

We are all in this together



***Prescription
Opioids and
Home Safety:
Proper Storage
& Disposal***



Learning Objectives

Recognize why prescription opioids in the home is an important safety topic for the aging adult population of Montana.

Better understand medication diversion and why it is important to properly store and dispose of unused prescription opioids.

Identify ways to safely store medications in the home.

Better understand the different medication disposal methods available.



Aging Adults and Prescription Opioids in the Home

Important Considerations - Montana is an “aging state”:

- 2020:
 - ❖ In 66% of MT counties – 20-29.9% of population is 65+
 - ❖ In 11% of MT counties – 30-39.9% of population is 65+
- 2025:
 - ❖ In 66% of MT counties – 20-29.9% of population is 65+
 - ❖ In **23%** of MT counties – 30-39.9% of population is 65+
- 2030:
 - ❖ In 55% of MT counties – 20-29.9% of population is 65+
 - ❖ In **38%** of MT counties – 30-39.9% of population is 65+
 - ❖ In **2** counties – 40-49.9% of population is 65+

(Data from MT DOC/Census and Economic Information Center – 8/2010)

- Keep in mind...Nationally:
 - From 1999 to 2017, the greatest percentage change in drug overdose death rates occurred among adults aged 55–64, increasing from 4.2 per 100,000 in 1999 to 28.0 in 2017, a more than 6-fold increase.



Aging Adults and Prescription Opioids in the Home

- People ages 45+ are prescribed not only more opioids, but higher dosages as well. Increasing likelihood of trips and falls.
- Emerging evidence that Medicare patients have some of the highest and fastest-growing rates of opioid use disorder.
- Elderly less likely to recognize signs of OD
- Aging populations are less able to metabolize medications properly
- Most likely taking more than 1 prescription = drug interactions



Aging Adults and Prescription Opioids in the Home

- More grandparents are raising grandchildren than ever before.
 - Increases the likelihood of elder abuse as many aging individuals are raising grandchildren due to the opioid problem.
 - Increases the hazards associated with accidental poisonings among children.

Why do we care?

Since 2000, more than 700 Montanans have died from prescription opioid overdoses.

299 of those deaths were people aged 45+ (42.7%).

How does this affect how we help address keeping our homes and families safe?





Safe Storage = A Safe Home

- When not stored properly, prescription opioids can fall into the wrong hands, leading to unintentional poisoning.
 - Prescription drug diversion: the deflection of prescription drugs from medical sources into the illegal market. This includes transferring drugs to people they were not prescribed for.
 - It's against the law to divert drugs—you can go to jail for it.
- Hide and lock away prescription opioids where family, friends, or guests cannot find them.
- Keep medications in original container. Remove/black out your name and prescription number to protect your identity before disposing it.
- Make sure to always keep your medications locked up and stored away, out of reach of children or pets.

Safe Storage – Out of Sight



Safe Medication Storage Zone
– **Out of Sight**, out of reach!

Are medications safely stored
in areas that are inaccessible
to children?

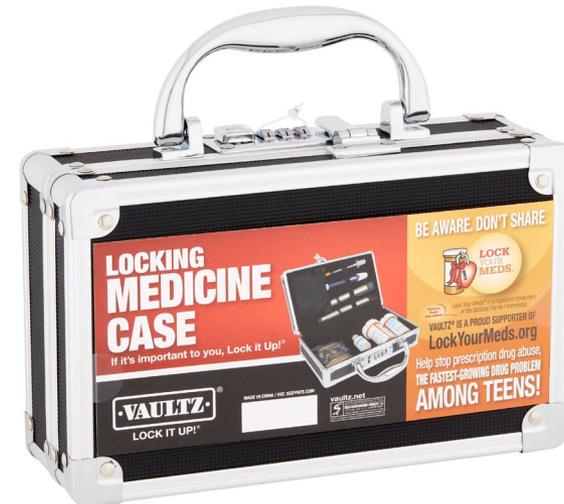
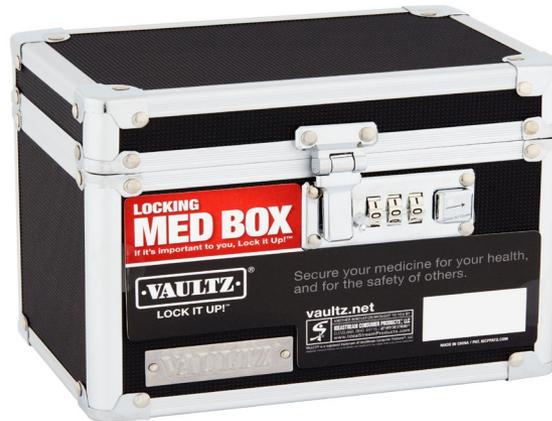
Medications should be, not
only out of reach, but also **out
of sight!**

Securely storing medications is
as important as securely
storing a gun in your home!

