

Drug Disposal Guidelines

Purpose:

Improper disposal of expired or unused medicines can cause environmental pollution, accidental poisoning, and legal liabilities. Hospitals must follow strict protocols for safe drug disposal.

Correct Disposal Steps:

1. Identify expired, unused, or damaged medicines
 2. Separate hazardous from non-hazardous drugs
 3. Record them in a disposal log with expiry dates and quantities
 4. Store them in a designated quarantine area
 5. Arrange for collection by certified disposal agencies
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Common Disposal Methods:

- **Incineration:** High-heat treatment for hazardous drugs
 - **Return-to-supplier:** Many pharma companies take back expired drugs
 - **Take-back programs:** Community services or NGOs
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Example Procedure:

A batch of antibiotics expired in May 2025 is identified during audit. The pharmacist logs the details in the disposal register and places the batch in the “to-dispose” cabinet for certified pickup.

Do's:

- Always wear gloves when handling expired drugs
- Label disposal bins clearly
- Keep disposal logs updated
- Use secure containers for transportation

Don'ts:

- Never flush drugs into toilets or sinks
 - Never mix medical waste with general waste
 - Don't dispose of sharps without sealed containers
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Conclusion:

Drug disposal is an important part of hospital operations. Staff must follow safe, legal, and environmentally friendly practices to prevent harm and stay compliant with regulations.