

# Proper Medication Disposal

More than just throwing medicine into the trash



## Discard Expired and Unused Medicines

Check the labels and contents of all your medications at least once a year. You should properly dispose of any drugs sitting unused in your medicine cabinet, especially if their color, smell, or texture have changed.

## Safety Precautions

When disposing of medication, take safety precautions to avoid harm to you or to others who can come into contact with the discarded medication. Proper disposal will protect you and others in your home from accidental exposure to discarded medications, including pets, children, and anyone else who may find medications in your trash, and can help prevent prescription drug abuse.

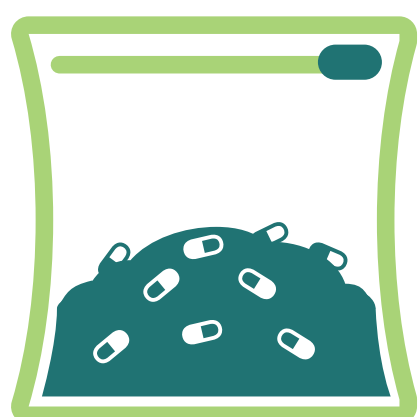


**If there are no specific disposal instructions on the medication label or packaging, follow these simple steps to dispose of most medicines in the household trash**



## MIX

Mix medications (do not crush tablets or capsules) with an undesirable substance such as dirt, kitty litter, or used coffee grounds



## SEAL

Place the mixture in a container such as a sealed plastic bag



## SCRATCH OUT

Scratch out all personal information on the prescription label of your empty medicine packaging to make it illegible



## THROW

Throw the container and medication packaging into your trash



## MAY I FLUSH?

The FDA recommends **flushing only if the medication has instructions** to do so. Visit the FDA's website for a list of medications that need disposal by flushing [here](#).

## Drug Take-Back Programs

Many communities have programs that encourage people to bring unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal. Contact your city or county government's household trash and recycling service to find out if a take-back program is available in your area.

The Drug Enforcement Administration sponsors National Prescription Drug Take-Back Days. Find an upcoming [Drug Take-Back day and location near you](#).



## Still Unsure?

You can always speak to your local waste management authorities or pharmacist for proper medication disposal instructions.