

What are the best ways TO GET RID OF OPIOIDS?



If, at some point, you have unused (or expired) opioids, it is important to dispose of them as soon as you can. If you don't get rid of them, you run the risk of taking them by mistake, or someone else might take them.

Opioids are not like over-the-counter drugs, such as aspirin or cold medicine. Opioids are a controlled substance. As such, the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) have set up guidelines for the best ways to dispose of unused opioids.

First, the DEA hosts a "take-back" day with lots of events around the country. To find an event near you, please visit http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html.

If there is not an event where you live, please follow one of these steps.

1

Visit an authorized collection site. Sites where you live might include a:

- ▶ pharmacy
- ▶ hospital
- ▶ clinic
- ▶ police station

2

Some pharmacies have mail-back envelopes to help you dispose of unused opioids through the mail.

- ▶ Please note, the pharmacy must mail them. It is illegal for you to send drugs through the mail.

3

If there is no take-back or mail-back program where you live, you can dispose of opioids in your household trash. But, if you do, make sure you:

- ▶ do not crush the pills
- ▶ mix the opioids with an unpleasant substance such as dirt, rotten food, used cat litter or used coffee grounds
- ▶ place the mixture in something that can be sealed (such as a zip-top bag)
- ▶ add to your trash the morning your trash is collected

If you can't do any of these things, please ask a pharmacist what you can do. Once the opioids have been disposed, you can throw out the empty pill bottle or package. Please be sure to scratch out your name or tear off the label so others can't see your private health information.

Visit <http://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm101653.htm> to learn more.

Be safe. Properly get rid of controlled substances to protect you and the community.