

Why do I need to get rid of my old medicine?

Prescription drug abuse has been on the rise and is growing exponentially.

- 70% of people who abuse prescription pain relievers say they got them from friends or relatives, often without their knowledge
- Marijuana and prescription medication are the most common forms of drug abuse
- The majority of poisoning deaths are contributed to misuse of prescription drugs



Why can't I just throw it away or flush it?

- People often go through the trash, and may stumble upon some unused prescription medicine
- These pills can end up being sold or abused
- Flushing medicine introduces extra drugs into the water systems
- New technology is detecting trace amounts of medicine in the environmental and drinking water supply

5 Steps to Safety— Disposal Technique

- 1) Pour your medicine into a sealable plastic bag
- 2) If the medicine is a solid (tablet, capsule), add a small amount of water to dissolve it
- 3) Add an undesirable substance (dirt, coffee grounds, or kitty litter) to the liquid medicine in the plastic bag
- 4) Seal up the bag. Immediately dispose of it in the household trash for regular pick-up
- 5) Use a marker to black out any personal or contact information, as well as the drug information on your empty medicine bottle. Then, the empty bottle can be recycled with plastic wastes.

What should I do about used needles, syringes, or IV bags?

Household Sharps, including needles, syringes, and lancets

- After use, dispose of sharps in a rigid, puncture-resistant container
- Common household containers include bleach bottles and laundry detergent bottles
- Properly seal the bottle with duct tape and **mark that it is not for recycle** before disposing with the household trash
- If your town or city does not allow this, contact the NH Syringe Access Initiative at (603)271-0290, the SHARPs Program (Store Household sharps And Return them Properly) at (800)628-8070, or the NH Department of Transportation Sharps Program at (603)485-3806



When disposed of properly, syringes may be thrown away with your trash

Intravenous (IV) bags

- Empty IV bags can be thrown away or recycled. IV bags with contents should be returned to the medical care provider
- IV bags used for chemotherapy should not be disposed of in the trash. Talk to your health care provider for more information.