

What if there are no take-back programs in my area?

If disposal instructions are not given on the prescription label and take-back programs are not available in your area, you can:

- ✓ Take the remaining pills out of the original prescription containers.
- ✓ Next, mix the pills with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter.
- ✓ Then, place them in a sealable bag, empty can, or other container to prevent the medication from leaking or breaking out of a garbage bag.
- ✓ Lastly, throw the bag out with other household trash.

Additional Resources

[Drug Disposal Locator and Information](http://www.awarerx.org/)
<http://www.awarerx.org/>

[Take Back Your Meds-Drug Take Back Programs](http://www.takebackyourmeds.org/)
<http://www.takebackyourmeds.org/>

[Drug Enforcement Administration](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/)
http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/

[American Association of Poison Control Centers](http://www.aapcc.org/)
<http://www.aapcc.org/>

[U.S. Food and Drug Administration](http://www.fda.gov/forconsumers/)
<http://www.fda.gov/forconsumers/>



Since the first National Take Back Day in September of 2010, The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has collected more than 4.1 million pounds of prescription drugs throughout all 50 states and conducted nine national programs.

Be Smart



Be Safe



For more information please visit **EMPainline** at www.empainline.org or contact us at info@empainline.org

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Patient Safety Guide

Where to safely store pain medication:

- ✓ Store medication where it is **not visible or easily accessible** to others besides yourself or a designated caregiver that helps manage your medications.
- ✓ **Lock It Up.** If possible store your pain medication in a locked cabinet.
- ✓ **Count the number of pills** you have, keep track of the ones you have taken, and be aware of any missing pills.
- ✓ **Never share** your pain medication with anyone.

How to safely dispose pain medication:

The **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** and the **White House Office of National Drug Control Policy** developed the following guidelines for prescription medication disposal:

- ✓ Follow any specific disposal instructions on the drug label or patient information that accompanies the medication.
- ✓ Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet to dispose of your medication, unless instructions on the medication label or patient information packet specifically instructs you to do so.
- ✓ Take advantage of the drug take-back programs that allows the public to bring in unused drugs to a central location for proper disposal.



DON'T

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou>



If you are prescribed prescription pain medication:

While prescription pain medication is often necessary for people with severe pain, these medications, if not used as prescribed, can have consequences.



What you need to know:

If you are prescribed pain medications, make sure that you protect yourself and your loved ones by safely storing and disposing your medications.

1. **PROTECT:** Keep your loved ones safe. **Store** prescription pain medications out of sight and inaccessible to others who were not prescribed the medication.
2. **PREVENT:** **Dispose** of any unused pain medication.

How to protect against prescription abuse:

The most common forms of prescription abuse include misuse and overdose of prescription pain relievers found at home in the medicine cabinet.

To protect against prescription abuse make sure you know **how to spot symptoms** and **where to get help**.



Symptoms of overdose:

If you, or a loved one, has taken prescription pain relievers, here are some danger signs to look for:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slow breathing | <input type="checkbox"/> Weakness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confusion | <input type="checkbox"/> Dizziness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue | <input type="checkbox"/> Nausea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apathy | <input type="checkbox"/> Vomiting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pinpoint Pupils | <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cold and Clammy Skin | |

Who to contact for help:

If you notice any of these signs of abuse, or if you have questions about abuse you can call the Poison Control Center's Help Line.

Poison Help Line: 1-800-222-1222

In the case of an emergency, **dial 911**.

*Poison centers offer free, confidential medical advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week.