

# SAVE A LIFE

## DISPOSE DRUGS SAFELY

Disposing of expired, unused or unwanted drugs the right way can protect people and the environment. Here is why drug disposal is important:

**Drug overdose** is the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S. More people die from drug overdoses than car accidents.<sup>1</sup>

**70,000 children** go to the hospital each year for medication errors.<sup>2</sup> Unused drugs contribute to this.<sup>3</sup>

**69%** of people who misused pain medication got them from a friend or relative.<sup>4</sup>

**80%** of new heroin users began by misusing pain drugs ordered by their doctor.<sup>5</sup>



## SAFELY STORE DRUGS BEFORE DISPOSAL<sup>6</sup>



### STEP 1

Keep drugs in the container you received them in.



### STEP 2

Lock the container in a cool, dry place out of reach of children and pets.

# SAFELY DISPOSE OF DRUGS<sup>6</sup>



Find a Michigan household drug take back site near you. For a list of sites, visit [michigan.gov/deqdrugdisposal](http://michigan.gov/deqdrugdisposal).



If you can't get to a drug take back site, use the recipe below as a last resort to dispose of expired, unused or unwanted drugs.<sup>5</sup>

## Disposal Recipe<sup>5,7</sup>

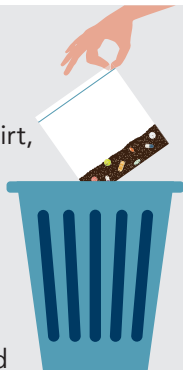
*(Do not dispose chemotherapy drugs this way, talk to your prescribing doctor instead.)*

**Step 1:** Mix drugs (do not crush) with dirt, kitty litter or used coffee grounds and add a small amount of water to dissolve any solid medications.

**Step 2:** Seal drugs in plastic bag.

**Step 3:** Place plastic bag in trash.

**Step 4:** Take prescription container and scratch out personal information, then recycle or throw away.



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### REFERENCES:

1. American Society of Addiction Medicine (2016); 2. Trust for America's Health; 3. Tucker, C. (2011). Drug Takebacks Aim to Prevent Abuse, Protect Environment: Disposing of Drugs the Right Way. *The Nation's Health*, (41)2, 1-15.; 4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Results from the 2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings, NSDUH Series H-46, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4795. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2013.; 5. U.S. Food and Drug Administration: Consumer Health Information (2013); 6. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality; 7. Cancer.net.