



# Prescription Medication Safety For Pet Owners

- A message from the Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine on household prescription drug safety for pets and owners -

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

A growing concern in the U.S. is the use of prescription opioids and other medications that are intended for pet consumption, but are obtained by individuals for illicit use. Additionally, prescription drugs that are intended for animals can also pose health risks for pet owners around the home.

## PROPER DISPOSAL

Improper disposal of prescription opioids and other medications is harmful to humans **and** animals. Make sure to always dispose of your expired or unused prescriptions in a safe, and responsible way. Learn more about safe disposal of medicines, visit VaAware. Learn more about proper storage of fentanyl patches from the U.S. Food & Drug Administration.

<http://vaaware.com/>

[www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/ucm368902.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/ucm368902.htm)

Each year, Virginia law enforcement participates in nationally recognized drug take-back days hosted by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

**Find out which take-back location is closest to you**  
[https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/](https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/)

## HOME SAFETY TIPS

- Consult a veterinarian immediately if you suspect your pet has been inadvertently exposed to a prescription drug, or shows symptoms such as vomiting, seizing or other illness.
- Prescriptions should be stored securely in a locked cabinet or container to help avoid accidental exposure or unauthorized use.
- Flushing prescription drugs down the drain can contaminate water sources and may potentially harm humans and animals that ingest them.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Virginia Board of Veterinary Medicine  
<https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/vet>

U.S. Food & Drug Administration  
<https://www.fda.gov>

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration  
<https://www.dea.gov>

VaAware  
<https://vaaware.com>