




# EMPTY THE MEDICINE CABINET

## The U.S. is in the midst of an opioid crisis.

**OVERDOSE DEATHS**

Overdose deaths involving prescription opioids have quadrupled since 1999 and

**MORE THAN 183,000 PEOPLE HAVE DIED FROM OVERDOSES RELATED TO PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS.**<sup>1,2</sup>




**EMERGENCY VISITS**


Every day,

**OVER 1,000 PEOPLE ARE TREATED IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS**

for misusing prescription opioids.<sup>3</sup>



**ECONOMIC IMPACT**



**\$55 BILLION HEALTH AND SOCIETAL COSTS**


related to prescription opioid abuse each year.<sup>4</sup>

**OPIOID USE DISORDER**

In 2015, about

**2 MILLION AMERICANS**


had opioid use disorder.<sup>5</sup>



**RX OPIOID MISUSE**

On an average day in the US,

**5,800 INDIVIDUALS MISUSE PRESCRIPTION OPIOIDS FOR THE FIRST TIME.**<sup>5</sup>



It is important that patients take medication as prescribed by healthcare professionals, and safely store and dispose of them to help reduce the risk of accidental exposure or intentional misuse.

**DRUG DIVERSION**

**ABOUT 54%**

of those using pain relievers for non-medical use

**GET THEM FROM FRIENDS OR RELATIVES**<sup>5</sup>



If you have prescription medicine in your home,  
**IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROPERLY STORE, SAFEGUARD AND DISPOSE OF IT.**

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## THE DOS AND DON'TS OF SAFE MEDICINE STORAGE<sup>6</sup>

**DO** talk to your community pharmacist about how to properly dispose of unused or unwanted medicine. Additionally, you can access disposal information online at [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov) by searching for “Rx drug disposal.”

**DON'T** store medicine in a bathroom medicine cabinet where humidity and temperature changes can cause damage.

**DO** lock up medicine that is at risk for being abused in a cabinet, drawer, or medicine safe.

**DON'T** leave medicine in places that are easily accessible to children or pets.

**DO** keep an updated list of all prescription medicine in your home. Take an inventory at least twice a year — when clocks ‘spring’ forward in the spring and ‘fall’ back in autumn, for example.

**DO** keep medicine in a cool, dry place that is out of the reach of children.

**DON'T** take medicine in front of children who often mimic adults.

**DO** ask your community pharmacist if any of the medicine you have been prescribed may have the potential for abuse.

**DON'T** share prescription medicine. Healthcare professionals prescribe specific medicine for individuals based on personal medical histories and other health factors. A medicine that works for one person may cause harm — even death — to someone else, even if symptoms are similar.

**DO** store medicine in its original container — the label on the bottle provides important information about the medicine.

## GETTING RID OF UNUSED OR UNWANTED PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE

It is important to get rid of medicine that has expired or is no longer needed. Talk to your community pharmacist about the best way to get rid of unused or unwanted medicine in your home.

For more information on medication disposal, please visit the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) websites.<sup>7</sup>



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1. CDC. Wide-ranging online data for epidemiologic research (WONDER). Atlanta, GA: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics; 2016. Available at <https://wonder.cdc.gov/>. Accessed March 2017. 2. Rudd RA, Seth P, David F, Scholl L. Increases in Drug and Opioid-Involved Overdose Deaths — United States, 2010–2015. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*. ePub: 16 December 2016. Accessed March 2017. 3. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. *The DAWN Report: Highlights of the 2011 Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) Findings on Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits*. Rockville, MD. 4. Birnbaum HG, White AG, Schiller M, Waldman T, Cleveland JM, Roland CL. Societal Costs of Prescription Opioid Abuse, Dependence, and Misuse in the United States. *Pain Medicine*. 2011; 12(4):657-667. doi:10.1111/j.1526-4637.2011.01075.x. 5. Hughes, A., Williams, M. R., Lipari, R. N., Bose, J., Copello, E. A. P., & Kroutil, L. A. (2016, September). *Prescription drug use and misuse in the United States: Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. NSDUH Data Review. Retrieved from <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/>. Accessed March 2017. 6. Vorvick, L. Storing your medicines, National Institutes of Health, Medline Plus Medical Encyclopedia, Updated May 11, 2014. Available at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/patientinstructions/000534.htm>. Accessed March 2017. 7. FDA website link: <https://www.fda.gov/Drugs/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/BuyingUsingMedicineSafely/EnsuringSafeUseofMedicine/SafeDisposalofMedicines/ucm186187.htm> DEA website link: <https://apps.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pubdispsearch/spring/main?execution=e1s1>