



NARCAN: A LIFE-SAVING TOOL TO ADDRESS OVERDOSE

LET'S

TALK

MENTAL
HEALTH

In today's toolbox talk, we're going to talk about a very important topic that affects not just our industry, but communities across the country: the opioid epidemic and how we can help save lives with a tool called Narcan (generic name: Naloxone).

The Opioid Epidemic

The opioid epidemic refers to the widespread misuse of opioids, including prescription painkillers, heroin, and synthetic opioids like fentanyl. The US has seen a dramatic increase in opioid-related overdoses and deaths, making it a major public health crisis.

The construction industry is particularly vulnerable due to the high rates of injury and subsequent prescriptions for pain management. Substance misuse can lead to severe safety hazards on the job site, affecting not only the individual but also their coworkers.

WHAT IS NARCAN?

- Narcan is the brand name for naloxone, a medication designed to rapidly reverse opioid overdose. It can quickly restore normal respiration to a person whose breathing has slowed or stopped due to overdosing with heroin or prescription opioid pain medications.

HOW DOES NARCAN WORK?

- Narcan is an opioid antagonist, which means it binds to opioid receptors and can reverse and block the effects of other opioids.
- Effects are typically seen within minutes, making it an essential tool in emergency situations.

COMMON MISPERCEPTIONS

Narcan Encourages Drug Use

- Fact: Narcan does not encourage opioid use. It is a lifesaving measure, much like a fire extinguisher is used in the event of a fire. Narcan provides an opportunity for the person to seek treatment and recover.

Narcan is Only for Addicts

- Fact: Anyone who uses opioids can be at risk of an overdose, including those with legitimate prescriptions for pain.

Narcan is Difficult to Use

- Fact: Narcan is designed to be simple and safe for anyone to use, including people with no medical training.

USING NARCAN

When to Use Narcan

- Narcan should be used when someone is showing signs of an opioid overdose.
 - Unresponsiveness or unconsciousness
 - Slow or shallow breathing, or no breathing
 - Small, pinpoint pupils
 - Blue or grayish lips and fingernails
- Call emergency services immediately if you suspect an overdose

How to Administer Narcan (Nasal Spray):

- Tilt the person's head back and provide support under their neck with your hand.
- Insert the tip of the nozzle into one nostril until your fingers touch the bottom of the person's nose.
- Press the plunger firmly to release the dose.

After Administration:

- Stay with the person and monitor their condition until help arrives.
- Narcan can wear off before the opioids clear the person's system, sometimes in as little as 30 minutes. If they slip back into overdose and emergency help has not yet arrived, give another dose. Medical attention is always necessary.
- ***Make sure to follow jobsite safety procedures and reporting requirements.***

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