

Environmental Concerns

Many pharmaceuticals are getting past our waste water treatment plants and getting into our drinking water. Scientists with the United States Geological Society conducted a study of over 130 rivers, streams, and other waterways in the U.S. and found the following pharmaceuticals in over 80 percent of those tested:

- Antibiotics
- Anti-depressants
- Birth control pills
- Seizure medication
- Cancer treatments
- Pain killers
- Tranquilizers
- Cholesterol-lowering compounds

Sewage systems are not equipped for prescription drug removal. Effective removal of prescription drug pollutants from treatment plants varies based on the type of chemical and on the individual sewage treatment facilities. This makes controlling and removing prescription drug pollutants and other toxins difficult once they are flushed.

While effects may be initially subtle due to low concentrations found in our environment, there's much concern that these subtle effects which accumulate over time and become quite significant.

In 2008, the P2D2 (Prescription Pill and Drug Disposal Program) began with Pontiac Township High School teachers Paul Ritter's ecology class and Eric Bohn's Illinois studies class. The purpose was to educate the public about the harm done to the environment due to the current drug disposal practices and to provide an alternative way to ensure our water quality for future generations.

To learn more about the P2D2 Program please visit www.p2d2program.org.

Guidelines for Disposal

1. Take unused and unwanted prescription and non-prescription drugs to participating drop-off locations. Keep medications in original bottles or packaging if possible. Mark out your name and address on the prescription labels.
2. Drop-off sites routinely send collected medications to be incinerated as part of the ecological and safe disposal protocol. (*Incinerated medications are able to create energy that is used to power homes and businesses.*)

Drop-Off Locations

Police Departments/ISU Health Services (Controlled substances and all other medications)

All medications, including controlled substances may be taken to secure drop-off locations for disposal, at Bloomington and Normal police departments and Illinois State University Health Services.

Bloomington-Normal (Non-narcotic, prescription and OTC only)

Eastland Pharmacy (OSF St. Joseph Medical Center)
Atrium Pharmacy (BroMenn Regional Medical Center)
Merle Pharmacy
Ryan Pharmacy

McLean County (Non-narcotic, prescription and OTC only)

Chenoa Pharmacy, Chenoa
Doc's Drugs, LeRoy

For more information on drop-off locations and local drug disposal events, please visit www.heartlandcoalition.org

This effort is a collaboration between Leadership McLean County and Heartland Coalition to educate the public about the rise in prescription drug abuse as well as environmental concerns.

Source: Drug-Free America and p2d2program.org



Teen Prescription Drug Abuse

Drug Disposal Program



Talk to your teen about the danger of misusing prescription drugs. Safely disposing expired or unused prescription medications is a critical step in helping protect your teens.

Let's Talk!

Due to the rise in prescription drug abuse, now, more than ever, it is important to take responsibility for properly disposing unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs. This issue is not only critical in protecting the health of our environment, it's critical in protecting the health of our children – the 2.1 million teens who abuse prescription drugs yearly.

Teen Prescription Drug Abuse

Although teens are turning away from street drugs, there is a new threat - the family medicine cabinet and the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs (OTC).

Between 1995 and 2005, treatment admissions for the abuse of prescription painkillers grew more than 300 percent. As more teens are entering substance abuse treatment, they report taking these drugs due to easy access at home.

Did You Know ...

- 1 in 5 teens has abused a prescription (Rx) pain medication
- 1 in 5 report abusing prescription stimulants and tranquilizers
- 64 percent of children ages 12 to 17 who have abused pain relievers say they acquired them from their friends or relatives, typically without their knowledge
- 1 in 10 has abused cough medication

As reported by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America's annual tracking study.

Keeping Medications Safe from Teens

Education

Educate yourself about medications teens are abusing, and share this information with others who are in contact with your children, such as school administrators, coaches, counselors, etc.

Communication

Discuss the subject with your teenagers. See what your kids know about peers using medications without doctor's orders.

As with street drugs, express clear disapproval of prescription and OTC drug abuse to ensure your teen knows exactly where you stand.



Signs of Potential Prescription Drug Abuse

WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

Pain Reliever Abuse

- Constricted pupils
- Nausea and vomiting
- Respiratory depression (*inadequate ventilation*)

Stimulant Abuse

- Anxiety
- Delusions
- Flushed skin
- Chest pain with heart palpitations

Depressant Abuse

- Slurred speech
- Dizziness
- Respiratory depression

Safeguarding Medications

- Start by taking note of how many pills are in each of your prescription bottles or pill packets.
- Keep track of your refills. This goes for your own medication, as well as for your teens and other members of the household. If you find you need to refill your medication more often than expected that could indicate a problem.
- If your teen has been prescribed a drug, be sure you control the medication, and monitor dosages and refills.
- If possible, keep all medicines, both prescription and over-the-counter, in a safe place, such as a locked cabinet your teen cannot access.
- Make sure your friends and relatives—especially grandparents—are also aware of the risks. Encourage them to regularly monitor their own medicine cabinets.
- Talk to the parents of your teenager's friends. Encourage them to secure their prescriptions.

