



Health and Safety Toolbox Talks

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TOOLBOX TALK:

Opioids in Construction

Speaker: Safety Manager/Foreman

Audience: Workers

I. Introduction

1 min

Understanding how opioids can affect you and the construction industry as a whole can help raise awareness, combat stigma, and decrease opioid addiction.

The goals for today's discussion are:

1. Identify the different types of opioid drugs
2. Recognize why opioids may be prescribed more to construction workers
3. Provide resources for those struggling with addiction

II. Discussion Questions

4-6 min

(Notes to presenter: Use this as an opportunity to identify what medications they mention are opioids and which are not)

- Who in the room has been prescribed pain medications by a doctor or dentist?
- What are some examples of them?

Opioids	Non-Opioids
• Hydrocodone (Vicodin) • Oxycodone (Percocet or OxyContin) • Hydromorphone (Dilaudid) • Codeine • Meperidine (Demerol) • Morphine	• Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) • Naproxen Sodium (Aleve) • Aspirin (Bayer) • Acetaminophen (Tylenol)

It can be easy to be prescribed opioid pain medication without even knowing it. Opioids can lead to dependence even when prescribed by your doctor. So, if you are prescribed medication for pain relief, ask your doctor if it is an opioid and if there are non-addictive alternatives available.

III. How opioids affect the construction industry

4-6 min

The construction industry is especially affected by opioid dependence. Why do you think this is? (Note to presenter: ask the participants for ideas and then discuss the following points)

- This is due to the physical nature of construction work.
- Because construction is so labor intensive, there tend to be more injuries and it is harder to work through pain.
- Construction workers are more likely to be prescribed opioids for their injuries in the first place. Some workers feel they can't take a day off work due to pain. Because of this, they are more likely to become dependent.

IV. Resources for opioid addiction

2 min

There are plenty of resources to help treat opioid addiction. Encourage co-workers to seek help if they are struggling with opioid addiction.

This could take the form of talking to a doctor or seeking resources from an employee assistance program (EAP). (note to presenter: if there is an EAP available, elaborate on how the workers can contact and utilize this resource at your specific company. If not, you may omit this point.)

If you are interested in getting help for opioid addiction or would like to help someone take their first steps toward recovery, there are more resources listed on the toolbox talk cards provided. Many of the resources on the cards provide free and confidential information and referrals for opioids and other substance use problems.

IV. Conclusion

1 min

If you have any questions about what we discussed today, please reach out to the safety manager or your foreman.

Are there any questions?

Thanks for your time!

Sources

The Construction Chart Book. CPWR. 2018. Chart 38e

Promoting Safer and More Effective Pain Management. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/Guidelines_Factsheet-Patients-a.pdf

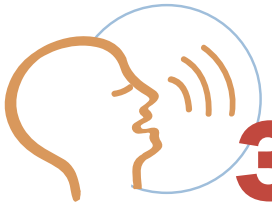
Signs of OPIOID OVERDOSE



1 Lips and nails are blue or gray



2 Breathing is slow or absent



3 Gurgling sounds or snoring



4 Skin feels cold and clammy



5 Pupils are tiny



6 Person is not moving and/or cannot be woken up

Call 911 immediately if you see these signs of opioid overdose

RESOURCES FOR substance abuse and overdose

Substance abuse resources: **Family support resources:**

**The Massachusetts
Substance Use Helpline**
800-327-5050
helplinema.org

**Substance Abuse and
Mental Health Services
Administration**
(In English and Spanish)
800-662-4357
www.samhsa.gov

**Grayken Center for
Addiction at Boston Medical
Center**
617-414-6926
www.bmc.org/addiction

Learn2Cope
508-801-3217
www.learn2cope.org

Nar-Anon
800-477-6291
www.nar-anon.org

Overdose prevention:

**Boston Public Health
Commission overdose
prevention trainings**
tinyurl.com/BPHCtraining

**Opioid Toolkit Pilot Program
for Massachusetts workplaces**
tinyurl.com/MAtoolkit