Safe Medication Storage – Locking Cases

Locking medicine cases are available for purchase on-line and at most major big box stores. Costs average around \$25.

Make every effort to store these lock boxes out of reach and most importantly, **out of sight.**





Safe Medication Disposal – Methods

1st Choice: Utilize local medication take-back community events.

2nd Choice: Utilize medication drop-boxes located in your community.

3rd Choice: Utilize a Deterra[®] or other medication neutralization pouch.

4th Choice: Utilize household disposal using coffee grounds/kitty litter, etc.

5th Choice: Flush medications if directed to do so on the label. Does not apply to septic systems.

Prescription Medication Take Back Events

Encourage participation in community events such as National Take-Back Day.

Montana, 2019 event:

- 1,720 lbs. collected
- 26 collection sites

Click here to locate the next Take Back Day in your area.

<https://takebackday.dea.gov/>



Prescription Medication Drop Boxes



Disposing of unused medications in a secure collection box is the preferred method for safely disposing of household medications.

These collection boxes are available at permanent collection receptacles that reside at law enforcement offices, pharmacies, or other secure locations.

As of August 2019, there are 164 drop-boxes in MT:

- 50 = police departments or sheriff's offices
- 76 = pharmacies
- 38 = health clinics or hospitals.

For specific locations, visit

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/substanceabuse/dropboxlocations>



The Following Items CAN Be Disposed of in Medication Drop Boxes

- Prescriptions Medications
- Pet Medications
- Over-the-Counter Medications
- Prescription Ointments
- Prescription Patches
- Vitamins



The Following Items CAN NOT Be Disposed of in Medication Drop Boxes

- Needles and Syringes

For Safe Needle and Syringe disposal got to link:

<http://safeneedledisposal.org/>

- Thermometers
- Hydrogen Peroxide
- Inhalers
- Lotions and Liquids
- Aerosol Cans

Safe Disposal – Medication Deactivation Pouches

Single-use medication deactivation pouches:

- Contain a substance that neutralizes prescription medications when combined, rendering it safe to dispose of in household garbage.
- Allows individuals to deactivate prescription medications in the home for quick and easy disposal.

* *Ideal for those who cannot travel to medication drop box locations.*



Safe Disposal – Household Trash

Follow these simple steps to dispose of medicines in the household trash

MIX

Mix medicines (do not crush tablets or capsules) with an unpalatable substance such as dirt, kitty litter, or used coffee grounds;



PLACE

Place the mixture in a container such as a sealed plastic bag;



THROW

Throw the container in your household trash;



SCRATCH OUT

Scratch out all personal information on the prescription label of your empty pill bottle or empty medicine packaging to make it unreadable, then dispose of the container.



If a community drop-box is unavailable, medicines can be mixed with an undesirable substance such as coffee grounds or kitty litter in a sealed plastic bag and disposed of in household trash.

