

Check Your Medicine Cabinet

Individuals and families are all likely to find a variety of unused, expired, and unneeded medications in their homes. Any left-over medications should be disposed of properly for the following reasons:

- ✓ It is **UNSAFE** to reuse medications. If a person thinks a prescription medication is needed, they should contact a doctor.
- ✓ Unused medications are often **INEFFECTIVE** because they have been kept past their expiration date or they have been stored improperly.
- ✓ Unused medications can make a person's home the target of **BURGLARY OR THEFT** by drug abusers.
- ✓ Unwanted medications can be found and ingested by children or pets, resulting in accidental **POISONING**.

Protect You & Your Family

Educate your family about taking medications as directed to reduce the amount of unwanted medications in your household in the future. If you don't know how to take your medications, ask your pharmacist. Additionally, check the expiration dates of your medications every six months and properly dispose of expired products. Consider purchasing small quantities of medications to prevent "leftovers".

Remove all personal health information before disposing the prescription container.

Recycle the prescription vial with other plastics.

*For more information, visit
SMARxT Disposal at www.smarxtdisposal.net or
Nebraska MEDS at www.nebraskameds.org.*

Protect The Environment

Step 1
Place unwanted medication in a plastic bag and crush it or add water.



Step 2
Mix in coffee grounds, cat litter or sawdust.



Step 3
Place in the trash. **DO NOT** flush or pour down a drain.



Don't Flush Medications

If flushed down the drain, unneeded or expired medications can contaminate our water.

In 2002, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) released a study that detailed very low concentrations of medications in 80% of 139 waterways across the country.

Seven streams and groundwater samples in Nebraska were included in this study.

Nonprescription drugs, like acetaminophen, were found most frequently. Less commonly found were prescription drugs, such as antibiotics, hormones, and even antidepressants.



NPA

Nebraska Pharmacists Association

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How to Discard Your Unused Medications

Safe disposal of unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications will protect your family, our communities, and the environment.



Nebraska Medication Education for Disposal Strategies
www.nebraskameds.org