

# Disposing of old medications



~~no flush~~

## WRAP & TRASH!

Old medicines, including vitamins and nutritional supplements, are the #1 cause of poisonings in children under 5. Flushing them down the drain or toilet pollutes our water and can harm fish, turtles, waterfowl and the animals that eat them, including people. Improper disposal in the trash may create an opportunity for illegal use.



1. Keep the medicine in its original container.
2. Mark through, tape over or scratch off personal information.

**For solid medications, such as pills or capsules:** add a small amount of water to at least partially dissolve them. Seal the container with duct tape or other opaque tape.

**For liquid medications:** add enough table salt, flour, charcoal, coffee grounds or nontoxic powdered spice, such as turmeric or mustard to make a pungent, unsightly mixture that discourages anyone from eating it. Seal the container with duct tape or other opaque tape to prevent leaks and breakage.

**For blister packs:** wrap the blister packages containing pills in multiple layers of duct tape or other opaque tape.

**Unused ampules, vials, and IV bags** should *NOT* be opened (other than to scratch out the patient's name). Wrap the item with duct or other opaque tape to minimize breakage, and then place in an opaque plastic container (such as an empty yogurt or margarine tub).



3. Double bag the contained drugs in a closable plastic bag then place in a non-descript container such as a brown paper bag, box or can.
4. Tape the container closed and put it in the trash. This helps prevent immediate identification that the package contains drugs and helps contain any leaks if the container breaks during the disposal process. Avoid putting drugs into any material or food that might be attractive to pets or wildlife.

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