

Times are Tough: Protect Construction Workers from Opioid Risks

December 2021

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic overlapped with the deadliest months of the opioid overdose epidemic, challenging all of us and our mental health.



Nearly **250** U.S. lives were lost to drug overdoses every day in 2020.¹

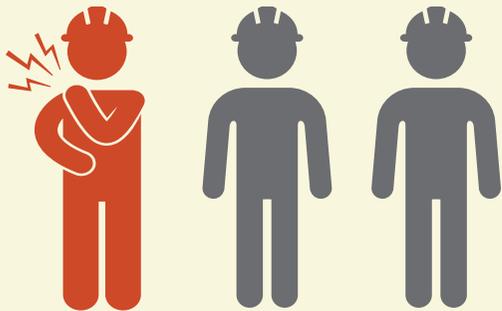


~**50%** of Americans report the COVID-19 pandemic is negatively impacted their mental health.²



75% of overdose deaths in 2020 were caused by opioids.¹

Construction workers already face higher opioid-related risks from work conditions:



1 out of 3 construction workers have a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD).³



Prescription opioid use **3 times** higher among construction workers with MSDs.³



Overdose deaths in construction increased **9 times** from 2011–2018.⁴

Invest in workplace safety to reduce injuries, provide health care and paid sick leave, and help your workers get support and treatment so they can stay healthy – and stay on the job.

For help visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/opioids/wsrp/default.html>

¹CDC [2021] Products-Vital Statistics Rapid Release–Provisional Drug Overdose Data. Centers for Disease Control: Atlanta. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

²NIEH [2021]. Opioids and the workplace: prevention and response. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. The COVID-19 Pandemic Is Fueling the Opioid Crisis! (nih.gov)

³Dong XS et al. [2020]. Musculoskeletal disorders and prescription opioids use among U.S. construction workers. J Occup Environ Med. 62(11);973–979. <https://doi.org/10.1097/JOM.0000000000002017>

⁴Dong XS et al. [2019]. Overdose fatalities at worksites and opioid use in the construction industry. CPWR Quarterly Data Report: Fourth Quarter. www.cpwr.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Quarter4-QDR-2019.pdf

