Efficacy of Pain Medications; National Safety Council, 2015](#)

Everyone who takes opioids is at risk of accidental overdose. Taking too much of an opioid pain medication can cause your breathing to slow and potentially stop, causing a potentially fatal overdose.

SOURCE: [NSC Report "The Psychological and Physical Side Effects of Pain Medications", 2015](#)

Only 20% of Americans are very confident that they can spot the signs of an overdose. Naloxone administration, the medication that temporarily reverses an opioid overdose, is essential to saving lives.

SOURCE: [NSC National Public Opinion Poll, 2017](#)

More than 60% of people who are prescribed opioid painkillers have at least one risk factor for developing an opioid use disorder.ⁱⁱ

SOURCE: [NSC National Public Opinion Poll, 2017](#)

Just over half of people who misuse prescription pain relievers in 2017 said they obtained the drugs from a friend or relative for free.

SOURCE: [SAMHSA Report "How People Obtain the Prescription Opioids THEY Misuse", 2017](#)

95% of all opioid overdoses occur in working age adults (aged 18-64).

SOURCE: [National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health Report "Drug Overdose Deaths in the United States 1999-2017", 2018](#)



Seventy-five percent of employers have had an issue with opioids in the workplace.

SOURCE: [NSC Employer Survey, 2019](#)

Illicit drug use has been estimated to cost the U.S. economy up to \$504 billion a year.

SOURCE: [The Council of Economic Advisors Report "Calculating the Real Costs of the Opioid Crisis", 2018](#)

Over 75% of adults with a substance use disorder are in the workforce.

SOURCE: [Journal of Occupation and Environmental Medicine Report "A Substance Use Cost Calculator for US Employers With an Emphasis on Prescription Pain Medication Misuse", 2017](#)

Taking an opioid painkiller after a workplace injury increases medical costs, delays recovery and doubles the risk of disability one year later.

SOURCE: [NSC Report "Prescription Pain Medications: A Fatal Cure for Injured Workers", 2015](#)

ⁱThis includes opioid pain relievers, heroin, fentanyl, methadone, and all other natural and synthetic opioids. This number also includes both unintentional and intentional deaths.

ⁱⁱRisk factors include a personal or family history of alcohol or substance misuse, having depression, anxiety or other mental health illness, a history of physical or sexual abuse and long-term use of opioid pain medications.