

National Drug Take Back Day

Frequently Asked Questions

WHY TAKE BACK YOUR MEDICINE?

When you get unneeded medicines out of your house, you decrease the risk of intentional misuse or overdose by teens, family members, or guests in your home. You also decrease the risk of accidental poisoning to children and pets which are, sadly, all too common.

Medicine thrown in the trash can still do harm. When medications are flushed down the toilet, they can get into our rivers, lakes, and oceans. Properly disposing of medications- either in a permanent take back site or during a take back day- keeps our loved ones and the environment safe!

WHAT TYPES OF MEDICINES ARE ACCEPTED?

Prescriptions*

- Opioid and non-opioid medications in any form (pill, tablet, etc.)
- Pet medications

Over-the-counter medications*

- Any expired and unused medicines or vitamins

*For liquids, keep them tightly sealed in their original container

WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTED AT TAKE BACK DAY EVENTS?

- Injectables or needles/syringes of any kind
- Intra-venous solutions
- Chemotherapy medications
- Medical waste
- Illegal drugs or marijuana
- Vaping devices with batteries that cannot be removed
- Thermometers with mercury

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MEDICINES THAT PEOPLE DROP OFF?

Event organizers do not count, inventory, or log the medicines dropped off for disposal. Law enforcement agencies seal and store the boxes of collected medicine until they can be picked up for incineration by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

WHO PUTS ON THE EVENTS?

National Drug Take Back Day is held every October and April by the DEA in collaboration with local law enforcement agencies. Community organizations and local coalitions focused on substance use prevention can also help organize and promote take back day events with law enforcement.

Take Back Day events are strategies approved by the Washington State Health Care Authority and the North Sound Accountable Community of Health to support the [Washington State Opioid Response Plan](#).

DO I HAVE TO WAIT FOR TAKE BACK DAY TO GET RID OF MY MEDS?

Nope! In 2018, the Skagit County Board of Health passed *Skagit County Code (SCC) 12.2, Secure Medicine Return ordinance*, requiring pharmaceutical producers to pay for the collection and disposal of leftover medications.

All Skagit County residents can safely dispose of leftover medicines for free in three secure and convenient ways: physical drop boxes or kiosks in select pharmacies, hospitals, and law enforcement agencies; mail-back distribution sites where folks can pick up free pre-paid envelopes and boxes to dispose of medications through the U.S. Mail; or mail-back supplies can be sent to your home. Find out more at [MED-Project™](#)

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF & MY FAMILY?

- Talk to your medical or dental provider about other options for managing pain.
- Learn the facts about your medications and their risk for addiction and overdose.
- Store medicines in a locking cabinet, box, or bag and keep the key securely in another location.
- Keep an inventory of current medications to be aware if something goes missing.
- Never share your prescriptions with others.
- Safeguard your kids by talking openly with them about your family's policy on drugs and medications of all kinds.
- Learn how to respond to an overdose and how to obtain and administer naloxone (aka Narcan®) the medication that can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose.
- Dispose of any unused, unneeded, or expired medications right away. Year-round take back sites and mail-in options can be found at [med-project.org](#)

To learn more visit [GetTheFactsRx.com](#)

Want to know about opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery options in our area?

Visit [SkagitRising.org](#)