

Medication Poisoning In Florida



In 2008, poisoning was the leading cause of injury-related death for Floridians. About seventy-eight percent of these deaths were unintentional. Poisoning can occur at any age, but the number of fatal poisonings tend to start during the teen years and peak during adulthood (ages 25-64).


In recent years, a growing number of poisoning deaths are a result of the abuse and misuse of prescription drugs, especially pain and narcotic medications. People that have abused or misused medications have said “the medications were easily accessible and obtained from the home of a family member or friend.”

Because I Care Campaign

The *Because I Care* campaign goal is to bring community awareness about the growing problem of medication poisoning and encourage families to make behavioral and home environmental changes.

Because you care, you can do your part to reduce the risk of someone around you having access to medications that may be abused or misused by following the tips discussed in this brochure.


Tips to make your home safer and prevent medication poisoning:

 *Put all medications in a place inaccessible to children and visitors*

A good place to store medications in one house might not be the most ideal place to store them in another. The medicine cabinet, especially one accessible to others not involved in the medication treatment, may not be the best place to store medications.



The medicine cabinet may not be the best place to store medications.


 *Do not share medications with others*

Giving or sharing your prescription drugs with others is illegal. Medications should only be used by the person they were prescribed for and under medical care.

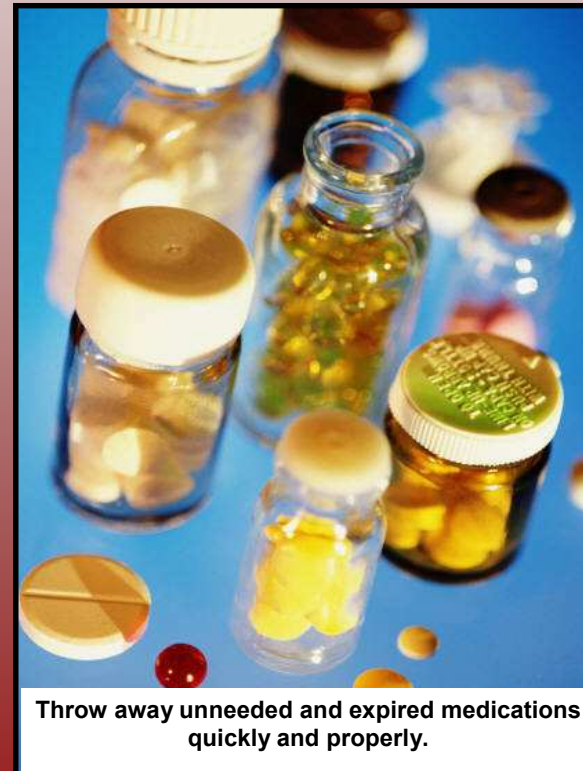
Sharing medications, or using them without regard to instructions, can be deadly or cause long lasting injury to body organs.

Do **not** share your prescribed medications with others.



 *Properly and quickly dispose of unneeded or expired medications*

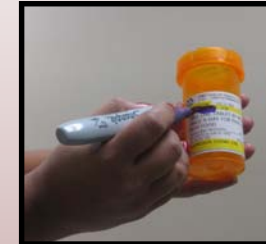
In some cases, you might stop taking medications because the medications may no longer be advised for use by your physician or it has expired. These medications may become accessible to others including young children, teens, and adults who are not aware of the dangers involved in taking medications belonging to others. It is best to quickly and properly dispose of all medications that are no longer needed or have expired.



Throw away unneeded and expired medications quickly and properly.

Steps to Safe Medication Disposal

Step 1: If at all possible, do NOT flush the medication. Leave it in original container and remove personal information from bottle. Mix with undesirable substance such as brewed coffee with coffee grounds (make sure pills dissolve) or kitty litter (liquid medications only).



Step 2: Seal the container with tape, place in a bag (or container), and seal that bag (or container).



Step 3: Place hidden in the trash. Make sure that it is not easily accessible or visible to others.





Resources

National:

- The **Poison Help Centers (1-800-222-1222)** are staffed with medical personnel able to answer specific questions about medications and provide first aid guidance right after a poisoning is believed to have occurred. They assist in determining if the poisoning incident requires emergency services or could simply be treated at home.

Anytime you fear your life or someone else's life is in immediate danger, call 911.

- **Florida Department of Environmental Protection**
Phone: 1-850-245-2118
www.dep.state.fl.us
- **U.S. Food and Drug Administration**
Phone: 1-888-INFO-FDA
www.fda.gov
- **U.S. Health and Human Services- Substance abuse treatment facilities**
Phone: 1-800-662-Help
dasis3.samhsa.gov

Local:

- **Orange County Health Department**
Because I Care campaign
Phone: 407-858-1400 ext. 1214
www.orchd.com
- **Orange County Drug Free Coalition**
Phone: 407-836-7335
www.orangecountyfl.net or
www.drugfreecoalition.org

Because I Care Pledge

I will protect and save lives
by doing my part:

- I will place medication in a safe and secure place.
- I will not share prescription medications.
- I will quickly and properly dispose of medications in my household that are no longer needed or have expired.

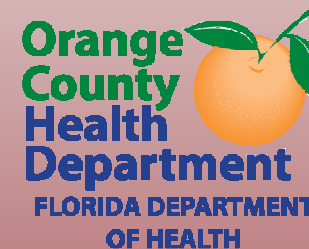
Signature: _____

Witness: _____

Date: / /



Poisoning Awareness and Prevention: Medications



For more information on poisoning prevention, contact:

Orange County Health Department
Office of Community Health–
Injury Prevention Program
6101 Lake Ellenor Drive
Orlando, Florida 32809
407-858-1400 ext.1214
www.orchd.com

Date: 2/2010

