

How to Dispose of Unwanted Medication



Expired or unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications from households should never be disposed of by flushing them down the toilet or a drain.

Although this method of disposal prevents accidental ingestion, it can cause contamination to the aquatic environment because wastewater treatment systems are not designed to remove many of these medications.

Seven Steps to Safety

Please use these practical guidelines when disposing of prescription and over-the-counter medicines:

For Pills and Liquids:

1. Keep the medicines in the original container. This will help identify the contents if they are accidentally ingested.
2. Mark out your name and prescription number for safety.
3. For pills: add some water or soda to start dissolving them. For liquids: add something inedible like cat litter, dirt or cayenne pepper.
4. Close the lid and secure with duct or packing tape.
5. Place the bottle(s) inside an opaque (non see-through) container like a coffee can or plastic laundry bottle.
6. Tape that container closed.
7. Hide the container in the trash. Do not put in the recycle bin.

DO NOT give drugs to anyone else

DO NOT flush drugs down the toilet

Do NOT put drugs in the trash without disguising them – human or animal scavengers may find them and misuse them.