Medication Safety – Safe Use-Safe Storage-Safe Disposal

Situation: The prescription medicine abuse epidemic is a national concern, many people don’t realize this affects children as well as adults. According to Safe Kids Worldwide\(^1\) every 9 minutes a child (under the age of 6) goes to the ER because they got into medicine, every hour a child is hospitalized, every 12 days a child dies. National statistics reveal that 3000 children were poisoned by opioids, 60% were less than 5 years old, almost all were ingested in the home. The number of opioid prescriptions filled in the area correlated with the exposure\(^2\). In a recent 2 year period 39 children were admitted to Rady Children’s Hospital for the ingestion of an opioid or narcotic (figure 1). This primarily occurs in curious young children gaining unsupervised access to medications and older children experimenting with their medications found in the home\(^3\).

Solutions:

Reduce the amount of opioid medications prescribed. Physicians around the country are changing their prescribing patterns and new regulations are in place to limit the amount of medication available. Alternate choices for pain relief are being utilized more frequently.

Store all medication as you would any potential poison. Don’t let convenience trump safety. Keep medications out of reach and out of sight. For older children this can mean keeping in a secure place in a locked container.

How does a child gain access to medication?

⇒ packaging is child resistant, not child proof, medication is often replaced in another container and can look like candy
⇒ medication is stored in hand bags or on the kitchen sink within reach of children.
⇒ Pills fall out of someone’s pocket and children find them on the ground or in furniture.
⇒ Unused or expired medications are not disposed of properly
⇒ Medicines should be locked in a cabinet out of sight

Dispose of all unused medication by crushing and mixing with cat litter or coffee grounds. Drop off unused medications at a drop off event or drop box at selected pharmacies. April 28, 2018 is National Take Back Day for unused medications. See the attached flyer for the 40 take back locations across San Diego county. Year round you can also find a location of a drop box near you by visiting [www.dontrushtoflush.org](http://www.dontrushtoflush.org)

References:
\(^1\) Research Report; Safe Medicine Storage: Recent trends and Insights for Families and Health Educators. Safe Kids Worldwide 2018
\(^3\) Annual Trauma Report; Rady Children’s Hospital San Diego 2016 Renee Douglas MSN, RN
Prescription Drug Take Back Day
Drop Off Your Unused Prescription Drugs
Saturday, April 28, 2018 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

SAN DIEGO COUNTY LOCATIONS:
(For the location nearest you, visit www.DEA.gov)

SOUTHERN
- Camarena Elementary School
  1650 Exploration Falls Dr., Chula Vista
- Coronado Police Station
  700 Orange Avenue, Coronado
- Imperial Beach Sheriff’s Station
  845 Imperial Beach Blvd., Imperial Beach
- Kaiser Permanente Otay Mesa
  4550 Palm Ave., San Diego
- National City Police Department
  1200 National City Blvd., National City
- Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center
  751 Medical Center Ct., Chula Vista

MILITARY
(Military, Retirees, Beneficiaries, & Staff Only)
- Naval Medical Center San Diego
  (Balboa) Baxter Circle Between Blgs. 2 & 3
- Navy Exchange 32nd St., in the NEX Lot @ Callaghan Hwy gate
- MCAS Miramar Exchange Building #2650 Elrod Avenue
- Camp Pendleton San Onofre
  MCX Parking Lot

NORTHERN
- Scripps Encinitas Hospital
  354 Santa Fe Drive, Encinitas
- Scripps Coastal Medical Center
  2176 Salk Ave., Carlsbad
- Scripps Rancho Bernardo Clinic
  15040 Innovation Drive, San Diego
- Tri-City Medical Center
  4002 Vista Way, Oceanside
- Fallbrook Sheriff’s Station
  388 E. Alvarado St., Fallbrook
- Escondido Police Station
  1163 N. Centre City Pkwy., Escondido
- Albertson’s Parking Lot
  1459 Main St., Ramona
- Poway Sheriff’s Station
  13100 Bowron Road, Poway
- Walgreens Parking Lot
  310 Sycamore Ave., Vista
- Kaiser Permanente San Marcos
  400 Craven Road, San Marcos

CENTRAL
- Scripps Green Hospital
  10666 N. Torrey Pines Rd., La Jolla
- Sharp Health Care Corp. Office
  8695 Spectrum Center Blvd., San Diego
- SDPD Eastern Division
  9225 Aero Drive, San Diego
- SDPD Central Division
  2501 Imperial Ave., 92102
- SDPD Northwestern Division
  12592 El Camino Real, San Diego
- San Diego County Juvenile Hall
  2801 Meadow Lark Dr., San Diego
- SDPD Mid-City Division
  4310 Landis Street, San Diego
- Mesa College Police Sub-Station
  7250 Mesa College Dr., San Diego
- Veteran’s Administration Hospital
  3350 La Jolla Village Dr., San Diego
- San Diego District Attorney’s Office
  (Hall of Justice) 330 W Broadway, San Diego

CENTRAL Continued
- SDPD Southeastern Division
  7222 Skyline Drive, San Diego
- SDPD Western Division
  5215 Gaines St., San Diego
- SDPD Northern Division
  4275 Eastgate Mall, La Jolla

EASTERN
- Walgreens Parking Lot
  9305 Mission Gorge Rd., Santee
- Alpine Sheriff’s Station
  2751 Alpine Blvd., Alpine
- El Cajon Police Department
  100 Civic Center Way, El Cajon
- La Mesa Police Department
  8085 University Ave., La Mesa
- SDSU – Parking Info Booth
  6095 Canyon Crest Dr., via College
- Lemon Grove Sheriff’s Station
  3240 Main Street, Lemon Grove
- Walgreens Parking Lot
  9728 Winter Gardens Blvd., Lakeside
- Rancho San Diego Sheriff’s Station
  11486 Campo Road, Spring Valley

To find the collection site nearest you, visit: http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov

Rx Abuse Hotline: (877) 662-6384
www.SanDiegoRxAbuseTaskForce.org