Alcoholism and the Opioid Epidemic

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Agenda

• How did we get here?

• Prevalence in the mining industry

• Warning signs

• Where to seek help
THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC BY THE NUMBERS

- **130+** People died every day from opioid-related drug overdoses.
- **47,600** People died from overdosing on opioids.
- **81,000** People used heroin for the first time.
- **28,466** Deaths attributed to overdosing on synthetic opioids other than methadone.
- **11.4 m** People misused prescription opioids.
- **2.1 million** People had an opioid use disorder.
- **886,000** People used heroin.
- **15,482** Deaths attributed to overdosing on heroin.

**Sources:**
2. OUDs Data Brief No. 299, December 2017
What are opioids?

• Entire family of drugs that interact with opioid receptors on nerve cells in the body and brain.

• Prescription
  • Oxycodone (OxyCotin)
  • Oxycodone + Acetaminophen (Percocet)
  • Hydrocodone + Acetaminophen (Vicodin)
  • Morphine
  • Methadone

• Heroin

• Fentanyl
3 Waves of the Rise in Opioid Overdose Deaths

- **Wave 1:** Rise in Prescription Opioid Overdose Deaths
- **Wave 2:** Rise in Heroin Overdose Deaths
- **Wave 3:** Rise in Synthetic Opioid Overdose Deaths

**Other Synthetic Opioids**
- e.g., Tramadol and Fentanyl, prescribed or illegally manufactured

**Commonly Prescribed Opioids**
- Natural & Semi-Synthetic Opioids and Methadone

**Heroin**

**Source:** National Vital Statistics System Mortality File.
HOW OPIOIDS BLOCK PAIN

PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS

They influence the release of chemicals from the “brain’s internal reward system” that can calm your emotions and give you a sense of pleasure.

They slow down automatic functions, including breathing and heart rate, which can lower your pain.

They slow or reduce pain signals before they get to the brain, where you feel them.

THEY CAN ALSO MAKE YOU:

- Nauseated.
- Tired & Sleepy.
- Constipated.

TAKEN OVER TIME:

- Tolerance: Your body can get used to them, and you need more.
- Withdrawal: You can get very sick if you suddenly stop taking them.
- Misuse: You might take them in a way not prescribed by your doctor.
- Addiction: You might become dependent.

Sources: National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institute on Drug Abuse for Teachers, University of Utah Health Care.
Prescription Opioids

Can be a safe and effective pain management tool

Reasons for abuse:
- Self-medication
- Recreational high
- Compulsory habits due to dependence or addiction
How did this happen?

• 1990’s pain specialists and advocacy groups argued for an increased use of opioids to manage pain

• Introduction and extensive marketing of OxyContin

• 1996 to 2012 sales increased from $48 million to $2.6 billion

• Number of prescriptions rose 300%

• Social acceptance
Risk Factors for Prescription Opioid Pain Reliever Abuse and Overdose

- Obtaining overlapping prescriptions from multiple providers and pharmacies.
- Taking high daily dosages of prescription opioid pain relievers.
- Having mental illness or a history of alcohol or other substance abuse.
- Living in rural areas and having low income.
Nearly all people who used heroin also used at least 1 other drug.

Most used at least 3 other drugs.

Heroin is a highly addictive opioid drug with a high risk of overdose and death for users.

People who are addicted to...

- Alcohol are 2x more likely to be addicted to heroin.
- Marijuana are 3x more likely to be addicted to heroin.
- Cocaine are 15x more likely to be addicted to heroin.
- Rx Opioid Painkillers are 40x more likely to be addicted to heroin.

Heroin

- Illegal, highly addictive opioid drug
- Typically injected
- Between 2010 – 2016 rate of death increased 5x
Heroin Epidemic

- Shut down of pill mills
- Changes in prescribing guidelines
- Cost
- Easy access

WHO USES HEROIN?
Growth of Inbound International Mail to the US

Source: USPS via US Senate
Fentanyl

- Synthetic opioid pain reliever

- 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine

- Most overdoses and death linked to illegally made fentanyl which is often mixed with heroin and/or cocaine as a combination product.
Fentanyls: Overdoses On The Rise

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid approved for treating severe pain, such as advanced cancer pain. Illicitly manufactured fentanyl is the main driver of recent increases in synthetic opioid deaths.

50-100x MORE POTENT THAN MORPHINE

SYNTHETIC OPIOID DEATHS ACROSS THE U.S.

