



Tips on How to Get Rid of Unused, Unneeded or Expired Medicines

Storing unused, unneeded or expired medicines at home can be a risk for others who may take them by mistake or abuse them. Strong pain relievers called opioids may be very harmful or deadly when taken without the supervision of a doctor. Here are some ways to get rid of unused medicines safely:

- **National Rx Drug Take Back Days:** In April and October, the government hosts a drug Take Back Day. You can find event dates and locations at takebackday.dea.gov.
- **Permanent drop-off sites:** Some pharmacies and police stations have drop-off boxes where you can safely dispose of medicines at any time of the year for free. For a list of locations near you, browse the *Collection Site Locator* at takebackday.dea.gov.
- **DisposeRx packets:** Some local pharmacies offer packets that contain a powder that changes opioids into a gel form when mixed with water. The gel mix may be safely tossed in the trash.



Opioids should not be thrown away in household trash. Strong pain relievers such as hydrocodone (Vicodin, Norco) and oxycodone (Percocet, OxyContin) can be flushed down the toilet if the options above are not available. To learn if your medicine can be safely flushed down the toilet visit medlineplus.gov/druginformation.html. Find your medicine and click on the *What should I know about storage and disposal of this medication?* section.

For opioids or any other medicines that cannot be flushed down the toilet, you can throw them away in the trash by following all these steps:

- Remove the medicine from the original container.
- Mix the medicine with a substance that cannot be consumed, such as used coffee grounds or cat litter.
- Place the mixture in a sealed bag and throw it away in the trash.
- Remove all your personal information on the prescription label of your empty container.

Be sure to review all your medicines with your doctor on a routine basis and discard medicines as soon as you no longer need them. Contact OneCare Customer Service toll-free at **1-877-412-2734** (TTY 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We have staff who speak your language. Visit us at www.caloptima.org.