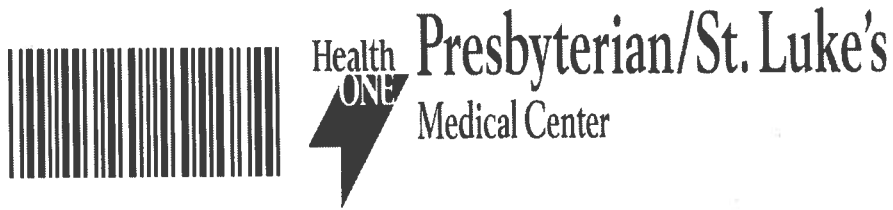


Presbyterian/St. Luke's
Medical Center

The Patient was given access to the following documents on Jul 23, 2018

SAFE DISPOSAL OF OPIOIDS - Discharge Care, English

Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center
1719 E. 19th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80218
(303) 839-6000
www.pslmc.com



Safe Disposal of Opioids

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Prescription opioid pain medicines can be given in many forms. Some common forms are pills, patches, lozenges, and sprays. It is important to dispose of any expired or leftover opioids. This will prevent anyone from using the opioid without a prescription. It will also prevent a child or animal from finding and using the opioid by accident.

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS:

Call your doctor or pharmacist if:

- Someone came into contact with the opioid before or after you disposed of it.
- You need a Medication Guide if one is available for your form of opioid.
- You have questions or concerns about disposing of your opioid medicine.

The best way to dispose of opioids: The laws vary by country and area. In the United States, the best way is to return the opioids through a take-back program. This program is offered by the US Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). The following are options for using the program:

- **Take the opioids to a DEA collection site.** The site is often a law enforcement center. Call your local law enforcement center for scheduled take-back days in your area. You will be given information on where to go if the collection site is in a different location.
- **Take the opioids to an approved pharmacy or hospital.** A pharmacy or hospital may be set up as a collection site. You will need to ask if it is a DEA collection site if you were not directed there. A pharmacy or doctor's office may not be able to take back opioids unless it is a DEA site.
- **Use a mail-back system.** This means you are given containers to put the opioids into. You will then mail them in the containers.
- **Use a take-back drop box.** This is a place to leave the opioids at any time. People and animals will not be able to get into the box. Your local law enforcement agency can tell you where to find a drop box in your area.

Other safe ways to dispose of opioids: The medicine may come with disposal instructions. The instructions may vary depending on the brand of medicine you are using.

Instructions may come in a Medication Guide, but not every medicine has one. You may instead get instructions from your pharmacy or doctor. Follow instructions carefully. The following are general guidelines to follow:

- **Find out if you can flush the opioid.** Some opioids can be flushed down the toilet or poured into the sink. You will need to contact authorities in your area to see if this is an option for you. The FDA also offers a list of medicines that are safe to flush down the toilet. You can check the list if you cannot get the information for your local area.
- **Ask your waste management company about rules for putting opioids in the trash.** The company will be able to give you specific directions. Scratch out personal information on the original medicine label so it cannot be read. Then put it in the trash. Do not label the trash or put any information on it about the opioids. It should look like regular household trash so no one is tempted to look for the opioids. **Keep the trash out of the reach of children and animals.** Always make sure trash is secure.
- **Talk to officials if you live in a facility.** If you live in a nursing home or assisted living center, talk to an official. The person will know the rules for your area.

How to dispose of pills:

- **Remove the pills from their original containers.** Do not crush or break tablets or capsules. If possible, flush the pills down the toilet.
- **Throw the pills away safely if you cannot flush them.** Put the pills in a container. Examples are a large plastic bag that seals, or a used plastic tub with a lid. Add dirt, cat litter, sawdust, used coffee grounds, or similar material to the container. This is to keep someone from wanting to take the medicine if it is found. If the container has a lid, put it on tightly. For a plastic bag, use duct tape to make sure it is sealed.
- **Put the container into a bag.** An example is a plastic grocery bag. Do not label the bag. Put the bag with the container in your trash.
- **Safely throw away the original pill container.** Scratch out personal information on the original medicine label so it cannot be read. Then put it in the trash.

How to dispose of patches:

- **Stick the sides of the patch together.** Fold the patch in half on the sticky side. If possible, flush the patch down the toilet. Do this for used and leftover patches.
- **Throw the patch away safely if you cannot flush it.** Put the patch in a bag. Seal the bag and put it in another bag or container. Seal the outer bag or container, and then put it in the trash.
- **Wash your hands with soap and water.** Do this right after you flush or throw away a patch. This will remove any medicine from your hands. If the patch accidentally sticks to you or someone else, wash the area right away. Use soap and water. Then call your doctor.



- **Do not let a child handle patches.** The amount of opioids in patches can be life-threatening to a child. **Do not** let a child touch a patch, even if it is used. Patches may still contain some of the opioid even after they are used. **Do not** let a child throw the patch away or flush it.

How to dispose of lozenges:

- **Cut the lozenge off the handle.** If possible, flush the lozenge down the toilet. Cut the lozenge off over a toilet so it falls in. You can put up to 5 lozenges into the toilet. Flush 2 times. Repeat these steps until you have disposed of all the lozenges. Do not flush more than 5 lozenges at a time.
- **Dissolve the lozenge if you cannot flush it.** Run the handle under hot water until all the medicine is dissolved.
- **Throw handles away safely.** Your lozenges may come with a temporary container for handles. Empty the container every day into a bag. Seal the bag and put it in another bag. Then put it in the trash. Also follow these steps for handles from dissolved lozenges.

How to dispose of sprays: Sprays come with small disposal bags and a disposal bottle or pouch. Do the following to dispose of spray units:

- **Put each unit into a small disposal bag immediately after it is used.** Seal the bag. Then put it in the trash.
- **Empty any expired or leftover units before you throw them away.**
 - Open the disposal bottle or pouch. Hold the unit upside down with the nozzle inside the bottle or pouch. Spray until the unit is empty.
 - Place the empty unit in a small disposal bag. Seal it. Then put it in the trash.
 - Repeat these steps for each unit.
 - If you have a disposal bottle, put the lid on. Shake the bottle from side to side. If you have a pouch, seal it.
 - Put the bottle or pouch into the large disposal bag. Seal the large bag. Then put it in the trash.

For more information:

- Drug Enforcement Administration
8701 Morrisette Drive
Springfield,VA22152
Phone: 1-800-882-9539
Web Address: <https://www.dea.gov/divisions/office-of-diversion-control/>
- US Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring,MD 20993
Phone: 1-888-463-6332
Web Address: <http://www.fda.gov>

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