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Disposal of Pain Medication

At the time of surgery, you may be given a prescription for opiate pain medication for postoperative pain. You may not need to take all of the medicine that was prescribed.

Keeping unused pain medication can lead to abuse of this medication by others. More than 5% of Montana teens reported using a prescription pain medicine for a nonmedical purpose in the past year. Nearly 70% of prescription pain medication abusers get the drugs from a family member or friend.

Do not share your medications with others. Store your medication in a place where only you know to look that is not easily accessible to young children or pets. This will help reduce the chances of an accidental poisoning of your most precious family members.

When a medication is no longer needed, it is best to get it out of the home. Safely and responsibly dispose of your prescription medications by bringing them to a permanent prescription drop-box location or at a prescription drug take-back event in your community.

A list of permanent drop box locations in Montana can be found at www.dojmt.gov/consumer/prescriptiondrugabuse/rx-dropbox-locations

If you are unable to use a drop box program, follow these at-home disposal recommendations from the Office of National Drug Control Policy:

1. Take your prescription drugs out of their original containers.
2. Mix drugs with an undesirable substance, such as cat litter or used coffee grounds.
3. Put the mixture into a disposable container with a lid, such as an empty margarine tub, or into a sealable bag.
4. Conceal or remove any personal information, including the prescription number, on the empty containers by covering it with black permanent marker or duct tape, or by scratching it off.
5. Place the sealed container with the mixture and the empty drug containers in the trash.

Thank you for choosing Surgical Associates for your care. For prescription requests or refills (including narcotics) or for general questions please call our office during regular business hours; Monday-Thursday 8:00am-5:00pm and Fridays 8:00am-2:00pm. A surgeon is on-call after hours for emergent care. However, pain medication (narcotics) will not be provided after regular business hours.

