

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the appropriate disposal of pharmaceutical products. The following information is not intended as medical advice or guidelines, but rather, it is to serve as information for you to utilize as you find appropriate.

The appropriate disposal of medications is an important issue to be addressed. In recent years, concerns have arisen regarding the presence of pharmaceuticals in tap water. It is possible for drugs to enter the environment unintentionally by excretion or purposely by disposal into sewage or trash. These issues have led to a stronger attention to the appropriate disposal of pharmaceuticals by consumers and healthcare professionals.¹

The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Environmental Protection Agency have recently published new guidelines for the proper disposal of prescription medications:¹⁻²

- Take unused, unneeded or expired prescription drugs out of their original containers.
- Mix the prescription drugs with an undesirable substance, such as coffee grounds or kitty litter. Putting them in impermeable, nondescript containers, such as empty cans or sealable bags, will further ensure the drugs are not diverted or accidentally ingested by children or pets.
- Throw these containers in the trash.
- Flush prescription drugs down the toilet only if the accompanying patient information specifically instructs that it is safe to do so.
- Take advantage of community pharmaceutical take-back programs that allow the public to bring unused, unneeded or expired drugs to a central location for proper disposal.

The FDA advises that the following medications* be flushed down the toilet instead of thrown in the trash. It is important to note that this list is not all-inclusive. Recommendations for specific drugs from the manufacturer for appropriate disposal should be followed:¹⁻²

Actiq® (fentanyl citrate)	Tequin® Tablets (gatifloxacin)
Daytrana™ Transdermal Patch (methylphenidate)	Zerit® for Oral Solution (stavudine)
Duragesic® Transdermal System (fentanyl)	Meperidine HCl tablets
Oxycontin® (Oxycodone)	Reyataz® Capsules (atazanavir sulfate)
Avinza® capsules (morphine sulfate)	Xyrem® (Sodium oxybate)
Baraclude® tablets (entecavir)	Fentora® (fentanyl buccal tablet)
Percocet® (oxycodone and acetaminophen)	

*Trademarks of their respective owners

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) also provides guidance on the proper disposal of controlled substances.³

- A pharmacy may hire an outside firm to inventory, package and arrange for the transfer of its substances to another pharmacy, supplier or manufacturer. The pharmacy is responsible for the transfer of the substances and for accuracy of the inventory.
- The pharmacy may also transfer drugs to a distributor registered with the DEA to destroy drugs (reverse distributor).
- A pharmacy can not turn over any controlled substances to a distributor unless the reverse distributor is registered with the DEA to destroy controlled substances. The pharmacy is responsible for verifying the reverse distributor is registered with the DEA.
- Any pharmacy seeking to dispose of controlled substances must first contact the nearest DEA Diversion Field Office for disposal instructions. Please see the following link for locations nearest to you:
http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/offices_n_dirs/fielddiv/index.html.
- There are no cases in which drugs may be forwarded to the DEA unless the registrant has received prior approval from the DEA.
- The DEA procedures established for destruction of controlled substances shall not be construed as altering in any way the state laws or regulations for disposal of controlled substances. Requests from registrants seeking authorization to destroy controlled substances without DEA presence, or requests from non-registrants desiring to dispose of controlled substances, will be handled as follows:
 - Once each calendar year, retail pharmacies may request DEA authorization to destroy damaged, outdated or otherwise unwanted controlled substances in the presence of a witness. The pharmacy must complete DEA Form-41, listing all drugs to be destroyed. In addition, the pharmacy must prepare a letter requesting permission to destroy the controlled substances, proposing the date and method of destruction. The witness should be a licensed physician, pharmacist, mid-level practitioner, or a state or local law enforcement officer. Both documents must be received by the nearest DEA Field Office at least two weeks prior to proposed destruction date. Once the controlled substances have been destroyed, signed copies of the DEA Form-41 must be forwarded to DEA, and the pharmacist should contact the local environmental authorities prior to implementing the proposed method of destruction to ascertain that hazards are not associated with the destruction.

I hope this information has been helpful to you. Thank you for your interest in Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals, a business within Covidien. For further reference on the appropriate disposal of prescription drugs, please visit www.WhiteHouseDrugPolicy.org and www.dea.gov. Please contact us at 1-800-778-7898 if you have any further questions.

References

1. Tom WC, ed. Proper disposal of expired and unwanted drugs. Pharmacists Letter Detail Document #240413. [Internet]. Available at: www.pharmacistsletter.com. Accessed April 3, 2008.
2. Proper disposal of prescription drugs. Office of National Drug Control Policy, February 2007. [Internet]. Available at: www.WhiteHousePolicy.gov. Accessed April 2, 2008.
3. Drug Enforcement Agency. Disposal of controlled substances. [Internet]. Available at: http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pubs/manuals/pharm2/pharm_content.htm#p5. Accessed April 3, 2008.

This information is supplied as a professional courtesy. It is intended to provide pertinent data to assist you in forming your own conclusions and making decisions. The information is not intended to advocate any indication, dosage or other claim that is not covered in the package insert. Current prescribing information documents can be assessed through our Web site at www.covidien.com. For questions or concerns, please contact the Product Monitoring Department at the number listed above.

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