

# DISPOSAL of PHARMACEUTICALS & IN-HOME INJECTION NEEDLES

## DON'T Flush Your Waste Drugs!

The age-old advice of flushing pharmaceuticals down the toilet is now considered to be the wrong advice -wastewater treatment plants and septic systems are not designed to treat pharmaceutical wastes.

## DISPOSE of Your Pharmaceutical Waste

In Southern Illinois there are many medication drop-off locations and local one-day events. For a list of drop-offs and one-day events visit <http://bit.ly/medsdrop>.

## REDUCE Pharmaceutical Waste whenever possible.

- Use all antibiotics as prescribed by your doctor. Not using all doses of an antibiotic could lead to development of antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria.
- Buy only as much as can reasonably be used before the expiration date.
- When prescribed a new medication, ask the doctor to prescribe only enough to see if the medication will work for you and in the lowest dose advisable.

## DISPOSAL of In-Home Injection Needles

To reduce the exposure risks from in-home needles, lancets and syringes, we suggest the following methods of disposal:

- Place used needles in a special "sharps" container and return it to a local collection site or by mail to a facility to be disposed of properly.
- Jackson County Health Dept. has sharps disposal containers available for purchase. There are two sizes available: small (3"x3"x8") for \$5 & large (6"x9"x10") for \$10. Clients can return full sharps containers to Jackson County Health Dept. for disposal. Please call 684-3143, ext. 150 for more information on this service.
- Your local pharmacist may also carry some of these products or be able to offer needle disposal advice. For more information on mail-back programs and in-home disposal devices, visit [www.safeneedledisposal.org](http://www.safeneedledisposal.org).

***Alternate Disposal Option: If you do not wish to utilize a mail-back program or in-home disposal device, please follow these guidelines when disposing of in-home needles:***

- ***Place all needles, lancets, & syringes in a sturdy plastic container (such as a laundry detergent bottle) or coffee can.***
- ***Write "Sharps Household Generated - Do Not Recycle" on the outside of the container.***
- ***Keep the lid on and keep out of reach of children and pets.***
- ***When full, place tape around lid to secure.***
- ***Place container in household trash for pickup by a County-licensed waste hauler for disposal at a permitted landfill.***
- ***Never burn or bury any medical waste, including needles.***



**Public Health**  
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Jackson County Health Department

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