

# Responsible disposal of medicines in the household

Merck supports legal, safe, secure and effective drug disposal methods that will protect against accidental poisonings, deter theft and abuse, and minimize impact on the environment (see Merck's public policy statement on [Pharmaceuticals in the Environment](#)).

## Rationale for our position

Merck understands that regulators, policy makers, community groups and the public are concerned with the presence of unwanted or expired medicines in households and trace amounts of pharmaceuticals in the environment.

Merck works with government agencies, the scientific community and other stakeholder organizations to better understand disposal options that can facilitate timely, environmentally sound disposal at minimal cost to society.

Merck also supports other efforts to offer medicine disposal programs to residents of local communities and believes that these programs, at a minimum, should:

1. Educate the public on appropriate and responsible storage and disposal of medicines.
2. Comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
3. Minimize the risk of medicine diversion.
4. Be designed to scientifically evaluate economic and environmental impact of the program and effect on the incidence of medicine abuse/misuse.
5. Contain appropriate liability protections for those individuals involved in the implementation of the program, including healthcare providers and manufacturers.
6. Be financially supported by stakeholders in proportion to the respective impact on the quantity of medicine processed by the program and/or their benefit from participation in the program. Merck commits to remain an active participant in the conversation over the type and funding of available medicine disposal programs to meet the unwanted medicine disposal needs of patients.

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