



Safe Disposal of Unwanted Drugs

Why can't prescription bottles be thrown in the trash?

Remember, your name and prescription number are on your bottle. This information should be closely protected. This can be done by using a permanent marker to mark out your name and prescription number or removing the entire prescription label from the bottle and shredding it.



Why can't all drugs just be flushed down the toilet or poured down the sink?

When drugs are disposed of in this manner they can end up in our drinking water, soil that grows our food, and in our oceans. In a recent report, more than 100 different pharmaceuticals were found in lakes, rivers, reservoirs and streams throughout the world.

Are there some drugs which should be flushed down the toilet?

Yes. These drugs include:

Diazepam rectal gel *only* (Diastat®/Diastat AcuDial®)
Fentanyl (i.e., Duragesic® patch, Actiq®, Fentora® , Onsolis® soluble film)
Hydromorphone (i.e., Dilaudid®, Exalgo®)
Meperidine® (Demerol®)
Methadone (i.e., Dolophine®, Methadose®)
Methylphenidate patch *only* (Daytrana®)
Morphine (i.e., Avinza®, Kadian®, MS Contin®, Oramorph SR®, Embeda®)
Oxycodone (i.e., OxyContin®, Percocet®, Percodan®)
Oxymorphone (Opana®, Opana ER®)
Sodium oxybate (Xyrem®).

How do I get rid of my other expired drugs or drugs I am no longer taking?

Disposal of all other unwanted drugs depends on the county in which you live. Therefore, contact your local Household Hazardous Waste Facility for disposal regulations:

Alameda	(800) 606-6606	Napa	(707) 257-9292
Butte	(866) 429-2288 Ext 0	Placer	(916) 645-5230 Ext. 108
Contra Costa	(510) 421-4500	Sacramento	(916) 875-5555 Ext. 0
East Contra Costa	(925) 756-1990	San Joaquin	(209) 468-3066
El Dorado	(530) 626-4141	Solano	(707) 437-8971
Marin	(415) 499-6907	Yolo	(866) 714-8470





There is no drug take-back or collection program close to where I live. How do I get rid of drugs that cannot be flushed?

If a drug take-back or collection program is not available near you, and the drugs are not labeled to be flushed, the Federal Guideline recommends the following:

1. Remove the medications from their original containers.
2. Mix drugs with an unappealing substance, such as cat litter or used coffee grounds.
3. Put the mixture into a disposable container with a lid, such as an empty margarine tub, or into a sealable bag.
4. Place the sealed container with the mixture, and the empty drug containers, in the trash.

For general information on proper drug disposal visit <http://www.smarxtdisposal.net>

If I have additional questions, where can I get more information?

<http://earth911.com/>

<http://www.disposemy meds.org/>

<http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/ReduceWaste/HealthCare/PPCP.htm>

**Pharmacy Service Call Center
(Toll Free)
1-866-600-8279**

**7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday
(except holidays)**

*Most calls will be answered by pharmacy technicians.
For drug information questions, ask to speak to a pharmacist.*

VA Northern California Health Care System
Chico, Fairfield, Mare Island, Martinez, Mather,
McClellan, Oakland, Redding
612-119 (VFHE App 1/11)

