

Patient and Family Education

DISPOSING OF UNUSED MEDICATIONS

Unused medications can pose a risk to children and pets if not disposed of in a safe manner. Improper medication disposal may also enable prescription drug abuse. By law, Hospice of the Valley staff is not permitted to remove medications from the patient's home.

There are several ways to safely dispose of medications:

- Drug take-back events or drop boxes. The best option for disposal is to take the medications to an official prescription drop-off box which is free and anonymous. The nearest location may be found at <https://www.azdhs.gov/gis/dump-the-drugs-az/>
- Follow any instructions for safe disposal on the medication bottle.
- Contact local law enforcement agencies, pharmacies or waste management companies for information on these programs.

If a take-back event or drop box cannot be used, medications may be disposed of at home.

- To reduce any impact on the environment, these medications should be disposed of in the household trash following the instructions below:
 - Remove medications from their containers.
 - Remove or conceal any personal identifying information on the label or container and dispose of them in the trash.
 - Do not crush tablets or capsules.
 - Discuss proper dispose of medication patches with an HOV nurse.
 - In a sealable plastic bag or disposable container with a lid, mix medications with an undesirable substance such as cat litter, dirt or coffee grounds, and some water to help dissolve and breakdown medication.
 - Place the sealed plastic bag or container (with the medication mixture) in the city trash.
 - Medication patches for pain should be folded in half with the sticky sides touching and flushed down the toilet. Wearing gloves while doing this is strongly encouraged.
 - Intravenous (IV) fluids are disposed of in the wastewater system (i.e., sink or flushed down the toilet).



[Medication Drop Box Locations](#)