73% INCREASE FROM 2014 TO 2015

264% INCREASE FROM 2013 TO 2015

Ohio Drug Submissions Testing Positive for Illicitly Manufactured Fentanyl

196% INCREASE FROM 2014 TO 2015

ILLEGITIMATELY MANUFACTURED FENTANYL

Although prescription rates have fallen, overdoses associated with fentanyl have risen dramatically, contributing to a sharp spike in synthetic opioid deaths.

OFTEN MIXED WITH HEROIN OR COCAINE WITH OR WITHOUT USER KNOWLEDGE
... and the world got still
Symptoms of Opioid Abuse

- **Nodding**: This is when a person temporarily falls asleep at an unusual time like during a conversation or while standing.
- **Covering their Arms**: A person may wear long sleeve shirts, and keep their arms covered, even if it is hot outside.
- **Constricted Pupils**: Heroin or other opiates will cause the user to have constricted pupils which will appear as pinpoints or a small dot.
- **Needle Marks**: Also known as track marks, if someone is shooting the drugs, they might have needle marks on the arms, behind their knees, or ankles.
- **Bad coordination**: If someone is high on opiates, their balance may be off, and they might stumble and trip while walking.
- **Scratching**: Another clue is that someone on opiates will usually itch and scratch frequently.

Are you concerned someone you love has an opiate addiction? Visit newroadstreatment.com and see what you can do to help.
Other Signs of Opioid Abuse

- Doctor shopping
- Shifting or changing moods
- Extra pill bottles
- Social withdrawal
- Sudden financial problems
NIH • Helping to End Addiction Long-term
Marijuana’s Role in Alleviating the Opioid Epidemic

• Latest research shows marijuana availability is associated with reductions in opioid use and misuse.

• Significant medical literature that marijuana is effective at treating chronic pain with lower risk of addition, and no risk of overdose.
Alcohol Abuse

• Prevalence of drinking:
  • 56% of people 18 or older reported drinking alcohol in the past month
  • 26.9% reported binge drinking

• 15.1 million adults have an alcohol use disorder.

• Estimated 88,000 people die from alcohol-related deaths annually which is the third leading cause of death in the United States.
What is Alcohol Use Dependency

Ask yourself these four questions:

1. Have you ever felt you should cut down on your drinking?
2. Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
3. Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?
4. Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady or get rid of your hangover?
What are the risk factors?

- Steady drinking over time
- Age
- Family history
- Depression or mental health problems
- Social and cultural factors
Opioids and Alcohol in the Workplace

• 21 million Americans are living with a substance use disorder

• \( \frac{3}{4} \) of those struggling are employed

• 20 million workers reported working under the influence of alcohol at least once in the past year
The Mining Industry

**National Drug-Free Workplace Alliance**
- 17.5% current heavy alcohol use
- 5% current illicit drug use
- 11.8% substance abuse disorder in the past year

**Recent 2017 study found**
- 25% of miners reported having at least 1 drink before going to work
CALORIE COMPARISON

5 pints of beer = 3 Burgers (90 mins to run off)

4 x 175ml of wine = 2 Burgers (60 mins to run off)
Addicts as Employees

• Miss 10 workdays for every day missed by other employees
• Are two-thirds as productive
• 5 times more likely to cause a workplace accident
• Accrue healthcare costs 3X higher
• Involved in 40% of all industrial on-the-job fatalities
Prominent signs of abuse

- Frequent tardiness/absences
- Inconsistent on-the-job performance
- Frequent small accidents
- Unusual physical symptoms or behavior
- Lack of concern over personal appearance and hygiene
- Paranoia or overreaction to criticism
- Unwillingness to talk about personal interests
- Lower productivity
- Physical signs
Symptoms of Substance Abuse Specific to Mining

• Carelessness and worker mistakes
• Damaging equipment and property
• Numerous accidents
• Unreliable to the detriment of the team
• Showing a lack of attention to detail
• Being unwilling to follow directions
• Unexplained/inadequately explained absences
• Taking unnecessary risks
• Disregarding safety for self and others
How to get help

• The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

• The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

• Faces & Voices Recovery

• NIDA National Drug Abuse Treatment Clinical Trials Network
Five signs of a quality treatment center

1. Accreditation
2. Medication
3. Evidence-Based Practices
4. Families
5. Supports
Questions?
Thank you!

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