

How to properly and safely dispose of medications:



- Take unused, unneeded or expired prescription drugs out of their original containers.
- Mix the prescription drugs with an undesirable substance like coffee grounds or kitty litter, and put them in solid, nondescript containers such as empty cans or sealable bags. This ensures that the drugs are not diverted or accidentally ingested by children or pets.
- Throw these containers in the trash.
- Flush prescription drugs down the toilet *only* if the accompanying patient information says that it is safe to do so. This information can also be found on the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Web site www.fda.gov.
- Wrap blister packs in multiple layers of duct tape before throwing them away.
- Return unused, unneeded or expired prescription drugs to pharmacy take-back locations for safe disposal. Ask your local pharmacy about these programs.
- **REMEMBER - Bring unused chemotherapy medications to your next clinic appointment. Our pharmacy will safely dispose of these unused medications.**

A Word about Sharps Disposal

“Sharps” include needles, syringes and lancets used for checking blood glucose levels.

Karmanos Cancer Center is **not able to accept used sharps, except those containing chemotherapy medication.** We would like to offer some useful tips on how you can safely dispose of all other sharps:

- Contact your local health department, county waste authority or check the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Medical Waste Regulatory Program’s Web site for a list of community service collections programs, by county at www.michigan.gov/deqmedwaste or call (517) 241-1320.
- Contract with a U.S. Postal Service approved mail-back service. These companies provide containers and directions on packaging your used sharps so they can be returned to the company through the U.S. mail. A list of these companies can be found by visiting www.safeneedledisposal.org or by calling (800) 643-1643.

Questions?

Please contact the Karmanos Pharmacy at (313) 576-8814 or Patient Education at (313) 576-9288.

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CCC
A Comprehensive Cancer
Center Designated by the
National Cancer Institute

How to Dispose of Unused Medicines



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Not sure what to do with those unused or outdated medications in your home?



If you have unused or expired prescription drugs or other medicines in your medicine cabinet, you are not alone. Knowing how to properly dispose of unwanted medicines can be confusing.

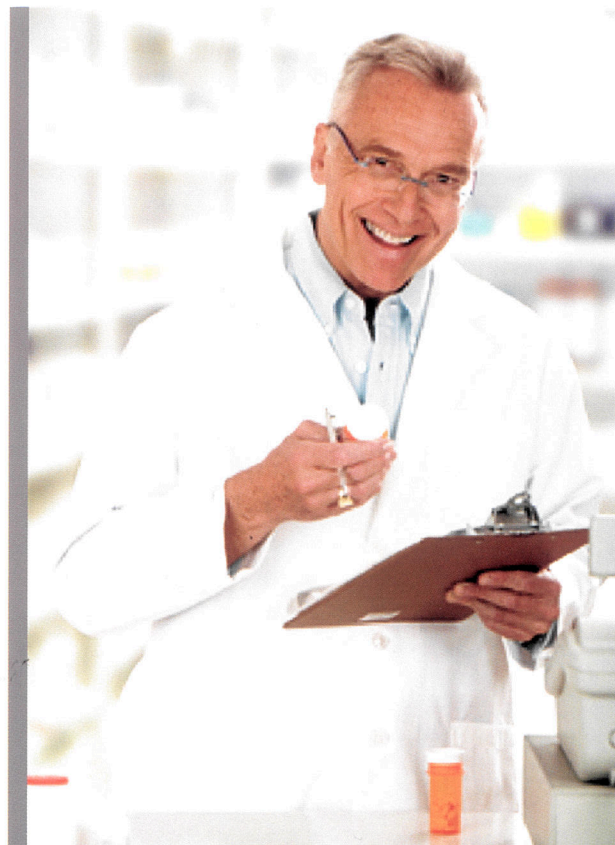
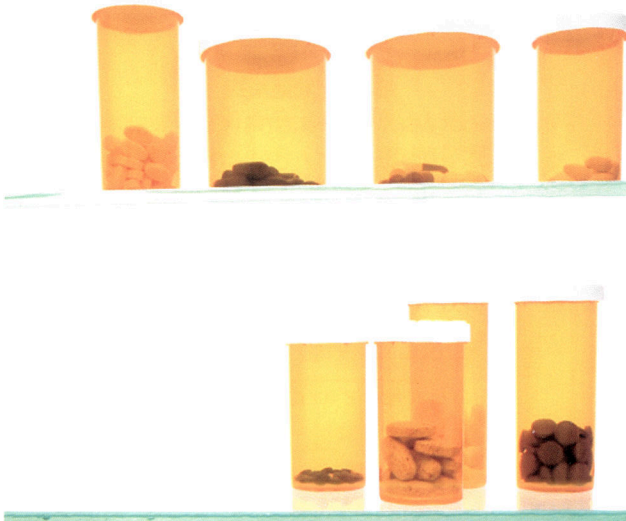
The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) joined the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to develop consumer guidelines to reduce the possibility of misuse of prescription drugs while also protecting the environment.

This brochure outlines these guidelines and provides helpful tips for safe disposal of unused or expired medicines.

Most people have been told to flush unwanted medications down the drain or toilet rather than keeping them around so they would not be misused by someone else who was not prescribed the medication. Although this prevents the possibility of medication misuse, flushing creates a new and growing environmental problem.

A growing number of community-based “take back” programs offer a safe disposal alternative. Call your city or county government household trash and recycling service and ask if a drug “take back” program is available.

Karmanos patients may bring unused chemotherapy medications with them to their clinic appointment/s to have the Karmanos Pharmacy safely dispose of them. This includes used sharps containing chemotherapy medication (see back panel for more information).



Remember to always follow specific disposal instructions on the drug label or patient information that accompany the medication. Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet unless this information specifically instructs you to do so.

You may call your pharmacist or pharmacy to get information on the best way to dispose of a particular drug or medication. Generally if no instructions are given, you may throw the drugs in the household trash, but first — follow the simple bulleted steps on the “How to properly and safely dispose of medications” panel.