Follow disposal directions you received with your medicines. If you did not receive directions, ask your healthcare professional or pharmacist about disposal or consult the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) guidelines.

Flush your prescription. Many opioids are included on the FDA’s list of medicines recommended for disposal by flushing.

The FDA recommends folding fentanyl patches in half with the sticky sides together before flushing.

Scratch out all personal information on prescription containers before discarding.

Take advantage of programs that accept unused medications for proper disposal. Find the disposal location in your area by visiting www.AgainstOpioidAbuse.org/disposal.

Ask your physician’s office or pharmacist if they provide medication disposal bags (these bags neutralize medicines to avoid damage to the environment).

You can also combine medication with dirt, kitty litter or used coffee grounds and place the mixture in a sealed plastic bag before discarding in the trash.

If you or someone close to you has an addiction to pain medication, talk to your healthcare professional or contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s treatment help line at (800) 662-HELP.

SAFELY DISPOSING of Unused Opioids

The Problem

In 2020, 9.3 million Americans misused prescription opioids.¹

136 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.²

Safe disposal is an important part of addressing the opioid abuse epidemic:

47.2%

Some medicines may be especially harmful and, in some cases, fatal with just one dose if they are used by someone other than the person for whom the medicine was prescribed.³

Unused medicines are a main source for misuse and overdose. Approximately 47.2 percent of those who misused prescription pain relievers in 2020 said that they obtained the medicine from a friend or relative.⁴

Accidental exposure to and improper disposal of fentanyl patches are also a risk, especially for young children who could put it in their mouth or on their skin.⁵

What You Can Do

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Allied Against Opioid Abuse is a national education and awareness initiative to help prevent abuse and misuse of prescription opioids. Founded by the Healthcare Distribution Alliance, the initiative is a collaborative effort with diverse partners across the pharmaceutical supply chain, as well as organizations that are experts in public health and healthcare. Our goal is to contribute to solving the opioid crisis in a meaningful way by educating patients about their rights, risks and responsibilities. To learn more visit www.AgainstOpioidAbuse.org or follow us on Twitter @AAOA_Tweets.