

## MEDICATION SAFETY:

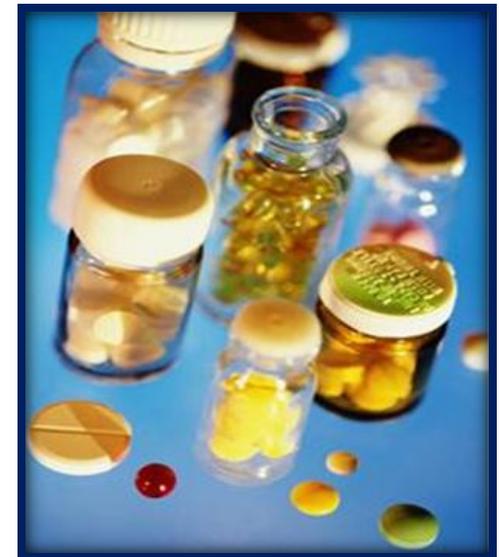
- Clear your medication cabinet of expired medications at least annually if not more often.
- Take medication where there is good light so the medicine label can be seen clearly.
- Store medication in its original container.
- Discard any medication that has expired or that your physician has discontinued.
- Be sure that medications are out of reach of any children or anyone who might misuse them.
- Never take someone else's medication.
- Do not share medication prescribed to you with others.
- Always keep a list of your medications that includes the reason you take it, the dose and how often you take it.
- Only take medications approved by the FDA.



Oregon Board of Pharmacy  
800 NE Oregon St. Ste 150  
Portland, OR 97232

**English**  
**April 2013**

## Medication Safety



Oregon Board of Pharmacy  
800 NE Oregon St Ste 150  
Portland, OR 97232  
(971) 673-0001 Phone  
(971) 673-0002 Fax  
[pharmacy.board@state.or.us](mailto:pharmacy.board@state.or.us)

---

## **DANGERS OF TAKING MEDICATIONS THAT ARE NOT APPROVED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION (FDA)**

---

It is dangerous to take medications that are not approved by the FDA as there is no assurance that such medications meet standards for safety, effectiveness and quality.

Non-FDA approved medications may:

- Not be made using safe standards;
- Not be labeled correctly;
- Be counterfeit;
- Be contaminated;
- Not help the condition or disease the medicine is intended to treat;
- Lead to dangerous side effects; or
- Be too old, too strong, or too weak.

If you are currently taking a non-FDA approved medication, talk to a healthcare professional about alternative medications that are FDA-approved.

---

## **MEDICATION COSTS & ALTERNATIVES**

---

If you are unable to afford a medication, there are safer alternatives than purchasing medications that are from a foreign country and are not FDA approved. If you find it hard to pay for your prescription medications, talk to your doctor. A less costly medication may be able to be prescribed or samples of medications may be given to you.

There are also many patient assistance programs that might be able to help you obtain medications at no cost or a significant discount. Visit these websites for information:

- [www.pparx.org](http://www.pparx.org)
- [www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org)
- [www.rxassist.org](http://www.rxassist.org)
- [www.needymeds.com](http://www.needymeds.com)

---

## **WHY DO MEDICATIONS HAVE AN EXPIRATION DATE?**

---

In the United States drug manufacturers are required to stamp an expiration date on their medications. This date is important because it is the date at which the manufacturer can guarantee the effectiveness and safety of the medication.

---

## **IS IT DANGEROUS TO TAKE EXPIRED MEDICATIONS?**

---

Using expired medications is risky and may be harmful to your health.

Expired medications may:

- Change chemically;
- Change physically; or
- Decrease in potency.

These changes may cause expired medications to be less effective in being able to treat your condition or may have effects on your body that are unintended.

---

## **I HAVE EXPIRED MEDICATIONS WHAT DO I DO WITH THEM?**

---

There are multiple collection drop off sites for unwanted medications throughout Oregon.

You may obtain a current list of collection drop off sites on our website at: [www.pharmacy.state.or.us](http://www.pharmacy.state.or.us).

Participation is free and anonymous.

If you do not want to utilize the drop off site for unwanted medications, you may dispose of most medications in the household trash.

Follow these steps:

- Mix medications with kitty litter or used coffee grounds;
- Place the mixture in a container such as a sealed bag; and
- Throw the container in your household trash.