

The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System — Serving New Jersey Since 1983

MEDIA ALERT

Media Contacts:
800-222-1222 (800-962-1253 outside NJ)

Clean Out Your Medicine Cabinet

- Help Prevent Unintentional Poisonings and Rx Drug Abuse on October 26th -

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Available for Interviews

(Newark, NJ) – October 23, 2013 — The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will give the public its seventh opportunity, on Saturday, October 26th from 10am to 2 pm, to prevent medication/pill abuse and theft by ridding homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription medications (Rx). The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. New Jersey law enforcement agencies will join other states in participating in this national event.

GotDrugs?



According to the DEA, last April, Americans turned in 371 tons (over 742,000 pounds) of prescription medications at over 5,800 sites operated by the DEA and its thousands of state and local law enforcement partners. In its six previous Take Back events, DEA and its partners took in over 2.8 million pounds—more than 1,400 tons—of pills.

This initiative addresses a vital public safety and public health issue. Medicines that are not needed and remain in homes are highly susceptible to being stolen, misused, and abused. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S. are alarmingly high, as are the number of unintentional poisonings and overdoses due to these drugs. Many times those that abuse prescription medications obtain them from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. According to a report from the University of Michigan, The Monitoring the Future Study, over 20% of 12 graders who admit to using prescription drugs over the past year admit to taking them from a friend or relative without asking. In addition, Americans are now advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—may pose potential safety and health hazards.

This is a great opportunity for those who may have missed the previous events or who have accumulated more unwanted, unused medications since the last take back event. It will help keep dangerous, addictive medications off the streets as well as helping to ensure environmentally sound disposal practices.

We urge everyone to use a lockable medicine cabinet and keep all medications, both prescription and over the counter, locked up at all times. This will help prevent both an unintentional exposure of a young child and the access from those seeking the medication for other than the intended purpose.

Be a role model and help make a difference in your community. The NJ Poison Experts encourage all residents to participate on Saturday, October 26, 2013. All sites will operate from 10 AM to 2 PM. Contact the New Jersey Poison Experts at 800-222-1222 for a local drop-off site near you. Remember to remind the seniors in your lives to do the same.

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If you have any questions regarding the DEA's Take-Back event or if you suspect a poisoning and are seeking treatment advice, call the NJ Poison Experts at 800-222-1222. If someone is unconscious, not breathing, seizing/convulsing, bleeding profusely, difficult to arouse/wake up, etc. call 911 immediately, otherwise call the poison center. Experts are always here to help 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. Calls are free and confidential. Help is available in more than 150 languages. Program the Poison Help line (800-222-1222) into your cell phone and post it near your home and office phones too.

About NJPIES

As New Jersey's only poison control center, the New Jersey Poison Information & Education System provides information on poison prevention and treatments. Chartered in 1983, NJPIES provides free consultation through telephone hot line services and the Web. Medical professionals such as physicians, registered nurses and pharmacists offer confidential advice regarding poison emergencies and provide information on poison prevention, drugs, food poisoning, animal bites and more. These specialists are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

NJPIES coordinates state poison education and research and is designated as the regional poison center by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services and the American Association of Poison Control Centers. It tracks incidences of adverse reactions to food, drugs and vaccines in order to monitor potential public health issues and provide data to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. A division of the Department of Preventive Medicine and Community Health of the New Jersey Medical School of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. NJPIES has a state-of-the-art center located on the school's Newark campus. NJPIES is funded, in part, by the NJ Department of Health and the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

New Jersey residents seeking immediate information about treating poison emergencies, and those with any drug information questions, should call the toll-free hot line, **800-222-1222**, any time. The hearing impaired may call **973-926-8008**. For more information, visit www.njpies.org or call **973-972-9280**.

About Rutgers

Established in 1766, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is America's eighth oldest institution of higher learning and one of the nation's premier public research universities. Serving more than 65,000 students on campuses, centers, institutes and other locations throughout the state, Rutgers is the only public university in New Jersey that is a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities.

Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) is the health care education, research, and clinical division of Rutgers University, comprising nine schools and their attendant faculty practices, centers, institutes and clinics; New Jersey's leading comprehensive cancer care center; and New Jersey's largest behavioral health care network.

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