



CPIN
Canadian
Primary Care
Information
Network

RCIP
Réseau canadien
d'information pour
les cliniques de
première ligne

Dispose of medications safely

Many people keep unused or expired medications at home without knowing the risks. Over time, medications may lose their effectiveness or be taken by mistake. Keeping old medications can increase the risk of accidental poisoning, misuse, or harmful side effects. This risk is higher when medications are within reach of children, visitors, or pets.

Medications should never be thrown in the garbage or flushed down the toilet. When medications end up in household waste or water systems, they can harm the environment and contaminate water. Even small amounts of medication can affect wildlife and water quality.



The safest and easiest way to dispose of medications is to return them to your local pharmacy. Pharmacies across Canada accept unused or expired prescription and over-the-counter medications at no cost. They ensure medications are destroyed safely. Pills, liquids, creams, inhalers, and patches are usually accepted. Before returning medications, please remove or cover any personal information on prescription labels to protect your privacy.

Regularly checking your medicine cabinet is a simple step that can improve safety in your home. It can also help you stay organized and avoid taking the wrong medication by mistake.

For more
information, [click
here](#)

Please take some time to review your medications and return any unused or expired ones to your pharmacy to help protect your health, your home, and the environment.