

## Guidelines for Disposing of Unused Medicines

Merck supports the efforts of the SMARxT DISPOSAL™ program – a public-private partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the American Pharmacists Association, and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) – to educate the public about the proper disposal of unused and/or expired medicines. The following guidelines are intended for use by consumers in the United States.

### SMARxT DISPOSAL™ GUIDELINES

Follow your medication prescriber's instructions and use all medications as instructed. If you do not use all of your prescribed or over-the-counter medication, you can take a few small steps to make a positive impact in safeguarding lives and protecting the environment by disposing of unused medicines properly:

- DO NOT FLUSH unused medications and DO NOT POUR them down a sink or drain.
- Be Proactive and Dispose of Unused Medication In Household Trash. When discarding unused medications, ensure you protect children and pets from potentially negative effects:
  - a) Pour medication into a sealable plastic bag. If medication is a solid (pill, liquid capsule, etc.), crush it or add water to dissolve it.
  - b) Add kitty litter, sawdust, coffee grounds (or any material that mixes with the medication and makes it less appealing for pets and children to eat) to the plastic bag.
  - c) Seal the plastic bag and put it in the trash.
  - d) Remove and destroy ALL identifying personal information (prescription label) from all medication containers before recycling them or throwing them away.
- Check for Approved State and Local Collection Programs. Another option is to check for approved state and local collection alternatives such as community based household hazardous waste collection programs. In certain communities, you may be able to take your unused medications to your community pharmacy or other location for disposal.
- Consult your pharmacist with any questions.

Consumers outside the United States should be aware that some countries have established programs or regulations on pharmacy or community take-back programs in which they receive and dispose of unused drugs for patients. Contact your pharmacy or a local authority to find out if such programs are available in your community.

Additional resources on the proper disposal of unused medicines are available at:

SMARxT DISPOSAL™ - <http://www.smarxtdisposal.net/index.html>

U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy -  
[http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/drugfact/factsht/proper\\_disposal.html](http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/drugfact/factsht/proper_disposal.html)