Safe Disposal of Medicine

A public awareness project by

Alliance to MedChi,
The Maryland State Medical Society
Safety

• Keep an inventory of all prescription and over-the-counter medicine.
• Store all medicine in a secure place.
• Dispose of unneeded or expired medicine at a “take back” site or by following FDA guidelines for Safe Disposal of Medicine in the trash.
• Take all medicine exactly as prescribed.
• Talk to children about the dangers of prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse.
Goals

Safe Disposal of Medicine
Drug Abuse Prevention

• Among young children who might ingest pills found around the house.

• Among teenagers and young adults who may look for prescription medication in their homes to use, share with friends or sell.
Dangers

• Each year, 1 out of every 180 two-year-olds ends up in the emergency room due to a prescription drug overdose.
• Only marijuana tops prescription drugs when it comes to drug abuse.
• Success is achieved every time a child is prevented from obtaining and abusing one pill.

• Safe Disposal of Medicine helps to remove the opportunity for children to abuse drugs found in the home.
Environment Protection

- Generally, unneeded or expired medicine should not be flushed down the toilet or poured down the drain.
- This puts the medication directly into our rivers and streams, since sewage treatment plants do not filter out all the medicine.
- There are already measurable amounts of certain medications in our waterways.
- Safe disposal will help prevent these amounts from increasing.
Identity Theft Prevention

- Proper removal of labels from medicine containers prior to recycling will help prevent identity theft.
Safe Disposal of Medicine

• “Take back” events and programs are the preferred method. Medication is turned over to a secure facility and then incinerated.

• If no “take back” venues are available, follow FDA guidelines for proper disposal in the trash.
Periodic “Take Back” Programs

• Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days that include medication
• DEA Nationwide Collection Days
• The American Medicine Chest Challenge in November
Ongoing “Take Back” Programs

• Dispose My Meds – specific pharmacies
• Prescription Drug Repository Program – specific pharmacies
• 7 County Sheriffs’ Offices in Maryland have “take back” programs
• These programs “take back” medication throughout the year
FDA Guidelines

• If no “take back” program is available, use the guidelines on the next slide to prepare medication for disposal in the trash.

• This does not include medication on the FDA list of controlled substances considered so dangerous that flushing is recommended if there is no “take back” program.
1) Place pills in a sealable container, such as a plastic bag.

2) Mix with coffee grounds, sawdust, kitty litter, etc.

3) Seal the bag and dispose of it in the trash.

4) Remove identifying information from empty medicine container.
DISPOSAL BY FLUSHING
FDA Recommends only if no “take back” program

• Only the FDA “Flush List”

• 30 controlled substances
  – Need to discard right away
  – Reduces risk to children and pets

• Flush down the sink or toilet
More Information

• To find missing drug labels for all marketed products:

• FDA information
  - 1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332)
  - http://www.fda.gov

• Office of National Drug Control Policy

• Dispose My Meds – for participating pharmacy

• Alliance to MedChi
  - 410-539-0872 x 3350, 3304
  - http://www.medchialliance.org
  - alliance@medchi.org
Thank You

Questions??