

Medication Safety And Storage

Medication safety and storage

Medications can be important for health and well-being. Unfortunately, if you don't keep them safe and secure, they can also be very dangerous.

- Every day, hundreds of children are seen in Emergency Rooms across the country for accidental poisoning from medications that weren't stored safely. And sometimes, those accidents are deadly.
- Prescription medication abuse is a serious problem in America:
 - More than half of people aged 12 and older who abuse prescription medications get them or steal them from friends or family.
 - Unfortunately, friends and family aren't the only issue: strangers who abuse or sell prescription drugs illegally may target you or your home to get these medications.

You play a big role in keeping all medications out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them: keep medications safe, keep them secure, and then get rid of them when you no longer need them.

Keep them safe

- It is dangerous and illegal for anyone but you to use your medications.
- Keep your medications in a safe place (such as a medicine cabinet) so they are out of sight and out of reach for family members or visitors.

Keep them secure

- Medications that are "controlled substances" — painkillers, anxiety medications and stimulants — should be kept in a locked cabinet, safe or container.

Then get rid of them

- Don't save leftover medications.
- Don't throw them in the trash or flush them down the drain — studies show that medications can contaminate our lakes and streams. They can harm fish and wildlife, and end up in our drinking water.
- Many counties and local law enforcement agencies have disposal boxes or organize collection events for unused medications. Call your county, pharmacy or local law enforcement office to find one near you. These programs accept all medicines including prescription, over-the-counter and pet medicines:
 - Keep the medication in its original container from the pharmacy
 - Use a marker to cross out the patient name on the label
 - Place the container in a sealed plastic bag
 - If you don't have the original container, put the medication in a sealed plastic bag, and write the name of the medication on the bag