

# Saturday is national drug take-back day

25 April 2014



Rid your home of unused, expired prescription meds by turning them in at a collection site near you.

(HealthDay)—If you have expired, unused or unwanted drugs in your medicine cabinet, you can safely dispose of them on National Drug Take-Back Day this Saturday.

The free and anonymous service is offered from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at collection sites across the nation. To find a site near you, go to the National Take-Back Initiative website and type in your ZIP code.

One major goal of the program is to reduce [prescription drug abuse](#) and [overdose deaths](#). In 2010, more than 22,000 people in the United States died of prescription drug overdoses.

Family and friends are the source for access to over half of all abused [prescription drugs](#), and in many of those cases users simply take the drugs from other people's medicine cabinets, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration noted in a news release.

In 2010, nearly three-quarters of prescription drug overdoses involved powerful [prescription painkillers](#) called narcotics, or opioids (such as oxycodone), according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In 2011, there were more than 420,000 emergency

department visits related to the misuse and abuse of prescription narcotics in the United States, a number that nearly doubled over five years, the news release noted. In 2012, more than 12 million Americans abused prescription narcotics by taking them without a doctor's orders or for reasons other than their original purpose.

This is the eighth Take-Back Day in four years and the previous events have been highly successful, collecting more than 3 million pounds (1,733 tons) of prescription drugs, the FDA said in the news release.

The agency also noted that you should safely dispose of medicines throughout the year. The FDA's Disposal of Unused Medicine website offers advice on how to do this.

**More information:** Here's where you can find the [National Take-Back Day website](#).

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