



Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy

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# Competent Compounding

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## APhA Provides Guidance on Proper Medication Disposal

In February 2007, the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) established guidelines for the disposal of unused or expired medications in response to growing concern about the implications of improper disposal on the environment and recent media coverage about medication misuse. APhA recommends three steps for proper disposal:

**1.) DO NOT FLUSH unused medications.** The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has determined that certain medications should be flushed due to their abuse potential. Read the instructions on your medication and talk to your pharmacist.

**2.) When tossing unused medications, protect children and pets from potentially negative effects by:**

- Crush solid medications or dissolve in water (this applies for liquid medications as well) & mix with kitty litter or a solid kitchen substance, then place in a sealed plastic bag **before** tossing it in the trash.
- Remove & destroy **ALL** identifying personal information (i.e. prescription label) from the medication container.
- Check for approved state and local collection programs or local hazardous waste facilities.



**3.) Talk To Your Pharmacist.** As the medication experts on the healthcare team, pharmacists are able to guide you on how to properly dispose of your unused medications.

Following these guidelines can help protect your family and community, prevent the illegal diversion of unused medications, and minimize a potential negative impact on the environment.

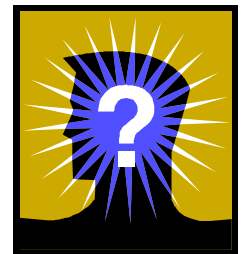
*Source: American Pharmacists Association (APhA), APhA Provides Guidance on Proper Medication Disposal Use with Respect and Discard with Care, Press release, February 14, 2007.*

## America's Other Drug Problem

Medication non-adherence, it's a huge problem, especially with drugs for "silent killers" such as hypertension, high cholesterol, osteoporosis, etc. Medication nonadherence occurs when medications are not taken as prescribed. Medication nonadherence may be intentional or unintentional. Intentional nonadherence occurs when the patient makes the decision to not take the medication as prescribed. Simple forgetfulness is an example of unintentional nonadherence. Patients stop taking **HALF** their chronic meds within a year and up to one out of five new prescriptions are never filled in the first place. Poor adherence costs an estimated \$100 billion/year, increases hospitalizations, and contributes to 125,000 deaths/year. For example, patients who are not adherent to statin therapy seem to have **TWICE** the risk of heart attack. Patients who don't use their asthma medications appropriately are more likely to go to the ER or be hospitalized for exacerbations.

**Education** is crucial. Many patients quit taking their medications because they don't know why they need them, don't think they are helping, believe the drug is harmful, or just plain forget. Patients who understand the benefits are more likely to take their medications appropriately.

**Tailoring drug regimens** to the patient's lifestyle helps. Your pharmacist can check for less expensive generics, medications with fewer doses, or a different side effect profile. If appropriate, your pharmacist can put the diagnosis on the prescription label, encourage the use of a pillbox, give private counseling, use easy





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to read written materials, and use refill reminder programs.

Source: *Medication adherence. Pharmacist's Letter/Prescriber's Letter* 2007;23(8):230811

## Veterinary Corner: What you should know about traveling with your pet

Planning and preparation are necessary when traveling with family pets. Before undertaking any trip, consult your veterinarian to be sure that all required vaccinations are up-to-date and to receive a health certificate within ten days of travel. A few general tips apply whether you travel by car or plane:



- Be sure your pet is properly identified with a current tag and/or a microchip.
- Grooming before a trip, plus having its favorite food, toy(s), and dishes available will make your pet more comfortable.
- Have proof of rabies vaccination and a current health certificate with you when crossing state or international borders.
- Keep a photo of your pet with you in case your pet is lost.

Traveling by plane: Air travel is of most concern to pet owners. The airlines sometimes update their regulations on pet travel including restrictions on breeds and size, and may charge for checked kennels.

- Check with the airline well in advance for their current regulations.
- For your pet's comfort, air travel on an almost empty stomach is usually recommended.
- It is not recommended to give tranquilizers to your pet when traveling by air because they can

increase the risk of heart or respiratory problems.

Traveling by car: If your pet is not accustomed to car travel, take it for a few short rides before your trip.

- Cats should always be confined to a cage or in a cat carrier to allow them to feel secure and prevent them from crawling under your feet while you are driving.
- A dog that must ride in a truck bed should be confined in a protective kennel that is fastened to the truck bed.
- Dogs riding in a car should not ride in the passenger seat and should not be allowed to sit on the driver's lap.
- Harnesses, tethers, and other accessories to secure pets during car travel are available at most pet stores.
- Pets should not be allowed to ride with their heads outside car windows. Particles of dirt or other debris can enter the eyes, ears, and nose, causing injury or infection.
- Small portions of food and water should be given at normal times. Plan to stop every two hours for exercise.
- If your dog is has a problem with carsickness, your veterinarian can prescribe medication that will help the dog feel comfortable during a long car trip.
- Pets should not be left unattended in cars.

Camping with pets: Traveling to country settings with your pet presents its own challenges. Skunks, raccoons, porcupines, snakes, and other wildlife can bite or otherwise injure your pet. Keep your pet within sight and on a leash. Be sure to ask your veterinarian about flea, tick, and heartworm prevention before you leave.

The demands of modern compounding have led to the creation of pharmacies devoted solely to this art. **Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy** has been serving your community for over seven years. Here we spe-

cialize in bio-identical hormone replacement therapies and veterinary medicine, to name a few. We have all the facilities and equipment needed to make anything from topicals to capsules and sterile injectables. We do not ac-

cept insurance, but do provide claim forms with prescriptions we fill. So, next time a patient wants a compound you're unsure of - we'd be happy to serve them!

