Safe Medicine Storage and Disposal

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Housekeeping

- Ask questions in the chat box
- Please stay muted
- Recording will be shared
Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for Americans aged 1-44 years old.

Unintentional injuries include opioid overdoses (unintentional poisoning), motor vehicle crashes, and unintentional falls.

Suicide is now the 2nd leading cause of death for this 1-44 age group, and numbers of suicides continue to rise.
# Unintentional Injury Deaths (US)

### 10 Leading Causes of Injury Deaths by Age Group Highlighting Unintentional Injury Deaths, United States – 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>Unintentional Poisoning</th>
<th>Suicide Suffocation</th>
<th>Unintentional MV Traffic</th>
<th>Unintentional Fire/Burn</th>
<th>Homicide</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>3,187</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>4,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>2,893</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>4,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>2,712</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>4,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>2,524</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>4,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>2,365</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>4,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>2,216</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>4,661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>2,087</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2,001</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>4,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>1,867</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>65+</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>1,736</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4,504</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Highlights**

Unintentional poisoning is the second leading cause of injury death in 15 to 24 year olds.

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Medicine **misuse** includes taking:

- Someone else’s medicine
- Too much medicine
- Medicine any other way than how it was prescribed
Children and Teens

• Children use [over-the-counter] medicines on their own as early as age 11 but nearly half don’t know they can be harmful when misused\(^1\)

• Medicine misuse often begins during the teen and young adult years

• One in four adolescents in the US has misused a prescription opioid at least once in their lifetime\(^2\)

• Youth who misuse prescription medicine are more likely to report use of other drugs\(^3\)
• Misuse of prescription drugs and use of pain relievers to get high decreased among 12th graders; remained stable for 8th and 10th graders

• Almost 1 in 10 teens perceive prescription drug misuse to have little to no risk of harm

• ~3,000 students in 12th grade reported use of pain killers to get high in any given month

• Most (80%) teens report their parents feel it is very wrong to use prescription drugs not prescribed to them

• Use of opioids remains a serious concern, with a very high risk of addiction, injury, and death

www.AskHYS.net
## What Contributes to Misuse and Protects Against it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge about prescription drugs and their potential harm</td>
<td>Perceived dangers of prescription drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to peer pressure or social environment where there's drug use</td>
<td>Positive community norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy access to prescription drugs, such as having prescription medications in the home medicine cabinet</td>
<td>Parental monitoring; engagement; <em>safely disposing of medications that are no longer needed</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information:
- SAMHSA.gov
- Youth.gov
- NIDA
- Safestates.org
- Preventionsolutions.edc.org
- Track numbers of pills, refills
- Supervision

- Use a safe, cabinet, or lockable box
- Don’t stock up

- Talk with kids and teens and keep lines of communication open

- Unused
- Expired
Suicide Prevention

Medicines are a common method for suicide attempts.

Safe storage and disposal of medicines creates time and distance between someone who is actively thinking about suicide and acting on that thought.

Did you know?

• Suicide is the second leading cause of death for adolescents ages 10 to 21 in Washington.

• 1 out of 5 highschoolers have considered attempting suicide.

In a crisis?

Text HELLO to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor

Free 24/7 support at your fingertips.
Secure storage

The safest way to keep medicines stored is to lock them up where others cannot access them.

Did you know?

2/3 of teens and young adults who report abuse of prescription medicine are getting it from friends, family and acquaintances.
## Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Durability</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster care approved or vouched for by reputable organizations (youth &amp; family services, poison centers, or hospitals)</td>
<td>Durable combination lock without an externally-facing latch Not easily cracked, smashed or torn</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Size (8&quot; x 6&quot; x 4&quot; can hold ~12 standard prescription bottles) Portability Positive customer ratings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Safe disposal

Dispose of medicines as soon as they are no longer needed or expired.

Disposal Options

- Drug take-back day
- Medicine disposal kiosk or drug mail-back
- DisposeRx
- Pharmacy
- Local police or sheriff station

Takebackyourmeds.org
Med-project.org
DIY Disposal

1. Fill a container with some water. Make sure the container has a lid.
2. Add something inedible to the container.
3. Add whole pills to the mixture.
4. Place the container in the garbage close to trash collection day.
5. Make sure that the trash is not easy for people or pets to access.

Remove labels from bottles!
Final Thoughts: Medicine Safety Tips

• Do not flush medicine down the drain or toilet
• Never share medicines with anyone else
• Remove personal information from prescription bottles or pill packages before throwing away the container
• Encourage friends, relatives and neighbors to safely store and dispose of their medicines, too
References

1. The National Safety Council


3. Drugabuse.gov

4. Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, 2018
Thank you!
Questions?

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www.seattlechildrens.org/health-safety