



## How to properly dispose of unused opioids safely

Help keep your family and community safe, starting in your home—get rid of any unused or expired prescription opioids that may be in cabinets, drawers, or anywhere else you store medicine.

Remove these medicines as soon as possible to reduce the chance of accidental or intentional opioid misuse.

### **WHAT IS AN OPIOID?**

Prescription opioids are powerful pain-reducing medicines that include oxycodone, hydrocodone, tramadol, and others. Doctors prescribe opioids after surgeries and for injuries; however, these medicines can have serious risks if they are misused by accident or on purpose.

### **WHY IS OPIOID DISPOSAL IMPORTANT FOR ME AND MY FAMILY?**

Prescription opioid misuse is one of the most common types of illegal drug use in the United States. Many people who misused prescription pain reducing medicine said that they got it from a friend or relative.

### **HOW DO I SAFELY DISPOSE OF OPIOIDS?**

Ask these questions to determine how to dispose of opioids:

1. Is a medicine take-back option readily available? If so, this is the preferred option. Check DEA website, as well as your local pharmacy and police station for possible options.
2. If not, is the medicine on the FDA “flush list”? If it is, flush it down the toilet.  
<https://www.fda.gov/media/109643/download>
3. Otherwise, throw it away in the household trash. Prior to disposing in trash mix opioids (do not crush) with used coffee grounds or kitty litter in a plastic bag.
4. Safe medication disposal pouches can be purchased at local pharmacies or online. They contain activated charcoal and are a safe and easy way to dispose of unused opioids.