



National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

Digital Toolkit

Background

Twice a year, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) proclaims a national day to ask all Americans to safely dispose of unused medication. Many businesses, medical offices, and first responders are hosting take back events to safely dispose of unused medication. National Take Back Day happens twice a year; at the last National Take Back Day, Americans collected a record-breaking 900,000 pounds of prescription drugs, more than the weight of three Boeing 757s.

Take Back Day – October 27th

- On Saturday, October 27th police stations, retail pharmacies, and community centers will be hosting prescription drug take back events at over 4,000 locations.
- To find a location near you, visit **TakeBackDay.DEA.gov**.
- Go to your medicine cabinet and check for any unused or expired medications, including opioids.
- Opioids go by many names, including Vicodin, Oxycontin, Percocet, Opana, tramadol, morphine, Kadian, and Avinz.

Unused Prescription Drugs Could Be a Danger for Friends or Family

- Everyone knows old leftovers in your refrigerator can make you sick. But leftover drugs in your medicine cabinet can be much more harmful—they can kill.
- America has tons of leftover prescription opioids: the vast majority of people do not use all the pills they are prescribed.
 - A 2017 study found that up to 92 percent of patients prescribed opioids did not use their full prescription.¹
- Every day, 47 people die from overdoses involving prescription opioids. Just because something is prescribed, doesn't mean it is safe for all purposes.²
- Each year, more than 11 million Americans abuse or misuse prescription pain medicines.
 - The majority of these cases come from taking drugs from a family or friend's prescription in their own medicine cabinet.
- Misusing opioids is a proven route toward becoming addicted to heroin.
 - Nearly 80 percent of Americans recent heroin initiates reported misusing prescription opioids first.³
- Many people do not know they have been prescribed an opioid:
 - Vicodin, Oxycontin, Percocet, Opana, tramadol, and morphine such as Kadian and Avinza are all opioids.⁴
- Senior citizens are especially likely to keep unused pills. A grandparent's medicine cabinet is an easy place for teenagers, or other loved ones, to fuel their addiction. Check your own cabinet first and encourage loved ones to clean out their unused medications too.
- Unused medicine is a threat to the lives of children, seniors, and pets. Accidental drug misuse sends thousands of Americans to the emergency room each year. If you don't need it, safely dispose of your left-over drugs for your family's safety.

How to Get Rid of Unused Prescription Drugs

- On Take Back Day, unneeded medication can be dropped off at any one of [the](#) thousands of disposal dropoff sites.
 - A tool to locate your nearest collection site is available at: <https://takebackday.dea.gov>

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28768328>

² <https://www.drugabuse.gov/related-topics/trends-statistics/overdose-death-rates>

³ <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/DR006/DR006/nonmedical-pain-reliever-use-2013.htm>

KEY MESSAGES

- Year round, you can drop off unneeded prescription drugs at participating police and sheriff departments and retail pharmacies or use a safe disposal kit to deactivate the drug.
 - Some retail pharmacies, such as Walgreens and Walmart, offer drug-disposal programs on site.
 - A number of other retail pharmacies, such as Costco, CVS, or Rite Aid, sell postage-paid envelopes for customers to mail any prescriptions.
 - Free safe disposal mail-in envelopes are offered by the National Safety Council at [NSC.org/TakeBack..](https://www.nsc.org/TakeBack)
- On National Take Back Day (Saturday, October 27, 2018), the DEA, in partnership with Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement, businesses, medical offices, Federal agencies, and first responders will host events to collect and safely dispose of unneeded medication.
 - National Take Back Day happens twice per year.
- Each Take Back Day, thousands of pounds of prescription drugs are disposed, helping to prevent incidents of drug abuse and misuse across the Nation.
 - According to the DEA, results from the October 2017 National Take Back Day show:
 - 4,274 law enforcement partners participated
 - There were 5,321 collection sites
 - 912,305 pounds of prescription drugs were collected (more than the weight of three Boeing 757 airplanes)

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Oct. 27 is Prescription Drug #TakeBackDay . Check your medicine cabinet for unused or expired prescription drugs and visit <https://takebackday.dea.gov> to find a safe disposal spot near you.
- There are over 4,000 locations where you can safely drop off your unused or expired prescription drugs. Visit <https://takebackday.dea.gov> to find your nearest location.
- Mark your calendars! On Saturday, Oct. 27, over 4,000 police stations, pharmacies and community centers will be hosting prescription drug #TakeBackDay locations. Visit <https://takebackday.dea.gov> to plan your drop off.
- Protect your family and friends. Get rid of your unused prescription drugs on #TakeBackDay on April 28. Visit <https://takebackday.dea.gov/> to learn more.
- Do you know how to dispose of prescription drugs safely? Visit <https://takebackday.dea.gov/> to learn more.
- Nearly 80% of America’s new heroin users report misusing prescription opioids first. Don’t let unused pills become the first step down a deadly path for yourself or someone you love. Find a disposal site at <https://takebackday.dea.gov/> #TakeBackday
- Opioids have many names. Check your medicine cabinet for unused Vicodin, Oxycontin, Percocet, Opana, Kadian, or Avinza and take them to a #TakeBackDay safe disposal site on April 28.
- 47 people die every day from overdoses involving prescription opioids. Protect your family and friends. Find a disposal site at <https://takebackday.dea.gov/> #TakeBackDay

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OCTOBER 27, 2018

Other names for opioids

VICODIN
OXYCONTIN
PERCOCET

OPANA
KADIAN
AVINZA

TRAMADOL
CODEINE
FENTANYL

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Visit takebackday.dea.gov to find a safe collection site