

## Medicine Cabinet Cleanup



**Do not take old medicines—they may not work or may harm you.**

**Every spring, clean out your medicine cabinet!**

- go through all the medicines you have at home
- remove prescription medications that are old or that you no longer take
- take out old or expired nonprescription medications, including cough/cold, pain, first aid, vitamin and herbal products
- remove medicines no longer in their original containers or with labels that can't be read
- take out medicines that have changed colour, smell or taste

## Getting Rid of Your Medications Safely

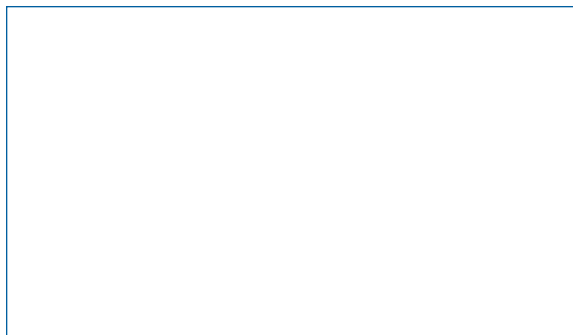
- bring all the medicines you have cleaned out to your pharmacy—they will be disposed of safely
- if you don't know if a medicine is still good, ask your pharmacist
- don't throw medicine in the garbage—children or animals may get into it
- don't flush medicine down the toilet—it's not good for the environment



**Your pharmacist can help you make the best choices for your health.**

**Have you talked with your pharmacist lately?**

**Compliments of your pharmacist**



**and**



Canadian  
Pharmacists  
Association



Canadian  
Society of Hospital  
Pharmacists

# Your Medicine Cabinet

*Your pharmacist*

**... can help you  
get the best from  
your medicine**

**... is always there  
to help meet your  
family's needs**

**?** With all the products available, choosing the right one can be difficult—your pharmacist can help you.

**?** Are you unsure what to do with your old medication?

## Talk to Your Pharmacist for Help

There are many nonprescription products at your pharmacy. Even though you don't need a prescription from your doctor, these medicines can harm you if taken the wrong way. They may not be the right medicine for you.

## Your Pharmacist Can

- help you decide if it's safe to treat your symptoms by yourself or if you should see your doctor
- help you choose medicine that is best for you
- explain how to take the medicine and for how long
- talk to you about other ways to help you feel better and stay healthy



## Choosing Nonprescription Medications

Before choosing a product, your pharmacist will consider:

- your symptoms and how long you've had them
- what you have already tried
- other health problems or allergies you have
- other medicines you take

## Using Nonprescription Medications Safely

- always ask your pharmacist about the best relief for: cough and colds, allergies, pain, stomach problems, infections, and others
- use nonprescription medications only for minor health problems
- read the label carefully and follow the directions
- tell your pharmacist and doctor about all the medicines you use
- many products are not for children—check the label

**?** Are you unsure about all the different products on your pharmacy's shelf?

## Storing Your Medicines Safely

- keep all medicines away from children (out of sight and reach)
- the cabinet in your bathroom is the worst place to keep your medicines—it gets too warm and damp
- keep your medicines in a cool, dry place and away from direct light (e.g., a box that can be locked or high on a shelf)
- keep your medicines in the original labelled container and keep the cap closed
- do not store medicine with food and household products



## Your Medicine Cabinet

Your medicine cabinet should include:

- prescription medications you are taking
- pain and fever relief (acetaminophen if you have children)
- common nonprescription medications you use
- thermometer
- medicine spoon or oral liquid syringe (household spoons are not accurate enough)
- first aid supplies (e.g., antiseptic for cleaning cuts and scrapes, antibiotic ointment, bandages)
- ipecac syrup for poisoning (causes vomiting—call your local poison control centre before giving)