

Safe Disposal of Prescription Medications Important Tips

It is important to dispose of expired or unused medications safely. The attached flyer has tips on how to do that. It also has resources to help you learn more.

Key Tip: Community drop off locations or “take-back” sites are the best way to get rid of unused medications. Below are two take-back sites in your community.

Takeback Site 1:

Takeback Site 2:

You can find more take-back sites in your area by going to the below website. To search, type in your zip code or city and state.

- <https://apps2.dea diversion.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/spring/main?execution=e1s1>

The following websites also have helpful information about the safe disposal of medications:

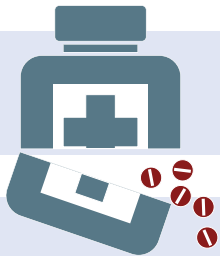
- www.deatakeback.com
- www.hhs.gov/opioids/prevention/safely-dispose-drugs/index.html



Rx Pain Medications

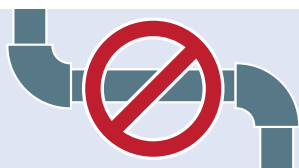
KNOW THE OPTIONS • GET THE FACTS

Safe Disposal of Prescription Medications



Of the 4 billion prescriptions filled in the United States every year, **one-third of them go unused**. That's 200 million pounds of unused medications.¹

Unused medications should be disposed of as soon as possible to limit the possibility of illegal use.



Flushing or dumping down a drain is not the best way to dispose of medication. Sewage treatment systems can't remove all the medications from the water released into lakes, rivers, or oceans in your area.²

So what are the other options?

Medication "Take-Back" Programs

"Take-back" programs allow the public to bring unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal. Call your local government's trash and recycling service to see if a program is available.

In addition:

- The DEA allows you to mail back unused prescription medications to pharmacies and other authorized sites using packages made available at pharmacies and other locations.
- Most states have agency collection boxes overseen by law enforcement or pharmacies. Call the DEA's Registration Call Center to find box locations or other disposal sites: 1-800-882-9539, or go to <https://nabp.pharmacy/initiatives/awarxe/drug-disposal-locator/> or www.deadiversions.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/index.html.
- Community coalitions and law enforcement in your area may sponsor "medication take-back events" periodically.

Disposal in Household Trash

If these programs are not available in your area, place the drugs in the trash by following these steps:

- Remove them from their original containers and conceal or remove any personal information, including the Rx number, from the container.
- Mix the medications with something inedible, such as coffee grounds or kitty litter.
- Place the empty container and the mixture in a sealed bag or empty can.

For more information, go to <https://www.epa.gov/research> or <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/resourcesforyou/consumers/buyingusingmedicinesafely/ensuringsafeuseofmedicine/safedisposalofmedicines/default.htm>.



¹ Dispose My Meds. (n.d.). You and the environment. Retrieved from <http://disposemymeds.org/environmental-impact/>

² United States Geological Survey. (2014). Pharmaceuticals, hormones, and other organic wastewater contaminants in U.S. streams. Retrieved from <http://toxics.usgs.gov/pubs/FS-027-02/pdf/FS-027-02.pdf>