

Health Unit Media Release

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Medicine Clean Out Campaign – November 2006

People take medications for a variety of ailments. **Those same medications can cause injury or even death when taken at the wrong time or by the wrong person.**

Misuse of medication affects everyone. Not only are medications responsible for almost all cases of poisoning hospitalizations among children less than 10 years of age¹, they are also the cause of 25% of hospital admissions for the elderly and 23% of all nursing home admissions as well².

For the month of **November**, the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit in partnership with the Brockville Leeds, Grenville Risk Watch Coalition and the Smiths Falls FOCUS Community Coalition, is delivering the 5th Annual “Medicine Clean Out” campaign. Our goal is to reduce the risk of injury from unsafe medication use and storage, and to promote safe disposal of unused, not needed, and expired medications.

The “Medicine Clean Out” campaign has three main messages:

1. Expired, left over or unlabelled medicine can be dangerous. (Always complete the full prescription of antibiotics.)
2. Medicine is a hazardous waste...Don't flush it...Don't throw it out.
3. Proper disposal of medicine protects your family and the environment.

We are reminding and urging area residents to take the following steps to participate in ‘Medicine Clean Out.’

Step 1 – Clean out the expired and out-dated medicines in your home. This includes prescription, over-the-counter, and herbal medications, and vitamins.

Step 2 – Bring the medication to your local participating pharmacy for safe and free disposal.

Step 3 – Medicine remaining in your home should be locked up and out of children's reach.

A big THANK YOU to 86% of the local pharmacies who now accept expired and unused medicines all year round! We are now up to 37 participating pharmacies.

Contact your local pharmacy to inquire if they are collecting unused or expired medicine. For further information please contact our Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 or 613-345-5685.

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¹ National Trauma Registry Bulletin, April 2002

² Ontario Drug Awareness Partnership, September 10, 2002