

Prescription Medicine and Veterinary Medicine Disposal

August 2015



Solid Waste Program

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Unused, unwanted or expired medication including veterinary medications are potentially harmful to animals, people, or the environment and must be carefully disposed of to ensure others do not find and use the medication. In addition, proper disposal will minimize the potential adverse environmental effects to water resources, as well as domestic animals and wildlife, which may occur if these medications are incorrectly disposed. Disposal options are described below.

Return Human Medications to the Pharmacy, Hospital or Physician's Office

Many pharmacies will accept unwanted medications for safe disposal. Contact your local pharmacy to determine options. In some cases, pharmacies, hospitals and doctor's offices have information for mail-back programs with envelopes available for a fee that can be used for disposal of medicines. This is an environmentally safe and preferred method of disposal.

Return Veterinary Medicines to the Veterinarian's Office or Clinic

Most veterinary clinics will accept unwanted veterinary medicines for safe disposal. Contact the veterinary clinic that you obtained the medicine from to determine if they will accept the medication. Disposal through the veterinary clinic is the best method of disposal.

Prescription Drug Take-Back Programs

Many law enforcement agencies in Alaska offer free prescription drug and over-the-counter (OTC) medicine drop-off programs. Contact your local law enforcement or state trooper office for local drop-off locations. You can also contact the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Registration Call Center at 800-882-9539 or the online [Search Utility](#) to find a registered collection receptacle near you.

Search the [National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day](#) website for upcoming events.

Throw It in the Trash - Don't Flush It Down the Toilet or a Drain

ADEC prefers that when possible, people should take advantage of take-back programs. However, if that option is not available, most unused or expired medication can be thrown out with the garbage. To help ensure that discarded medications actually get to the landfill, the US Food and



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Drug Administration (FDA) recommends removing the discarded medication from its container and mixing it with “undesirable substances” such as coffee grounds, mustard, or kitty litter. Also, concealing the medication inside other containers will help prevent others from finding and using it. The ADEC recommends removing the label or other identifying information before disposing of empty prescription medicine containers.

FDA Recommends Some Medications be Flushed Down the Toilet

As a general rule, ADEC prefers that medications are disposed through a take-back program, or if not available, in the trash as described above. However, there are certain medications that can be especially harmful to a child, pet or anyone else if taken accidentally. You should take extra care that these medications are disposed of in a safe manner. These medications should only be disposed through a take-back program or by being flushed down the toilet and NOT disposed in the trash.

FDA List of Medications to Flush Down the Toilet:

Abstral (fentanyl)	Methadone Hydrochloride
Actiq (fentanyl citrate)	Methadose (methadone hydrochloride)
Avinza Capsules (morphine sulfate)	Morphine Sulfate
Buprenorphine Hydrochloride; Naloxone Hydrochloride	MS Contin (morphine sulfate)
Butrans (buprenorphine)	Nucynta ER (tapentadol)
Daytrana (methylphenidate)	Onsolis (fentanyl citrate)
Demerol (meperidine hydrochloride)	Opana, Opana ER (oxymorphone hydrochloride)
Diastat/Diastat AcuDial (diazepam)	Oxecta, Oxycodone Hydrochloride (oxymorphone hydrochloride)
Dilaudid (hydromorphone hydrochloride)	OxyContin (oxycodone)
Dolophine Hydrochloride (methadone hydrochloride)	Percocet (Oxycodone and Acetaminophen)
Duragesic (fentanyl)	Percodan (aspirin; oxycodone hydrochloride)
Embeda (morphine sulfate; naltrexone hydrochloride)	Suboxone (buprenorphine hydrochloride, naloxone hydrochloride)
Exalgo (hydromorphone hydrochloride)	Xartemis XR (oxycodone hydrochloride, acetaminophen)
Fentora (fentanyl citrate)	Xyrem (sodium oxybate)
Hysingla ER (hydrocodone bitartrate)	Zohydro ER (hydrocodone bitartrate)
Kadian (morphine sulfate)	Zubsolv (buprenorphine hydrochloride, naloxone hydrochloride)

Other Resources

- [Medical Waste Disposal](#) (ADEC)
- [How to Dispose of Unused Medicines](#) (FDA)

