

## Assess, dispose, store, and monitor

### CHECKLIST

#### □ Assess your home

- Check your medicine cabinet and other common storage places for prescription drugs.
  - As a general rule, you should securely store and monitor abusable prescription drugs, including:
    - Painkillers: Vicodin (hydrocodone and acetaminophen), Oxycontin (oxycodone), and Tylenol with Codeine (acetaminophen with codeine).
    - Stimulants: Ritalin (methylphenidate), Adderall (amphetamine and dextroamphetamine), Dexedrine (dextroamphetamine), and Concerta (methylphenidate).
    - Depressants: Valium (diazepam), Xanax (alprazolam), Klonopin (Clonazepam), Ativan (lorazepam).
- Sort prescription drugs into two piles: 1) leftover and expired prescriptions, and 2) current prescriptions.

#### □ Dispose of leftover and expired prescription drugs

- Check with your community, police department, or pharmacist to see if there is a drug-take-back program in your area. For example, the Drug Enforcement Agency's Office of Diversion Control sponsors the National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day. For more information about a collection site in your area visit the [National Take-Back Initiative Collection Site Search](#).
- Visit the [FDA Safe Disposal of Medicines](#) site to see if the FDA recommends disposal by flushing. Especially dangerous drugs, such as Percocet and Oxycontin, should be flushed. Often, these drugs will have specific directions on the label to flush leftover and expired pills down the toilet.
- If your prescription drug is NOT on the disposal by flushing list, mix it with coffee grounds, used pet litter, or spoiled food to

make the product undesirable. Then, place the mixture in a sealed container, such as a plastic bag, and discard in the trash.

- Remove any identifying information from the prescription label before throwing the container away. This includes your name and contact information AND the name of the prescription drug.

#### □ **Store current prescription drugs in a secure location**

- Choose a secure location to store your abusable prescription drugs.
  - You can obtain a lock for your medicine cabinet from the hardware store or install a locking medicine cabinet. Small locked medicine boxes are also available at the pharmacy and can be purchased online.
- Store your prescription drugs in your new, secure location.
- Keep your key or the combination for the lock in a safe place.
- Regularly check that your prescription drugs are securely stored.

#### □ **Monitor prescription drugs consistently**

- Set a schedule to conduct regular pill counts.
  - If you have strong, Schedule II painkillers or stimulants in your home (Oxycontin, Ritalin), you may want to count the pills daily, bi-weekly, or weekly.
- Set a reminder for yourself so you don't forget your regularly scheduled pill count.
- Use the INFOGRAPHIC: *Pill counting basics and pill count log* to create a log for your pill counts.
- Regularly check that your log is complete and accurate.