Prescription Drug Abuse is the Fastest-Growing Drug Problem in the U.S.

1 in 7 Colorado High School students has taken prescription medications without a doctor’s prescription. Over half of teens say that it’s easy to get prescription drugs from their parent’s medicine cabinets.

In 2013 nearly twice as many Coloradans—

295 died from unintentional poisonings from pain medications than were killed in drunk driving-related accidents. There were

161 deaths from drunk driving accidents.

DID YOU KNOW?

Pain Medications Obtained for Nonmedical Use

68% of people who abuse prescription painkillers obtain them from a friend or relative.

Law Enforcement Take-Back
Visit colorado.gov/cdphe/rxdrug for law enforcement take-back locations

- Accepted medicines: all medicines except syringes and injectables
- These sites DO accept narcotics and controlled substances (Percocet, Oxycontin, Vicodin, Xanax, Ritalin, Adderall, etc.)

No questions asked!

Colorado Medication Take-Back Program
Call 303.692.2903 or visit coloradomeditakeback.info for a list of take-back program locations

- Accepted medicines: prescription medicines (pills, inhalers, creams/ointments, patches, etc.), over-the-counter medicines (vitamins, cough and cold pills, etc.), and pet medicines
- Not Accepted: Narcotics and other controlled substances, syringes or injectable medicines.

Other Disposal Options

- NCPA DisposeMyMeds Program: disposemys meds.org/index.php/pharmacy-locator
- Some Colorado retail pharmacies sell “mail back envelopes” for you to take home and safely mail back unused medications.

Safe drug disposal saves lives and protects drinking water supplies.
**DO:**

- **Take Extra Care When Disposing of Syringes & Patches**
  - **SYRINGES & SHARPS:**
    - Place syringes and other injectables in a rigid (empty laundry detergent) or metal container with a screw-on cap.
    - Place a label/warning on the container (Example: Syringes – Do Not Recycle).
    - Place sealed containers in the trash, not recycling.
    - Or purchase a sharps container at your pharmacy.
      - Your pharmacy may sell pre-labeled, mail-back containers.

- **PATCHES:**
  - Only for used fentanyl or Duragesic pain patches: fold in half, sticky side together, and flush down the toilet. These patches are dangerous if not flushed immediately after use.
  - Take unopened patches to a Law Enforcement Take-Back location (see list on back page).
  - Be especially careful using and storing pain medication patches; they are dangerous if used other than prescribed and directed.

**DO NOT:**

- Don’t flush pills or liquid medication down the toilet or drain. Flushing pollutes drinking water and potentially harms aquatic life.
- How you dispose of unused and expired medications makes a difference. Studies have detected medicines in our water supplies.

**If you have no other choice,** you can throw most medicines in household trash if you follow these steps:

- Remove medicine from containers and destroy labels to help protect privacy. Recycle containers if possible or hide them in the trash.
- Mix medicine with something that cannot be eaten, such as cat litter or coffee grounds, to prevent accidental or intentional misuse of medicine by children or animals.
- Wrap the mixture in another material, such as newsprint or a paper sack, or place medicine in sealable containers (cans, plastic bags).
- Throw in the trash on the day your garbage is collected.

**HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

By monitoring your meds and disposing of them properly.

**SAFE STORAGE & SAFE DISPOSAL TIPS**

**DO:**

- Store medicines safely and dispose of them wisely.
  - Store your medicines safely away from children or others who could take your medicine without your permission. This may mean locking up your medicines in a safe, or in another secure location.
  - Practice safe disposal by taking unused or expired medicines to a disposal location (see list on back panel, or ask your pharmacist for other options).

**DO NOT:**

- **How you dispose of unused and expired medications does make a difference.**
  - Consider a safe storage solution: A medication storage cabinet that locks.
  - Don’t flush pills or liquid medication down the toilet or drain. Flushing pollutes drinking water and potentially harms aquatic life.
  - How you dispose of unused and expired medications makes a difference. Studies have detected medicines in our water supplies.

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for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention