

Bi-Weekly Safety Tool Box Talks
James Peterson Sons, Inc.
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Prescription & Over-the-Counter Medicines

Just because your doctor prescribed some medicine, doesn't mean that it cannot cause problems. All medications, and even some supplements, can be dangerous. Think about some of the warnings on prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications:

- **May cause drowsiness.**
- **Use caution when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery.**
- **Dizziness may occur.**

Now consider how dangerous it would be for you to perform some of your daily tasks with reduced coordination, slow reactions, or when you're drowsy or dizzy.

You don't want to be operating a crane and find yourself feeling lightheaded. You certainly don't want to be working with a circular saw and start getting drowsy or shaky. The fact is, whether you're taking prescription or over-the-counter medication, your ability to perform your job safely can be affected.

The most important thing you can do when taking any medication is to **read the label first**. You wouldn't work with a hazardous material without reading the material safety data sheet, so don't put something in your body without reading the label.

Labels provide you with important and life-saving information such as the product name, the proper use of the medicine, warnings, possible side effects, directions on how to take it,

how much to take, drug interactions, and other dos and don'ts. Be sure to read and understand everything about the medication before you take it.

Aside from reading the label, you should also ask questions. If you are under a doctor's care and she prescribes medication, tell her that you are in the construction industry. Ask about the side effects of the medication. If you are taking OTC medication, consult your pharmacist. To avoid dangerous drug interactions, tell both your doctor and pharmacist about any other medications you're taking, including vitamins and other supplements.

Even with all this information, it's up to you to take the medication properly. Follow all directions and recommendations. Some medications must be taken with food, and others before you eat. Some pills should be swallowed whole, and never chewed or crushed. Many labels warn you to avoid drinking alcohol while you're taking the medication. Take all medication as directed and never take more than the recommended dose. Never misuse or abuse any medication.

Drugs don't have to be illegal to be dangerous. When you're sick and taking medication, sometimes the safest thing you can do is stay home and rest.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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In case of overdose, get medical help immediately and call the Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222).

Safety Manual Reference: *Drug Free Workplace Policy*

I have read the above safety topic.

Employee Name: _____ Date: _____

Employee Signature: _____

"Return after reading and signing to the office with your time card"