

Safe Storage & Disposal of OPIOIDS



Storing your opioid medication securely and disposing of unused or expired prescription opioids will help keep your family and community safe.

■ WHY IS SAFE STORAGE & DISPOSAL IMPORTANT?

Prescription opioids can be used to help relieve moderate-to-severe pain and can be an important part of treatment. They also come with serious risks such as overdose and addiction. Opioids are not recommended for all types of pain. You may be at risk of harm if you stop taking medications and start taking them again after your tolerance has decreased.

■ HOW CAN I STORE MY PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS SAFELY?

Medications should be stored out of reach of children and in a safe place – preferably locked – to prevent other family members and visitors from taking them. Others might experience an overdose at the same or even lower dosage than what your provider prescribed.

■ HOW DO I SAFELY DISPOSE OF UNUSED OPIOIDS?

1. If you received specific disposal instructions from your health care provider (e.g., *doctor, pharmacist*), you should follow those instructions to dispose of your medicine.
2. Most local pharmacies offer a kiosk to dispose of unwanted medications. Local police departments also have drug disposal bins.
3. You can use a prescription drug disposal pouch, obtainable through various pharmacies, local health departments and for purchase online.

4. Otherwise, throw it away in the household trash:
 - Remove or mark through all personal information on the prescription label of empty medicine bottles or packaging before you trash or recycle them.
 - Mix unused medicines (*liquid or pills; no need to crush pills*) with an unappealing substance such as dirt, cat litter, or used coffee grounds;
 - Place the mixture in a sealable container such as a sealed plastic bag;
 - Throw away the container in your trash at home.
5. As a last resort, check to see if the medicine is on the FDA “flush list.” If yes, flush it down the toilet. Always check the flush list first.

Do not keep unused opioids at home. They pose a grave risk to children and teenagers.



Remember:

- Store opioids out of sight and out of reach of children or teens in your home.
- Dispose of unused opioids safely when there is no longer a medical need for them.
- Don't share your opioid prescription with others. Federal & state law prohibits the sharing of prescription opioids.



To find a Take Back location near you,
please visit DEA's website at

apps.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/

This information is provided by the
Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP).