

Got Drugs?

- On September 25th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. DEA and its community partners will take part in the first nationwide prescription drug take back, operating collection sites around the nation where Americans can turn in their unused, unneeded, expired prescription medications.
- Unused or expired prescription medications are public safety issue, leading to accidental poisoning, overdose, and abuse. It is highly suggested not to hold on to expired medications. Homes containing children or elderly are especially vulnerable to this danger and need to take preventative steps, including getting rid of old medications.
- Flushing medication down the toilet is not recommended unless it clearly stated on the label or have been approved from ONDCP and the FDA. It is proven the wrong pharmaceutical drug can containment our water supply. See [FDA's website](#) for those prescription drugs that can be flushed down the toilet.
- Prescription drugs cannot be turn back into your local pharmacies, they must be handled in a special manner and registered the DEA.
- Medication is a controlled substance and cannot be shared with anyone it wasn't prescribed too. Drugs affect a person's body chemistry in a particular way, what doesn't harm you may harm or kill someone else.
- DEA is not just a collection of street drugs, any illegal activities related to prescription drug diversion include forgery of prescriptions, pharmacy robberies, and burglaries of businesses where controlled substance prescription drugs are use and kept.
- We have collaborated with local law enforcement and community partners on several prior take backs, but never a nationwide event. We will not ask questions concerning drugs needing to be disposed; we do ask not to bring syringes, marijuana or any other street drug.
- Drugs can stay in its original sealed container or emptied in the bin.
- Collection sites are located on DEA website www.dea.gov.
- After collection of all drugs they will be incinerated according to federal and state environmental guidelines. The drugs collected will be in the custody of a law enforcement officer until incinerated.
- The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and DEA will have more take back programs in the future.
- To explain the dangers of prescription drugs please visit the following websites GetSmartAboutDrugs.com for parents and JustThinkTwice.com for teens; a prescription drug guide "Prescription for Disaster: How Teens Abuse Medicine", and the DEA traveling target America: Opening Eyes to the Damage Drugs Cause.

U.S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration
www.dea.gov



Fact Sheet

August 2010

Prescription Drug Abuse -- a DEA Focus --

- In 2008, there were 6.2 million Americans aged 12 years and older who abused *prescription drugs for non-medical purposes within the past month – more than the number of people who are abusing cocaine, heroin, hallucinogens, and inhalants, combined.
- In 2008, on average, 5,965 persons per day abused prescription pain relievers for the first time. The total number of individuals that initiated with any controlled substance pharmaceutical (pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, and sedatives) for the first time exceeded the number of individuals that abused marijuana for the first time.¹
- Every day, on average, 2,500 teens use prescription drugs to get high for the first time.
- 1 in 7 teens admit to abusing prescription drugs to get high in the past year. Sixty percent of teens who abused prescription pain relievers did so before the age of 15.
- Fifty-six percent of teens believe that prescription drugs are easier to get than illicit drugs.
- 2 in 5 teens believe that prescription drugs are “much safer” than illegal drugs. And 3 in 10 teens believe that prescription pain relievers are not addictive.
- Sixty-three percent of teens believe that prescription drugs are easy to get from friends’ and family’s medicine cabinet.
- According to the Center for Disease Control, prescription drugs, including opioids and antidepressants, are responsible for more overdose deaths than “street drugs” such as cocaine, heroin, and amphetamines.
- DEA works closely with the medical community to help them recognize drug abuse and signs of diversion, and relies on their input and due diligence to combat diversion. Unfortunately, egregious drug violations by practitioners do sometimes occur – fortunately doctor involvement in illegal drug activity is rare. When violations do occur, DEA will pursue criminal, civil, and administrative actions against such practitioners as warranted.

¹ According to the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, released in 2009, the total number of new initiates using pain relievers, tranquilizers, stimulants, and sedatives was 2,512,000 and those initiating with marijuana was 2,178,000.