



Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence News

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Messages to Share

Below are sample messages that can be shared on social media or as Plan of the Week notes aligned with Navy Drug Detection and Deterrence's prevention efforts:

1. Substances can negatively affect decision-making ability, including those related to sexual practices. Drugs or alcohol should not be a factor when engaging in sexual activity. Avoiding them protects the health and safety of those involved. Learn more about sexual health and ways to protect it from the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's Sexual Health Month toolbox at go.usa.gov/xEGJ9.
2. National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is Saturday, April 27 from 1000–1400. It is a safe, convenient and responsible way of disposing of prescription drugs that you no longer need. For more information on collection sites, visit go.usa.gov/xnt4M, or check with your local MTF to see if they offer year-round disposal through a drop box.
3. April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Combining alcoholic beverages with certain prescription medications can often cause harmful side effects. Keep yourself safe and protect your health by avoiding alcohol while on medications, prescription or over-the-counter.
4. "Dabbing," or vaping marijuana, is becoming increasingly popular among teenagers. Dabs contain extremely high levels of THC – 60-90% concentrations vs. 3-5% in traditional marijuana smoking. Vaping is more discreet than other forms of smoking and vape products are easily accessible to youth.

Prescription Drug Disposal: Myths & Facts

As we gear up for National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on April 27, the Prescription for Discharge Campaign would like to dispel some common misconceptions about disposing of unused or expired medications. Keep reading to get the facts on safe prescription medication disposal.



MYTH: "I don't need to participate in Take Back Day. I can just flush my leftover medications down the toilet."

FACT: Most wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove pharmaceutical chemicals from water. When you flush leftover medications, they can contaminate our water supply and harm fish and other aquatic life. Protect the environment by disposing of leftover or unused medications properly.

MYTH: "I'll get in trouble for having leftover medicine."

FACT: Take Back Day is safe and anonymous. Use a marker to cross out your name on the prescription bottle for privacy. You won't get in trouble for properly disposing of your medications – but you could put your career at risk by taking medications that are not currently prescribed to you. Do the safe thing and dispose of your unused medications on Take Back Day.

MYTH: "No one will get hurt if I save some for later."

FACT: Take Back Day helps keep your family and shipmates safe. You should never share medications with family members, friends or shipmates even if you're experiencing the same symptoms. Make sure your prescriptions don't fall into the wrong hands by disposing of unused medications properly.

MYTH: "Take Back Day isn't for me because I don't have a problem with prescription drugs."

FACT: Take Back Day is for everyone. Whether you have expired Ibuprofen or leftover cold medicine, Take Back Day is an opportunity to safely and easily dispose of it.

MYTH: "It's too much of a hassle to drive to base on a Saturday."

FACT: Even if you can't make it to base on April 27, you can still participate in Take Back Day. Visit takebackday.dea.gov to locate a prescription drug drop off location near you.



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Rx Drugs and Teens

There has been much publicity with regard to the physical dangers of substance abuse, particularly surrounding opioid use. But, the dangers of prescription drug misuse also extend to an individual's personality and behavior, especially for teens. It is well-known that opioids target the brain's reward system by stimulating dopamine release. Perhaps less well-known, however, is that opioids have a negative effect on the parts of the brain responsible for decision-making and impulse control, and teens are most vulnerable to these risks.

A **study** by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that, specifically related to a nonmedical use of prescription drugs (NMUPD) and teens:

- 76.6% of teens who misuse prescription drugs engaged in sexual intercourse, compared with 39.9% of peers who did not misuse prescriptions
- 48.2% of sexually active teens who engaged in NMUPD did not use a condom the last time they had intercourse, compared with 35.8% of teens who did not misuse prescriptions
- 35.8% of teens who engaged in NMUPD had four or more sexual partners, compared with 10.1% of their peers who did not misuse prescriptions

Risky sexual behavior among teens is associated with more unplanned pregnancies, higher rates of sexually transmitted infection (STI), and a heightened risk of depression. Nearly one in five teens has used prescription drugs for non-medical use. Two-thirds of teens who misuse prescriptions get the medications from family and friends' medicine cabinets.

