

Spring clean your medicine cabinet

Have you considered how cleaning might save a life? I challenge you to spring clean your medicine cabinet to safely dispose of expired or unused drugs.

More than 41 Americans die each day from opioid overdose. Opioids include prescription pain relievers like oxycodone (OxyContin®, Percocet®), codeine, morphine (Kadian®, Avinza®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®) and others.

While opioids are a helpful for treatment of moderate to severe pain, they carry significant risks for addiction. Opioids change how the brain and nervous system function. You can't know how your brain will react to opioids before taking them.

Research documents that 4 in 10 teens who have misused or abused a prescription drug obtained it from a family member's medicine cabinet.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends these tips:

1. Only take prescription medication that is prescribed to you. Don't share medication with others.
2. Take the medicine as prescribed. Don't use medications in greater amounts, more often, or longer than directed by your doctor.
3. Keep medicines in a safe place. It's best to store prescription opioids in a place that can be locked - like a keyed medicine cabinet - to keep them secure from children and visitors.
4. Dispose of expired or unused prescription opioids. Remove them from your home as soon as possible to reduce the chance that others will misuse them. To get rid of prescription opioids and other medications safely, check with your pharmacist to inquire about collection options or watch for Medication Take-Back events.

Cowley County has drug disposal drop boxes in Arkansas City at the South Central Kansas Medical Center and Ark City Police Department. In Winfield, there is a disposal box in the Sheriff's Department at the Cowley County Courthouse. No liquids, sharps, or loose pills can be accepted.

For more resources, contact K-State Research and Extension Cowley County at the Cowley County Courthouse, weekdays 8-11:30 a.m. and 12:30- 5 p.m. at 620-221-5450.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/pdf/Prevent-Addiction-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Upcoming K-State Research and Extension Events

Virtual Alzheimer's Community Forum - April 27, 12 -1 p.m. free, call to register - 800-272-3900 presented by Alzheimer's Association via Zoom

Ask a Dietitian - April 27, 4:30-5:15 p.m. Zoom or Cowley County Courthouse, Extension Assembly Room, free, call to register 221-5450

