

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, support public health, and minimize impact on the environment (see Merck's public policy statement on [Pharmaceuticals in the Environment](#)). This statement focuses on responsible disposal of medicines in the household and is intended to complement Merck's broader position on Pharmaceuticals in the Environment, which addresses the presence of pharmaceuticals in the environment across the product life cycle.

Our Position

Merck understands that regulators, policymakers, 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 collaborates with government agencies, the scientific community, and other stakeholder organizations to advance evidence-based disposal options that align with public health and environmental protection guidance and support 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 the 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.