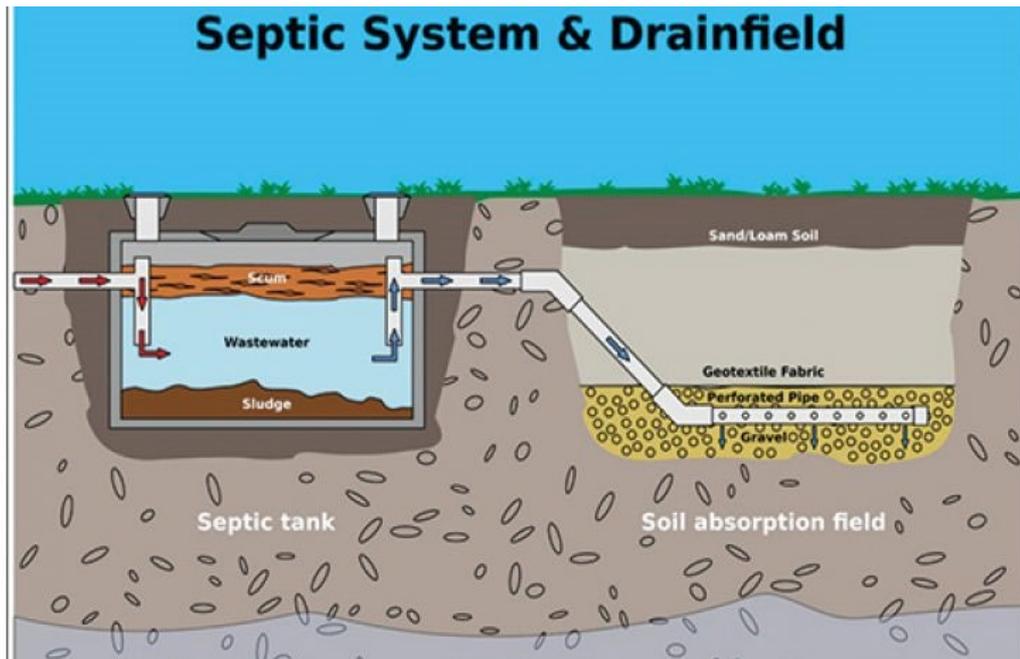


Why Can't I Flush My Medications?

- Flushing prescription opioids is only recommended when no other disposal options are available.
- Remember that the type of plumbing (septic systems) plays a role in the flushability of medicines.
- Check the **FDA flush list** to see if a medication can be flushed: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-know/drug-disposal-flush-potentially-dangerous-medicines#FlushList>

Safe Medication Disposal - Flushing

Septic Systems



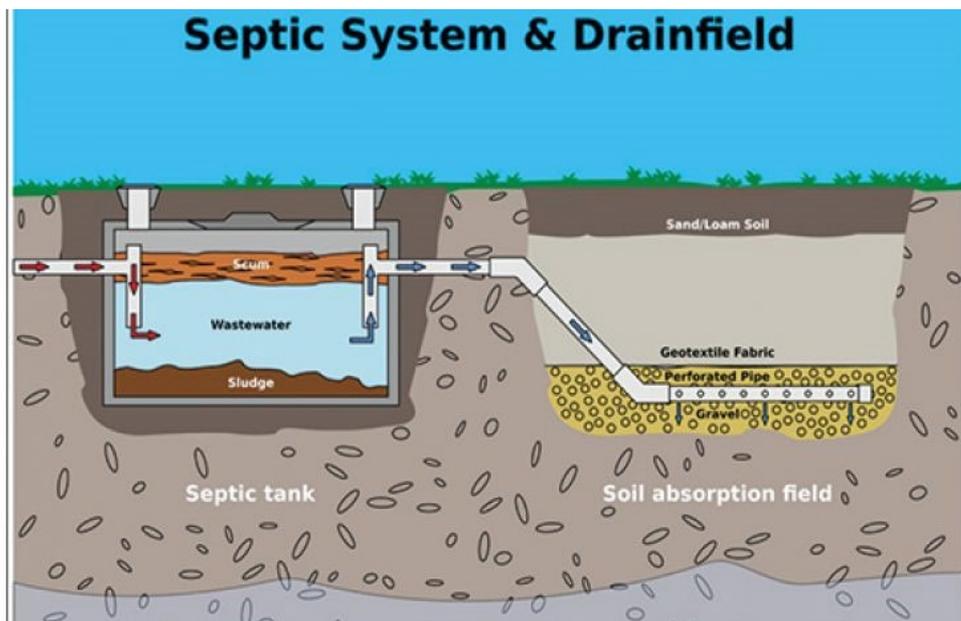
Septic systems are used in many rural areas of Montana.

IF on a septic system, it is recommended that ALL Rx meds are disposed of via the household garbage.

- ✓ OTC meds are ok to flush on a septic system
- *Flushing Fentanyl patches is never recommended.

Safe Medication Disposal - Flushing

Septic Systems



- Rx medications and septic systems don't get along, even if they are "expired."
- *Pharmaceuticals vs. Over the Counter Medications* – OTC medications are ok to flush on septic systems; prescription medications (antibiotics, anti-depressants, cancer-related drugs, or painkillers) **are not!**
- Rx meds can harm the septic system:
 - Potential to clog the system
 - Can harm the biological processes needed for proper septic system functioning (just using the bathroom while taking pharmaceuticals can be a problem)
 - Medications, like antibiotics, can kill off the healthy microbes that you need in your septic system. (Bacteria and enzymes aid in filtering the wastewater from your house.)

Safe Medication Disposal - Flushable Medications

List of medicines recommended for disposal by flushing.

