

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT: Suzanna Cisneros, suzanna.cisneros@ttuhsc.edu
(806) 773-4242

TTUHSC to Host Lubbock's Fall Medication Cleanout™ *Event Helps Residents Safely Discard Unwanted Medications*

The Texas Panhandle Poison Center (TPPC), managed by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy, will provide local residents with an opportunity to properly dispose of all expired, unwanted or unnecessary medications.

To make that task safe and environmentally friendly, TPPC will host Lubbock's Fall Medication Cleanout™ event 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 16 (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, 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. She encourages residents in Lubbock 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.

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

This is TPPC's 73rd Medication Cleanout™ event since the program began in 2009. To date, more than 63,430 pounds of medications and sharps have been collected for proper disposal. 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, including pre-teens, teens and adults are experiencing depression and sadness due the pandemic, which could lead them to impulsively turn to the medicine cabinet for relief or as a suicidal gesture. Because of this, taking a few minutes to clean out your medication could be a life-saving task

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

Though not required, Jaramillo said participants are encouraged to wear face coverings to protect themselves and event volunteers. Volunteers from the Department of Community, Family and Addiction Services at the Texas Tech University College of Human Sciences will provide support for Lubbock’s fall Medication Cleanout™. For more information, call (806) 414-9495 or visit [MedicationCleanout.com](https://www.MedicationCleanout.com).

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