## Proper Medication Disposal

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>What They Provide</th>
<th>Where You Can Find Them</th>
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| **State and local governments** | • Regulations for drug take-back programs  
• Locations of controlled substance take-back collection boxes (established by police departments or local drug enforcement agency field offices)  
• Waste management household hazardous waste programs  
• State boards of pharmacy may also have regulations dictating what a pharmacist may do with respect to medication take-back programs | [http://www.justice.gov/dea/agency/domestic.htm](http://www.justice.gov/dea/agency/domestic.htm) (DEA field office locations) |
| **SMARxT Disposal** | • Public awareness campaign that is a result of a partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the American Pharmacists Association, and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America.  
• Instructions for the proper disposal of medications  
• Links to safe disposal resources (including campaign materials)  
• News about pharmaceuticals in the environment  
• Answers to common questions about medication disposal | [http://www.smarxtdisposal.net/index.html](http://www.smarxtdisposal.net/index.html) |
| **Dispose My Meds** | • A tool that will locate independent pharmacies with medication take-back programs within a certain zip code, city, or state.  
• Information about the safety and environmental risks associated with improper medication disposal  
• Media center with links to news articles, videos, and audio related to proper medication disposal | [http://disposemymeds.org](http://disposemymeds.org) |
| **The Drug Take-Back Network** | • Links to local resources and events, as well as suggestions and tips for planning a take-back event  
• Descriptions and advice from successful take-back programs  
• Resources for pharmacies and organizations to adapt for their own events, such as waste inventory spreadsheets | [http://www.takebacknetwork.com/index.html](http://www.takebacknetwork.com/index.html) |
| **No Drugs Down the Drain** | • Link to search waste collection agencies that will accept unwanted medications across the United States  
• Information about the importance of safe drug disposal  
• Links to several other helpful medication disposal sites | [http://nodrugsdownthedrain.org/](http://nodrugsdownthedrain.org/) |
| **Private Companies (Ex. Waste Management and Sharps, Inc)** | • Mail-back disposal for a fee (Patients must be advised to verify what types of medications and devices are accepted)  
[http://www.sharpsinc.com/unused-medications.htm](http://www.sharpsinc.com/unused-medications.htm) (Sharps, Inc) |
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<th>Other Means of Medication Disposal</th>
<th>Proper way to conduct this form of disposal</th>
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| **If no medication take-back programs for disposal are available in your area** | • **If no medicine take-back programs for disposal are available in your area:**  
  ◦ Remove medications from their original containers.  
  ◦ Remove personal information from the container label of the original prescription bottle.  
  ◦ Mix medicines (Do not crush tablets or capsules) with an undesirable substance such as kitty litter or used coffee grounds;  
  ◦ Place the mixture in a container such as a sealed plastic bag; and  
  ◦ Throw the container in your household trash  
  ◦ Liquid medications should be mixed with salt, flour, charcoal, or a nontoxic powdered spice, such as turmeric or mustard to give the mixture an unappealing smell and texture. |
| Disposal in Household Trash | |
| Flushing of Certain Medicines | • **If no medicine take-back programs for disposal are available in your area:**  
  ◦ Flush unused medications down the sink or toilet. |
Disposal of Medical Supplies

**If no take-back programs are readily available in your area**

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<th>Products</th>
<th>Best Way To Dispose</th>
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| Ampules, Vials, & IV Bags     | - Do not empty or open the bags  
- Wrap the container with tape to minimize breakage, and place in an opaque plastic container (Ex. Empty yogurt or margarine tub).  
- Wrap the outside of the container with additional duct or shipping tape to prevent leakage.  
- Dispose of the container in the trash (NOT YOUR RECYCLING BIN!) |
| Chemotherapy Drugs            | - Chemotherapy drugs may have special disposal requirements.  
- Consult your health care provider about proper disposal. |
| Mercury Thermometers          | - Bring to a household hazardous waste (HHW) collection or contact your town’s recycling or public works (DO NOT PUT IN THE TRASH!)  
- Learn how to safely clean up a broken mercury thermometer. |
| Sharps (needles and lancets)  | - Place these items in a puncture-proof, hard plastic container with a screw-on cap (Ex. Detergent bottle or milk jug)  
- Seal the container with the original lid and wrap with duct tape.  
- Place the tightly sealed container in a bag and place in the trash (NOT YOUR RECYCLING BIN!). |