

Safe Storage and Disposal of Medicines

Medicines are drugs prescribed by your doctor such as antibiotics, opioids for pain, and other over the counter drugs. They need to be stored in a correct way for use. Ask your pharmacist about the best way to store your medicine. You should never reuse leftover medicines without talking to your doctor first. There is a right way to get rid of leftover medicines. Look at the medicines you have on hand. Old outdated and unused ones should be thrown away.

How do I safely dispose of medicines?

Throwing away expired or unused medicines in the right way can protect you and your loved ones from harm. It will also prevent the medicines from getting into someone else's hands for use. Follow the instructions on the label or package inserts to know how to safely dispose of your medicines. DO NOT flush down the toilet or sink unless the label or patient information insert tells you to do this.

Follow these steps before throwing away medicines in the trash:

1. Pour medicine into a plastic bag that seals. Add water to help dissolve the medicine.
2. Add kitty litter, dirt or coffee grounds (something that will make it less appealing for pets and children to eat) to the plastic bag.
3. Seal the plastic bag and put it in the trash.
4. Remove and destroy any personal information (such as the label with your name) from the medicine container before recycling or throwing it away.

Drug Take-back Programs

Drug take-back programs are a good way to get rid of expired, unwanted or unused medicines from the home. This will lower the risk that others may accidentally take the medicine.

Local drug take-back program information:

Many police stations have drug take-back boxes in their lobbies. To find the nearest take-back box:

- Visit the PA Dept of Drug and Alcohol Program's website: www.ddap.pa.gov
 - o Click on the Drug Take-Back link
 - o Enter your address or zip code to find a location near you

- Keep medicines in a safe place, out of sight and reach of children.
- Controlled medicines, like opioids, should be stored in a locked container.

Poison help: 1-800-222-1222

*** WellSpan Medical Group offices and other facilities DO NOT accept medicine for disposal.**

At this time, the following WellSpan Outpatient Pharmacy locations will accept medicines for disposal:

- WellSpan Pharmacy, York Hospital
- WellSpan Pharmacy, Apple Hill Medical Center
- WellSpan Pharmacy, Fairfield
- WellSpan Pharmacy, Good Samaritan Hospital
- WellSpan Pharmacy, Ephrata Community Hospital