The **Prescription for Discharge** campaign seeks to educate Sailors and their families on the proper handling of prescription drugs, including proper procedures for disposal through drop boxes at military treatment facilities. Although it may seem convenient or cost-effective to hold on to prescriptions for future use, the medications casually lying around your home pose a risk to others, especially young people.



Current and Upcoming Events

April DDD Webinars

All webinars are scheduled for 1000-1130 CT and 1700-1830 CT

10 – Chain of Custody Procedure

24 – Processing Samples & Running Reports in NDSP

To join, log on at go.usa.gov/xPPS2.

ADAMS for Leaders, DAPA, UPC & Drug Aware Courses

Can be accessed using your CAC by logging in to My Navy Portal (MNP) at my.navy.mil.

NMCPHC Sexual Health Month

April

Find the toolbox at go.usa.gov/xEGJ9.

Prescription Drug Take Back Day

April 27

Learn more at go.usa.gov/xEAMy.

Alcohol Awareness Month

Month of the Military Child

April

Misuse of Cough Medicine

The medications dextromethorphan (DXM) and promethazine-codeine suppress persistent cough when taken in proper therapeutic doses. Many over-the-counter (OTC) medications contain DXM, while promethazine-codeine syrup is only available by prescription. Misuse of these medications can cause a gratifying sensation by increasing the brain's dopamine levels.

Products with DXM often contain other medications that may cause permanent damage to the body if taken in high doses, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) which can cause liver damage. High doses of DXM itself can cause impaired motor function, increased heart rate and nausea or vomiting.

Promethazine-codeine syrup in its misused form is referred to by several names including "lean," "purp" and "sizzurp." In high doses, promethazine depresses the central nervous system, negatively affecting heart and lung function. These effects are heightened when promethazine-codeine is combined with alcohol.

Using any medication to get high is against Navy's drug policy. Always take medications—whether prescription or OTC—as directed to avoid misuse.

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Packaging of Specimens: From Best to Worst

A large percentage of specimens submitted to the Navy Drug Screening Lab Great Lakes (NDSL GL) are packaged incorrectly. While using additional tape or other measures to seal the specimen bags may seem helpful in preventing spillage and cross-contamination, these improper packaging procedures are increasing the lab's processing turnaround time. Learn the proper and improper ways to package specimens. The information below will help you understand how to ensure proper packaging of the samples that you send to the lab.



From left to right, the photos above show specimens in the “good,” “bad” and “worst” packaging.

Good Packaging

Correctly packaged, the specimen is placed in the bag with a proper seal across the opening. Prior to sealing, as much air as possible should be removed from the bag. The bag is then sealed by folding along the dotted line and attaching the accompanying adhesive strip to the bag.

When correctly packaged, the opening notch is still accessible, and the NDSL technicians can easily access the specimen for processing.

Bad Packaging

Improperly packaged, the specimen has been placed in the bag with the entire bag folded over the bottle's top and adhered to the side of the bag. In these cases, the bag may not remain sealed, thus defeating the primary purpose of the bag.

In this placement, the opening notch is partially accessible and layers of clear tape have been applied. This increases the lab's processing time and makes it more difficult for lab technicians to open that sample bag.

Worst Packaging

In the worst cases, the specimen has been placed in a bag with excessive wrapping and folding and with clear tape around the bottle. The adhesive seal is used to secure the plastic bag tightly to the sides of the bottle. Additional clear plastic tape is sometimes used to further secure the plastic bag.

When packaged this way, the opening notch has been covered by clear tape, making it inaccessible. This creates difficulty for the lab technician to open the bag, thus increasing the lab's processing time for each specimen.

Ensuring Proper Packaging

Unfortunately, over 90% of specimens have been received improperly packaged. Additional adhesives or tape to seal the bag are NOT necessary, as the adhesive strip should suffice for complete sealing when administered properly. The specimen bags are designed with tear-open capability and to prevent spillage and cross-contamination during shipment. The opening notch should be accessible. Our aim is to test all samples. When each specimen is properly packaged, the NDSLs can ensure that all specimens are tested and put in IFTDTL for review.