



“Your Connection for Workplace Safety”
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Weekly Safety Tip

Life Is All About Choices![®]

May 29, 2017

SCI Safety Tip: Prescription Drug Abuse Epidemic; Painkillers Driving Addiction, Overdose

Source: <http://www.nsc.org>



Every day, 60 people die from opioid pain medications. That's 22,000 people every year.

Opioids are being overprescribed. And it is not children reaching in medicine cabinets who have made drug poisoning the #1 cause of unintentional death in the United States. Adults have been prescribed opioids by doctors and subsequently become addicted or move from pills to heroin.

Perhaps even more alarming: 70% of people who have abused prescription painkillers reported getting them from friends or relatives. Most people don't know that sharing opioids is a felony.

'Painkillers Don't Kill Pain; They Kill People'

People who take opioid painkillers for too long and in doses too large are more at risk of addiction and more likely to die of drug poisoning. The numbers are staggering. In a 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health report, the Substance Abuse and Medical Health Services Administration says there are 4.3 million current nonmedical users of painkillers. Nearly 2 million people have painkiller substance use disorders.

"Painkillers don't kill pain. They kill people," says Dr. Don Teater, National Safety Council medical advisor.

SCI Safety Slogan

**Drug free
is the way
to be.**

James Lehrke-SCI

People think taking opioids is the best way to treat pain. But the reality is other non-addictive medicines are just as effective, including many over-the-counter drugs such as ibuprofen or naproxen.

[Learn How to Help Keep Loved Ones Alive](#)

National Safety Council is here to provide answers for families, resources for employers and prescribers, and information to help keep you safe at home and in your community:

- Research indicates people who take opioid painkillers quickly can develop a tolerance to and dependence on this class of drug; [learn how they work and why they can be risky](#)
- [Talk to children](#) about taking drugs that weren't prescribed
- Learn how to [get rid of painkillers](#) properly and [what constitutes a safe storage site](#)
- Find out [how much good can come from a coordinated effort](#), such as the Safe Communities America initiative in Madison and Dane County, Wis.
- Learn what legal measures are being taken to [address drug overdose](#)
- Learn why ibuprofen and acetaminophen when taken together form [one of the strongest oral treatments for pain](#) and how [opioids delay recovery from injury or surgery](#)
- In 2011, more than 25% of workers compensation prescription drug claim costs were for opioids; [learn why spending on opioids does not guarantee better outcomes](#)



[Where do Opioids Come From and What is the Cost?](#)

- Like heroin, opioid painkillers come from the poppy plant; opioids contain morphine and codeine
- In 2010, more than 400,000 emergency room visits were made related to prescription painkillers
- In 2006, the estimated [total cost in the United States of nonmedical use of prescription opioids](#) was \$53.4 billion, of which \$42 billion (79%) was attributable to lost productivity
- Four out of five new heroin users started by misusing prescription painkillers
- Research indicates 4% to 6% of prescription painkiller abusers will transition to heroin use

SCI OSHA News: Proposed budget seeks slight cuts for OSHA; reflects changed priorities

Source: [www,blr.com](http://www.blr.com)

Date May 25, 2017

The proposed federal budget for fiscal year 2018 is out, and President Trump is asking Congress to approve an overall cut of \$2.4 billion for the Department of Labor (DOL), a reduction of 21 percent.

The budget earmarks \$543 million for OSHA, including \$130 million for state and federal compliance activities. The current allocation is \$554 million. While the appropriation is not radically lower, the money would be allocated differently than in the past. For example, the plan calls for elimination of the Susan B. Harwood training grant program, which the administration calls “unproven.”

The budget would provide a slight increase for DOL’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) agency, would feel a significant effect if the proposed budget becomes law. Funding for NIOSH would drop from \$335 million to \$200 million.





Aurora Health Care®

Quick Tips for Healthy Living

May is Mental Health Month

This year for *May is Mental Health Month*, Mental Health America (MHA) is talking about *Risky Business*. We believe it's important to educate people about habits and behaviors that increase the risk of developing or exacerbating mental illnesses, or *could be signs of mental health problems themselves*.

One form of risky business is prescription drug misuse. Prescription medications are an important part of treating many health issues and are used effectively by millions of people; however, when misused they become the problem instead of the solution. We'll look at some of the most commonly misused prescription drugs: opioid pain killers, tranquilizers (used for anxiety and muscle spasms), sedatives (used for sleep disorders), and stimulants (used for ADHD and obesity).

What do we mean by "misuse"?

Misuse is when a person uses a prescription drug that is not intended for them, or uses a prescription in a way that is different than how the doctor indicated (using larger amounts, taking it more often, or using it for longer than prescribed).

Why do people misuse prescription drugs?

People who misuse prescription drugs may be self-medicating to control symptoms of an existing (and possibly undiagnosed) physical or mental health disorder, or because they like the way the drugs affect them and think they are safe to use. Sixteen percent of parents and twenty-seven percent of teens believe that using prescription drugs to get high is safer than using street drugs.

What can you do about prescription drug misuse?

- Use medications as directed.
- Talk to your doctor about non-addictive options for treating the condition that you are being medicated for if you feel at risk for misusing your prescription. Also make sure to consult your healthcare provider before adjusting medication dosage.
- Store medications in a safe place where they cannot be accessed by others who many want to use them inappropriately.
- Call 911 or get immediate help if you or a loved one have a medical emergency related to prescription drugs.
- Properly dispose of expired or unused medications. Over half of people who misused prescription pain relievers got them from friends or relatives.

For more information, visit www.mentalhealthamerica.net

The U.S. Chemical Safety Board, an independent federal agency that investigates chemical explosions and other incidents, is slated for elimination, according to the budget document.

Reaction and response to the 2018 budget proposal

According to Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta, "This budget reflects the Department of Labor's core mission and commitment to ensuring all Americans have access to good, safe jobs—and does so in a fiscally responsible way. The White House says the budget proposal places a priority on helping protect American workers and helping employers understand and comply with worker protection laws by putting an emphasis on compliance assistance and outreach.

Analysis by the law firm Conn Maciel Carey suggests that the budget may result in fewer inspections, with the emphasis shifting away from enforcement and toward compliance assistance and cooperative programs. As well, Conn Maciel Carey predicts the budget would result in a decrease in resources for rulemaking by OSHA and other DOL agencies. The firm advises, "Notwithstanding expected cuts to DOL's enforcement and regulatory programs, employers should remain vigilant in ensuring compliance with Wage and Hour, OSHA, and other DOL rules."

The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) reacted strongly to the fiscal year 2018 proposal. AIHA chief executive officer Lawrence Sloan said the organization is greatly concerned about cuts to the Harwood training program, NIOSH and its education and research centers, and the U.S. Chemical Safety Board. "Overall," said Sloane, "You cannot make America great again without protecting the health and safety of America's workers. More, not less, must be done."

What do you think?
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In Loving Memory...
Jessica, Kristin and Nick