Type: drugs@fda into your browser, or search: drugs@fda on your tablet or phone, and the current list of flushable medications will appear.

List of medicines recommended for disposal by flushing

This list from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) tells you which medicines you should flush when they are no longer needed. Links in the list below direct you to medicine information for consumers that includes specific disposal instructions.

Active Ingredient	Found in Brand Names
Benzhydrocodone /Acetaminophen	Apadaz
Buprenorphine	Belbuca , Bunavail , Butrans , Suboxone , Subutex , Zubsolv
Fentanyl	Abstral , Actiq , Duragesic , Fentora , Onsolis
Diazepam	Diastat / Diastat AcuDial rectal gel
Hydrocodone	Anexsia , Hysingla ER , Lortab , Norco , Reprexain , Vicodin , Vicoprofen , Zohydro ER
Hydromorphone	Dilaudid , Exalgo
Meperidine	Demerol
Methadone	Dolophine , Methadose
Methylphenidate	Daytrana transdermal patch system
Morphine	Arymo ER , Embeda , Kadian , Morphabond ER , MS Contin , Avinza
Oxycodone	Combunox , Oxaydo (formerly Oxecta), OxyContin , Percocet , Percodan , Roxicet , Roxicodone , Roxybond , Targiniq ER , Xartemis XR , Xtampza ER
Oxymorphone	Opana , Opana ER
Tapentadol	Nucynta , Nucynta ER
Sodium Oxybate	Xyrem oral solution

FDA believes that the known risk of harm, including death, to humans from accidental exposure to the medicines listed above, especially potent opioid medicines, far outweighs any potential risk to humans or the environment from flushing these medicines. FDA will continue to conduct risk assessments as a part of our larger activities related to the safe use of medicines.

For disposal information, specific to another medication you are taking please [visit Drugs@FDA](#). Once there type in the medication name and click on search. Then click on the label section for that specific medication. Select the most recent label and search for the term "disposal."

Updated: April 2018

Safe Medication Disposal - Flushing



Some pharmacies will place a label on prescriptions indicating whether the medicine is flushable or not.

Check your prescriptions for these labels before flushing medications down the drain.



Do not flush unused medications or pour down a sink or drain.

**DO NOT FLUSH UNUSED MEDS
OR POUR DOWN SINK**



Safe Medication Disposal - Flushing

Fentanyl Patches

Municipal system only (not applicable to septic systems):

- FDA recommends: Fold patch in $\frac{1}{2}$, sticky sides together, flush down the toilet.
- Don't dispose in household trash where kids and pets can find it. (Also, think about sanitation works and others who may come into contact with it.)
- FDA recognizes there are environmental concerns about flushing medicines down the toilet, however, believes the risk associated with accidental exposure outweighs any potential risk associated with disposal by flushing.



Safe Medication Disposal – Quick Tips

- Quick Link and Printable Fact Sheet for Prescription Drugs/Medication: Proper Use, Storage and Disposal in Montana:
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/publichealth/documents/EMSTS/opioids/MedicationProperUseStorageDisposal.pdf>
- Unused or expired medications have the potential to be misused or stolen.
- Medications that are flushed down the sink or toilet may contaminate local water sources.
- Some medications, like fentanyl patches, should not be flushed if utilizing a septic system.



Safe Medication Disposal - In Conclusion

- Prescription opioids need to be securely locked up and out of reach AND sight!
- Taking the time and effort to ensure that opioid-based medications are properly stored/disposed of can:
 - Prevent accidental overdoses in children
 - Prevent diversion of medications by friends, family, or even acquaintances.



Information Links

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services:

[https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/publichealth/documents/EMSTS/opioids/MedicationPr
operUseStorageDisposal.pdf](https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/publichealth/documents/EMSTS/opioids/MedicationPr
operUseStorageDisposal.pdf)

Addressing Substance Use Disorder in Montana, Strategic Plan: Interim Draft Report:

[https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/Documents/AddressingSubstanceUseDisorderInMonta
na.pdf](https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/Documents/AddressingSubstanceUseDisorderInMonta
na.pdf)

Prescription Medication Take Back Day Event in your area: <https://takebackday.dea.gov/>

Medication Drop Box Locations in your area:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/amdd/substanceabuse/dropboxlocations>

FDA flush list: [https://www.fda.gov/drugs/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-
know/drug-disposal-flush-potentially-dangerous-medicines#FlushList](https://www.fda.gov/drugs/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-
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