



## MEDICATION DISPOSAL

### DO

- Use medications as prescribed
- Store medications safely, away from children and pets
- Discard unwanted or expired medicines with your household trash (for most medicines)
- Return unwanted pain medicines and sedatives to your pharmacist so that they will not be misused by someone else. Read this brochure for other ways to prevent misuse.

### DON'T

- Don't share your medications with anyone else
- Don't flush medicines down the toilet
- Don't wash medicines down the sink
- Don't accept from your doctor's office medicine samples that you are not going to use

## FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

- Ask your pharmacist to provide a drop-box in the store where customers can bring unwanted or expired medications
- Ask your community's trash collector or water company to include with the monthly bills information on safe medication disposal
- Ask your house of worship, social club, or neighborhood association to start a "Sustainability Committee" to share wise concepts with members, ideas such as discarding pharmaceuticals safely, saving energy, or using water wisely. Contact My Green Doctor for more tips: [mygreendr@gmail.com](mailto:mygreendr@gmail.com).



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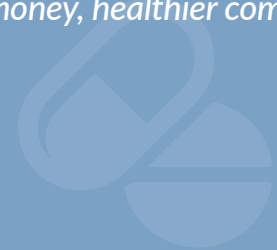


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YOUR HEALTHY HOME

# SAFE DISPOSAL OF MEDICINES

*Saving money, healthier communities.*





## BACKGROUND

Improperly discarding medication can cause many health and environmental dangers.

### Health Risks

Unsafe disposal of medications, whether prescribed or over-the-counter medicines, can lead to accidental poisoning or to the misuse of your medications by someone else.

### Environmental Risks

Medications poured into the sink or flushed down the toilet may end up in nearby rivers, lakes, oceans, and drinking water. This is because standard water treatment methods do not remove medicines from the sewage or from drinking water. Contaminated water can end up in crops, farm animals, and people. This can include antibiotics, hormones, pain pills, heart medicines, and even cancer treatments.

### Protect Your Privacy

Unwanted medication containers have personal information on the labels that you may not want to share with other people.

## FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS TO DISPOSE OF MEDICINES IN THE HOUSEHOLD TRASH

### MIX

Mix medicines (do not crush tablets or capsules) **with an unpalatable substance** such as dirt, kitty litter, or used coffee grounds.



### PLACE

Place the mixture **in a container** such as a plastic bag or trash bag.



### THROW

Throw out the mixture **with your household trash**.



### SCRATCH OUT

Scratch out **all personal information** on the prescription label of your empty pill bottle or empty medicine packaging to make it unreadable, then dispose of the container.



## PHARMACY TAKE-BACK PROGRAMS

Many pharmacies and communities offer secure drop-off boxes for unwanted medicines. The medicines will be destroyed safely or placed in secure waste facilities that do not allow medicines to enter rivers or water supplies.

To find a drop-off site near you, visit your local government website, local pharmacy, or your doctor.

Ask your health professional or pharmacist if you have questions about how to discard specific medications that might be toxic to others.



**NEVER FLUSH MEDICINES DOWN THE TOILET OR PUT THEM IN THE SINK!**