



How To Safely Dispose of Opioids and Other Medications



- The safest and best way to keep the environment protected is to take your medicines to a drug take-back program. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has a drug take-back site locator at takebackday.dea.gov
- Drug take-back day programs are temporary places usually at a local pharmacy or police department where you can leave the unused or expired medication.
- You can also check with local hospitals and pharmacies to see if they accept unwanted medication as these are more permanent and can be used more often to get rid of unused or old medicines.
- The medicine label may contain specific directions that will allow you to safely get rid of the medicine at home. Substances such as opioids and other medicines can be harmful if taken by others, so the label might have special throwaway instructions that you should follow.

What if there are no drug throwaway places such as pharmacies or hospitals in your area?

If you do not have any of these places in your neighborhood there are other ways to safely get rid of your medication at home.

If there are no special directions for throwing them away, you can do the following 4 things to remove them from your home:

1. Mix your medicine with things like dirt, cat litter, or used coffee grounds, make sure you mix the medication with something that someone would not consider eating.
2. Put the mixture in a sealed plastic bag or plastic container.
3. Throw the bag/container in your household trash.
4. Mark out or scratch out all your personal information on the prescription bottle to make it unreadable. Then throwaway or recycle the empty medication bottle.

You should get rid of any unused or expired prescription medicine as soon as possible by either of the previously mentioned ways. This prevents someone from being accidentally exposed or someone intentionally misusing the medicine. Timely disposal of opioid medicine and other drugs can reduce this danger to others.

