



Two Reasons Why Health Care Professionals Are at an Increased Risk for Substance Use Disorder

STRESS

Health care professionals deal with a lot of stress and emotions in their day-to-day jobs. They are often required to make spur-of-the-moment decisions regarding their patients' health and well-being. This stress may make them feel responsible for patient outcomes, which can greatly affect their mental state. This frequent pressure can weigh on them and may lead to alcohol or substance use as a way to cope.

ACCESS TO MEDICATIONS

Medications are one of the primary tools used to treat and help patients recover from illness or injury. A health care professional's knowledge of and easy access to medications can contribute to their use. They may divert medications from patients or from work and tell themselves, "Just this once," or, "I won't do it again." However, the relief felt from taking the substances is short-lived, making them want more and putting them at risk of developing a disorder.

"Sometimes I'd be standing in the operating room and it'd look like I had the flu. So I'd excuse myself and I'd run into the bathroom, eat 10 (Tylenols with codeine), and in maybe five or 10 minutes I'd be normal again."

--Former chief resident of neurosurgery at a prominent Chicago hospital.

Health care professionals suffering from alcohol and substance misuse are not only putting their own health (and careers) at risk but also endangering the health and well-being of their patients.

GETTING HELP

If you or a health care professional you know is experiencing an alcohol or substance-use disorder, it's crucial to get support immediately. Please reach out to the Nebraska Licensee Assistance Program (NE LAP) at [\(800\) 851-2336](tel:8008512336) or [\(402\) 354-8055](tel:4023548055) to begin the recovery process.

[www.bestcareeap.org/nebraska licensee assistance program](http://www.bestcareeap.org/nebraska-licensee-assistance-program)