

# HOW TO STORE AND DISPOSE OF MEDICATIONS SAFELY



Learn more at  
[LockItUpCC.org](https://LockItUpCC.org)



# PROTECT YOUR FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD



## Monitor Closely

- Keep track of the number of pills in all prescription and medication containers.
- Refill prescriptions only when needed—avoid having multiple containers of the same medication around.
- Be sure that you and other responsible adults are the only ones administering dosages to children.



## Store Securely

- Pick a location to always store medications in your home that is out of reach and/or out of sight to children or visitors.
- Use a locking cabinet or install a lock in this location if possible.
- Avoid leaving medication containers on countertops or nightstands.
- Do not leave loose pills in easily opened containers in your purse. Keep single dosages of medications in locking travel cases if necessary.



## Dispose Safely

- Take expired or unused medications to designated drop box locations around Charles County.
- Never flush medications down the toilet or pour them down the drain—this can pollute water supplies and is illegal in many areas.
- As a last resort, mix medications with unappealing substances such as dirt, cat litter, or coffee grounds and place the mixture in sealed bag. Place the bag in your trash can and cover with additional trash items.



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# SIGNS OF OPIOID OVERDOSE AND HOW YOU CAN HELP



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# KNOW MORE ABOUT OPIOIDS



## Know the Facts about Opioids

- Powerful opioids like fentanyl are toxic in even small amounts and can kill in minutes.
- They are often mixed with other drugs, including heroin and cocaine, and are sometimes even pressed into pill form.
- Opioids often cannot be detected by look, smell, or taste.



## Know the Signs of Overdose

- Unconscious with no breathing/unconscious with loud snoring
- No response to firm chest rub
- Blue lips and fingertips



## Know How to Respond

- Call **9-1-1** immediately
- Perform CPR if you know how and wait for help to arrive
- If available, administer a naloxone (also known as Narcan or Evzio) injection

**Naloxone can safely reverse an opioid overdose—FREE training is available through the Charles County Department of Health.**

Call **301-609-6700** for treatment and recovery services



Learn more at  
**LockItUpCC.org**



# MAKE SMARTER CHOICES WITH MEDICATIONS AND COVID-19



Learn more at  
[LockItUpCC.org](https://LockItUpCC.org)



# TAKE THE NEXT STEP IN PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY



**You could be more likely to contract COVID-19** and suffer serious health outcomes if you have a substance use disorder and/or other underlying medical conditions. Substance misuse weakens immune systems, increasing the likelihood of getting COVID-19 and further endangering your health.

- Opioid misuse can slow down breathing, which is already made difficult with COVID-19, leading to decreased oxygen in the blood and possibly brain damage or death.
- Medications that act as stimulants can increase the risk of serious health problems such as
  - stroke
  - heart attacks
  - seizures, and
  - heart or lung damagein individuals who have COVID-19.

**Reduce the risk in your home** by safely securing your medications and/or disposing them in designated drop box locations around Charles County.

## Safe Storage

- Store medications in a location out of sight and reach to children and visitors.
- Use a locking cabinet if possible or install a lock in this location.
- Avoid leaving medication containers out in the open such as on countertops or nightstands.
- Do not leave loose pills in easily opened containers in your purse—keep single dosages in locking travel cases if necessary.

## Safe Disposal

- Take expired or unused medications to designated drop box locations around Charles County—see the listing at [lockitupcc.org](http://lockitupcc.org).
- Never flush medications down the toilet or pour them down the drain—this can pollute local water supplies.
- As a last resort, mix medications with dirt, cat litter, or coffee grounds and place the mixture in a sealed bag in your trash bin.

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