

# YOUR PHYSICIAN WANTS YOU TO KNOW: PRESCRIPTION DRUG MISUSE IS AN EPIDEMIC

**Over 6.2 million people, ages 12 and above, report misusing prescription drugs.\***

If you are taking medications such as:

- OPIOIDS (for pain)
- SEDATIVES (for anxiety/sleep)
- STIMULANTS (for ADHD/weight loss)

Be aware! These medications are often stolen by family or friends. Some believe these medications are a safe way to "get high."

**YOU can prevent a tragic overdose with a few simple precautions:**

- Use medicine according to directions to prevent injury or death.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist about interactions with other medications you may be taking.
- Do not share medicine! Sharing controlled substances is against the law.



## Lock them up!

- Store meds in a locked cabinet, drawer, suitcase or safe.
- Do not store medications in kitchen cabinets or unlocked bathroom medicine cabinets.
- Do not leave out in the open, such as on a nightstand or in a purse.
- Do not take in the presence of children.
- Count your pills on a weekly or monthly basis.
- If stolen, notify the police and your doctor.
- If not locked up, medications could get into the wrong hands of family, friends, young children or strangers.



## Safe Medication Disposal

- If possible, participate in your community's take-back programs.
- Follow disposal instructions furnished by the FDA.
- Do not flush medications down the toilet.
- Before disposing of empty medicine packaging, scratch out all prescription information on the label.
- If there are no take-back programs or authorized collectors available: Using a separate container (such as a plastic bag or jar), dissolve (do not crush) medicine with tap water. Add an unpalatable substance like laundry detergent or used coffee grounds. Reinforce sealing before throwing in household trash.

\*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Results from the 2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings. This information is provided as a public service. It contains general information and is not intended to be used as medical advice. All questions regarding an individual's personal medical condition should be directed to a physician.

