WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH YOUR UNWANTED MEDICINES AND SHARPS?

There are a number of ways to dispose of unwanted medicines and sharps.

Medicines help treat diseases, manage chronic conditions, and improve health and well-being for millions of Americans. It’s vitally important that patients take their medicine as prescribed by their health care provider and as indicated on the label or packaging. Storing medications and used sharps securely to prevent accidental ingestion, sticks, or misuse (especially by children) is also very important.

If you have unwanted medication or sharps, proper disposal is easy. To protect your privacy, consumers are reminded to remove all personally identifiable information on prescription labels or materials before using any of the following disposal options.

(Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration)
**UNWANTED MEDICINE DISPOSAL OPTIONS**

1. **CHECK THE PACKAGE**
   If there are specific instructions for disposal on the label, package or package insert, please follow those instructions. Do not flush drugs down the toilet unless specifically instructed to do so.

2. **CONVENIENT KIOSKS**
   To find convenient kiosks in your area, visit www.med-project.org for more information.

3. **MAIL-BACK**
   Mail-back services for unwanted medicines are available to residents upon request. Visit www.med-project.org to order a mail-back package.

4. **UNWANTED MEDICINE IN-HOME DISPOSAL**
   1. Remove medication from its original container and mix with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds, dirt, or kitty litter.
   2. Place the mixture in a sealable bag, empty can, or other container and throw in your household trash.*

*Source: www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm101653.htm, last updated May 9, 2017.

**HOUSEHOLD SHARPS DISPOSAL**

1. **CHECK THE PACKAGE**
   If there are specific instructions for disposal on the label, package or package insert, please follow those instructions.

   Never place sharps in the trash or recycling, and never flush them down the toilet. Disposing of sharps in the trash or recycling may put trash and sewage workers, janitors, housekeepers, household members, and children at risk of being harmed.¹

2. **CONVENIENT KIOSKS**
   Dispose of used sharps disposal containers in convenient kiosks located in pharmacies and law enforcement locations throughout the city. Convenient kiosks may be available in your area; visit www.med-project.org for more information.²

3. **MAIL-BACK**
   Mail-back packages for your sharps are available in many pharmacies in the city. Ask your pharmacist about the availability of mail-back packages, and be sure to follow any instructions provided by the container manufacturer.³ To order a mail-back package, visit www.med-project.org.

**HOUSEHOLD SHARPS DISPOSAL**

Sharps can be dangerous to people and pets if not disposed of safely. Sharps can cause injuries and/or spread infections that cause serious health conditions. These infections may include: Hepatitis B (HBV), Hepatitis C (HCV), and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

Safe sharps disposal is important whether you are at home, at work, at school, traveling, or in other public places such as hotels, parks, and restaurants. Pet owners who use needles to give medicine to their pets should follow the same sharps disposal guidelines used for humans.³

**SHARPS DISPOSAL CONTAINERS**

Approved sharps containers must be:
- made of a heavy-duty plastic;
- able to close with a tight-fitting, puncture-resistant lid;
- without sharps being able to come out; and
- upright and stable during use; leak-resistant; and properly labeled as “sharps waste” or with the biohazard symbol and the word “BIOHAZARD” to warn of hazardous materials inside the container.

Place all sharps in a sharps disposal container immediately after they have been used. This will reduce the risk of needle sticks, cuts, and punctures from sharps. Sharps disposal containers should be kept out of reach of children and pets.³

**DO NOT REUSE SHARPS DISPOSAL CONTAINERS.**


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