

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TTUHSC to Host Lubbock's Spring Medication Cleanout™

Event Collects Residents' Unwanted Medications for Proper Disposal

With the help the Texas Panhandle Poison Center (TPPC), which is managed by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, local residents can add another item to their spring cleaning to-do lists: properly disposing of all expired, unwanted or unnecessary medications.

To help make that task safe and environmentally friendly, TPPC will host a Medication Cleanout™ event 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. March 20 (Saturday) at the Texas Tech Physicians Medical Pavilion, 3601 Fourth St.

TPPC Managing Director Jeanie Jaramillo-Stametz, Pharm.D., who also is an assistant professor of pharmacy practice at the Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, encourages Lubbock residents and those from the surrounding area to bring their unused, expired or unnecessary medications for proper disposal. The program also provides disposal services for syringes or sharps.

This is TPPC's 68th Medication Cleanout™ event since the program began in 2009. To date, more than 58,000 pounds of medications and sharps have been collected for proper disposal.

Jaramillo-Stametz said old medications become potential sources of poisoning to young children or may be accessed by teens experimenting with drugs. They also are a hazard to adults and elderly as they increase the risk of choosing the wrong bottle or taking medications that are no longer required.

"Medication Cleanout™ is a proactive approach to safeguard our communities by providing a free and convenient way for people to dispose of these medications in a legal, environmentally sound and convenient manner," Jaramillo-Stametz added.

Jaramillo-Stametz said the abuse of prescription medications continues to be a national epidemic, and the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions mean people have been staying home.

"Now is the time to clean out your medicine cabinets and remove these items from your homes to reduce the risk of poisoning by medications," Jaramillo-Stametz stressed. "In addition, many people, whether pre-teens, teens or adults are experiencing depression and sadness due the pandemic. This could lead them to impulsively turn to the medicine cabinet for relief or as a suicidal gesture, so by

taking just a few minutes to clean out your medication, you could be saving a life because poisoning, which includes medication overdose is the third most common means of suicide today in the U.S.”

Medication Cleanout™ employs a drive-thru, drop-off format that allows residents to conveniently dispose of their medications without leaving their cars. Yard signs will be posted to help drivers locate the drive-thru path. Medications should be left in their original containers.

Though not required, Jaramillo said participants are asked to wear face coverings to protect themselves and event volunteers.

Because of environmental restrictions, only medications from households can be accepted. Medications from clinics, pharmacies and other businesses are not allowed.

For more information about the Medication Cleanout™, call (806) 414-9495 or visit www.MedicationCleanout.com.