

# Safe Medication Practices for Controlled Substances

This handout is designed to supplement the educational video shared with you by your healthcare provider. You can review this video again at: <http://www.generationrx.org/take-action/patient/>



## Using Medication Safely

- Only use prescription medications exactly as instructed by your healthcare professionals.
- Do not break, chew, dissolve, or crush your medication unless you are told to do so by your healthcare professionals.
- This medication might make you sleepy or drowsy – do not drive or operate machinery until you know how this medication affects you.
- Never take this medication with other drugs or alcohol without asking your healthcare professionals.
- Never share your medications with others or take someone else's prescription drugs.
- If you have questions, be sure to talk with your healthcare professionals.

## Safe Medication Storage and Disposal

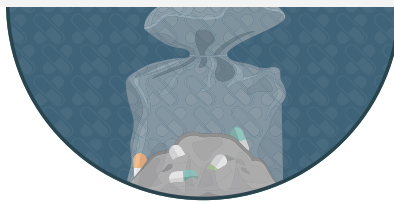
- Always store your medication in the original container and keep it out of sight; in a locked container, cabinet, or drawer; and out of the reach of children or pets.
- Read the materials that came with your prescription to see if there are any special instructions for disposing of unused medication. If not:

- 1** Take advantage of local drug take-back events or community drug drop boxes. You can find drug drop box locations at [www.rxdrugdropbox.org](http://www.rxdrugdropbox.org).
- 2** Visit [www.FDA.gov](http://www.FDA.gov) to find a list of medications that should be flushed.
- 3** If you cannot find specific instructions and don't have access to a drug drop box or drug take-back program, follow these three simple steps to dispose of unused medications:



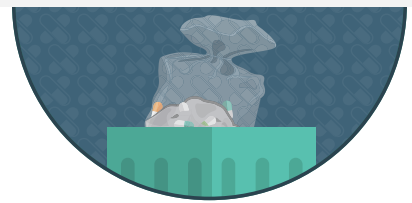
### Step 1

- Mix the medication with an unpleasant substance like used coffee grounds, dirt or kitty litter.



### Step 2

- Put the mixture in a sealed bag.



### Step 3

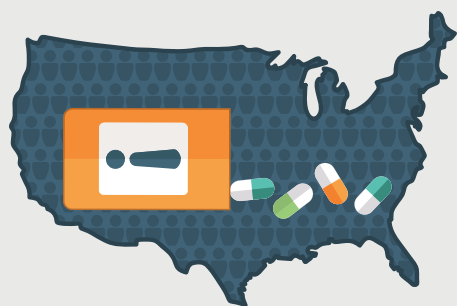
- Place in the trash.

## What is Misuse?

Anytime you take medication in a different way or for a different reason than your healthcare professionals intended, it's misuse. Prescription drug misuse can lead to serious health, legal and social consequences.

Causes of the Epidemic:

- Billions of prescriptions are prescribed each year, creating greater potential for misuse.
- Most people that misuse drugs get them from friends or family—and sometimes without the person's knowledge.



## Did you know...

- Millions of Americans misuse a prescription drug every month – and thousands do so for the first time, everyday.
- Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the United States.
- More people visit emergency departments because of prescription drug misuse than for illicit “street” drugs.

## Need Help?

- If you or someone you know has a problem with prescription drug misuse, talk with your healthcare professionals – warning signs include:
  - ✓ A strong desire for the medication
  - ✓ Taking the medication more than you're supposed to
  - ✓ Damaged relationships from misusing the medication
  - ✓ Spending a lot of time trying to get more of the medication
  - ✓ Feeling guilty after you misuse the medication
  - ✓ Having a friend or relative who is worried about your misuse of the medication
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides guidance on locating drug treatment facilities at: [www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov](http://www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov) or you can call their hotline at 1-800-662-HELP.
- SAMHSA also provides a listing of medication-assisted treatment providers at [www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/physician-program-data/treatment-physician-locator](http://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment/physician-program-data/treatment-physician-locator).



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