

Pharmaceuticals

Pharmaceutical drug abuse is one of the fastest growing trends in the US. For almost every ache and ailment, there is a pill that can be taken.

Just because you have a prescription, or obtained an OTC medication legally, does not mean it is safe to perform your normal work duties. Check with your employer to determine your best course of action to keep everyone safe.

Additionally, you should also consult with your doctor, or a pharmacist, regarding known side effects of medications. Many OTC/Rx drugs are very habit-forming and can lead to severe addiction.

Get Help

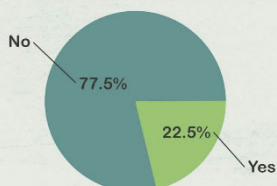
If your recreational use is becoming a problem, anonymous help is available. A Google search will result in numerous resources, or you can call SAMSHA.

1-800-662-HELP (4357)

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

WORKPLACE SUBSTANCE ABUSE

What percentage of people say they have used drugs or alcohol at work?



Drug Use Recreational, or Something More?

Not many topics produce as wide a range of opinions and opposite convictions in people as whether recreational drug use should be regulated, made legal or kept illegal. Regardless of our convictions, the vast majority of drugs are illegal to use for recreational or non-prescription purposes, and as such, many employers have a drug-free workplace policy.

However, in a survey conducted by DrugAbuse.com, almost 1 in 4 people admitted to using drugs or alcohol while on the job.

Drugs can be classified in multiple ways, but the three main types are sedatives, stimulants, and hallucinogens/psychedelics.

Sedatives – This class of drugs produces feelings of extreme relaxation by slowing down brain activity. This slowing down also results in decreased reaction time, decreased ability to process environmental cues, dizziness, drowsiness, problems with short-term memory, and decreased ability to think through actions to anticipate outcomes.

Stimulants – These drugs are the exact opposite of sedatives; they increase brain activity. Overuse can cause a rapid heart rate, feelings of anxiety, paranoia, restlessness, hallucinations, delusional thinking, agitation, mood swings, and increased aggression.

Hallucinogens/Psychedelics – These drugs affect the body by disrupting brain activity. This disruption can lead to drastic changes in the perception of reality and emotions, as well as bodily functions such as pain, appetite, and intestinal muscle control.

From a safety perspective, any mind-altering, or perception-altering substance is dangerous. Per OSHA, employers must provide a workplace free from recognized hazards. A person under the influence of a substance that alters the ability to process information, make decisions, stay alert, causes aggressiveness or distorts reality is considered a hazard. Not only is the person under the influence a hazard to themselves, but they are also a hazard to everyone else in the workplace as well, and are a liability for the employer.

When does recreational use turn into something more serious and detrimental? There is no one-size-fits-all answer to this question, but here are some of the common warning signs to look out for:

- Increasingly risky use, such as at work
- Prioritizing use over necessities such as food, hygiene, or sleep
- Continued use despite experiencing negative consequences
- Increasing or obsessive thoughts about obtaining and using a substance
- Deteriorating performance on the job
- Replacing family/friends and hobbies with using
- Withdrawal symptoms such as headaches, shakiness, irritability, depression, insomnia, nausea