How to Dispose of Outdated and Unused Medications

- **Store all medications in one place and in their original containers.**

  This will enable you to track what you have and expiration dates. Consider a location with a controlled and steady climate. Heat, humidity, and uneven temperatures can decrease the effectiveness of the medication, as can leaving the cotton in a newly opened bottle.

- **Schedule an inventory two times a year and find a handy way to remember when you'll do it.**

  Consider taking inventory when the time changes (e.g., when you change the batteries in your smoke alarms, on your birthday and half birthday, on opening day of baseball and football seasons).

- **When taking inventory, check these three things:**

  1. The expiration date – Don't forget about tubes of topical medications like lotions and salves.
  2. The appearance of the medication – While most pills and capsules do not change appearance as they age, some liquid and cream medications can.
  3. What it was prescribed for – if it's leftover from a previous condition, pitch it. Holding onto it "just in case" isn't worth the safety and health risks.

- **When you're ready to dispose:**

  - Find the nearest official drug take back collection site at ardrugtakeback.org/dispose-of-drugs/#dropoff where you can drop off unused and unwanted prescription drugs year-round.

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Together Arkansas is a collaboration between the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce/AIA, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and Arkansas Opioid Recovery Partnership. Original works written and produced by Working Partners Systems Inc.

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