

*So how do we dispose of medications we no longer need?* Our choices have been to leave them in the medicine cabinet, flush them, or throw them in the trash. There are problems with all of these options.

***If kept in the cabinet:*** Keeping old medication in the house can lead to accidents. People may get confused about which drugs to take, or take expired, ineffective medicine. Young children can find medicine, which could lead to poisoning. Unneeded drugs kept at home can also tempt intentional abuse.

***If flushed:*** Disposing of medication this way causes harm to the environment. Sewage treatment plants in use today are not designed to remove all drugs from treated water.

Drugs kill beneficial bacteria responsible for breaking down waste at sewage treatment plants. Flushed medicine also can damage septic systems.

***If thrown in the trash:*** Drugs thrown in the trash can wind up in the hands of small children, be consumed by animals, or wind up in the hands of illicit drug users. Identity theft can occur if personal information is left on the medicine bottles when discarded. Drugs can eventually leach into the landfill and wind up in our groundwater.

***So what can we do?*** Now, you can drop off your outdated or unwanted medications at Southwest General's Protection Services Office seven days a week. The drugs will then be safely processed, according to Ohio law, by a professional medical waste handler through a variety of means that ensure safe disposal.

### ***What can you bring in for disposal?***

The hospital will accept non-prescription over-the-counter medications (OTC), prescription medications and even pet medications. You can bring in pills, liquids, ointments and lotions. You can leave the medication in its original packaging or put it in a sealable plastic bag. You can even combine medications in one bag. If you bring in a liquid medication, please put the bottle in a sealable plastic bag to avoid leakage.

### ***What can't you bring in for disposal?***

There are several categories of prescription drugs that cannot be accepted for disposal at this time. These are controlled substances including drugs such as amphetamines, narcotics, codeine and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) treatments. If you are not sure whether your medication falls into this category, please contact your pharmacy.

The health center also cannot accept used syringes, asthma inhalers or drugs in aerosol canisters or chemotherapy drugs, either IV liquids or oral medications.

For these types of drugs, do not buy more than you can use before the expiration date. If you need to dispose of either controlled substances or chemotherapy drugs, call your pharmacist for assistance. Some pharmacies are willing to accept these drugs for disposal.

### ***Collection location and hours***

You can drop off medications at the Protection Services Office at Southwest General Health Center between the hours of 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. every day. The office is located at the south end of the hospital. You can use the door at the south parking lot,

next to the parking garage. There is plenty of free parking available. See the map on the other side of this brochure for reference.

Once you go through the double doors, the Protection Services Office is the first door on the right. There are no forms to fill out, so you can maintain your privacy.

If you can't get to the health center yourself, you can give the medication to a friend, family member, or other caregiver to bring in for you. No I.D. or signatures are required. Just remember that we can't accept controlled substances, used syringes, aerosol canisters or chemotherapy drugs.

If you can't find a way to bring your medication in, please call Southwest General's Health Connection at 440-816-5050. This health information and referral service will arrange for a pick-up.


### ***An ongoing commitment to the community***

The Medication Disposal Program is an ongoing commitment by Southwest General Health Center to recycling programs and environmental stewardship.

### ***Please help***

With your help, we can keep pharmaceuticals out of the reach of our children and avoid polluting our environment. We appreciate your participation in this program. Thank you for your dedication to the health and safety of our community.

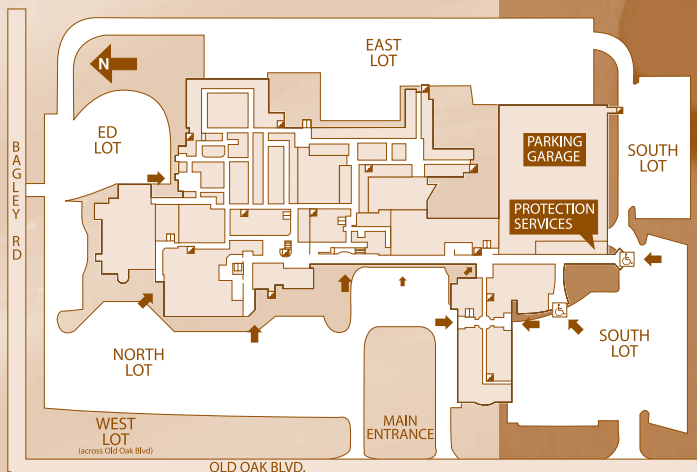
***For more information*** please call Southwest General Health Center's Health Connection at 440-816-5050 or visit [www.olmstedfalls.org](http://www.olmstedfalls.org) or [www.swgeneral.com](http://www.swgeneral.com).



*Medication disposal is quickly becoming an important issue. As a society, we're taking more medications than ever before. As the population ages, those numbers will only increase. Just take a look at the choices you have for a simple over-the-counter cold medication—it is mind boggling!*

Southwest General  
Health Center's  
Medication Disposal Program  
is just one more way ...

*Great Care  
Happens Here*



**SOUTHWEST GENERAL  
HEALTH CENTER**

*Partnering with*

**University Hospitals  
HealthSystem**

Medication Disposal Program  
18697 Bagley Road  
Middleburg Heights, OH 44130  
440-816-5050

[www.swgeneral.com](http://www.swgeneral.com)

Southwest General Health Center  
and the City of Olmsted Falls



# Medication Disposal Program

*Not sure what to  
do with expired  
or unwanted  
medications?*

*Southwest General  
Health Center, in  
partnership with  
the City of  
Olmsted Falls,  
can help!*

*Great Care  
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