

# How to Dispose of Unwanted Medicines

## DON'T Flush Unused Medicines



Why? Because they end up in our rivers and streams. To help protect our environment, throw unused, unwanted or expired over-the-counter and prescription medicines in the trash. Don't flush medicines, except when specifically instructed by the label.

## DO Throw in the Trash

The American Pharmacists Association recommends steps for safely disposing of pills and liquids. These steps will help prevent their misuse or accidental ingestion by children or pets.

1. Keep the medicines in their original container. This will help identify the contents if they are accidentally ingested.
2. Cross out your name and prescription number for safety.
3. For pills: add some salt water to start dissolving them. For liquids: add something inedible like cat litter, dirt or ash.
4. Seal the container and secure with duct or packing tape.
5. Put the container in the trash as close to pickup time as possible. Do not put in the recycle bin.



[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dontflush](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dontflush)



A Fairfax, Va., publication. March 2009. For more information or to request information in an alternate format, call the Fairfax County Health Department at 703-246-2411; TTY 711.



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