

## Document Details

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Medication Storage Information		
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Guidelines created to educate Service Users, families and carers on the storage of medication		
<b>Active Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Owner</b>
06/04/2020	Blower, Danielle	Administrator, System

### Distribution - Copy Holders

Person Name	Person Department Organisation	Notified Date
Blower, Danielle	Myhomecare	27/04/2020 12:44
Myles, Samantha	Support	27/04/2020 12:44
Larkin, Jennifer	Myhomecare	27/04/2020 12:44
O'Connor, Marina	Myhomecare	27/04/2020 12:44
Sullivan, Sandra	Training	27/04/2020 12:44
O'Connell, Clíodhna	Myhomecare	27/04/2020 12:44
McGeown, Yvonne	Myhomecare	27/04/2020 12:44
O'Donovan, Rowena	Myhomecare	27/04/2020 12:44
O'Flaherty, Debbie	Myhomecare	27/04/2020 12:44
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## Reviews


## Revision History

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1	Active	Guidelines created to educate Service Users, families and carers on the storage of medication	06/04/2020

## Relationships

### Related Documents

DOC73	Policy on Administration of High Alert Medication	
HOME 60	Medication Management for Nurses	

### Related Standards

Standard Description
Patient Safety Standard (JCI)
Patient Safety Standard (JCI) International Patient Safety Goals (IPSGs)
Patient Safety Standard (JCI) Patient Family Education (PFE)
Patient Safety Standard (JCI) Patient Medication Management (PMM)

## How to Store Medication safely at Home

Proper storage of medication is important to ensure the quality, effectiveness and safety of the medicines. You should always refer to your pharmacist for correct instruction on storage of medication if you have any concerns when being dispensed

While it is important to have your medications on hand when you need them, it is also necessary to be responsible for their proper use and safekeeping. It is good practice also to keep medications in a dry, cool place that is safe from children and pets.

Some medications require protection from sunlight or need to be kept in your fridge so always read the label or get someone to help read the directions for storage if you have difficulties with your sight. Storing medication in the correct manner will help ensure that your medication stays fresh and is effective for as long as possible, while also limiting the chances of misuse

Oral medications should also where possible be kept separate from medications for external use such as ointments, creams and suppositories and stored as per manufacturer guidelines

### **Make sure all medications are stored safely!**

#### **Do's and Don'ts Tips on medication Storage**

**DO ...** Read the label, follow the directions and note the expiration date. Go through your all medications every six to 12 months and discard any that are no longer needed and/or are expired.

**DO ...** Keep it in its original bottle. Prescription and manufacturer bottles are created to protect the medication from light and moisture and are childproofed.

It's also handy to have the original bottle in case you need information from the label — including refill directions.

**DO ...** Keep all medication (even vitamins) out of reach and out of sight if you have children in the home.

Make sure all the lids are tightly secured. You may also consider using a small locked box or cabinet to store medication for additional safety

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**DO ...** Call your GP or pharmacy if any of your medication has been exposed to liquid, heat or has begun to deteriorate prematurely.

**DON'T ...** Combine different medications in one bottle.

Moisture tends to linger in bathrooms, even well-ventilated ones, which can compromise medication. Bedrooms, wardrobes and storage areas are better options.

**DON'T ...** Leave medicine in the car, near the oven/hob or anywhere else it may be subjected to heat.



The infographic features two shelves of medicine. The top shelf contains blue pill boxes, orange pill boxes, purple boxes, and several bottles of liquid medication. The bottom shelf contains red pill bottles and orange boxes. A yellow circle on the left contains the title 'EXPIRATION DATES' and a paragraph of text. To the right of the bottom shelf is another paragraph of text.

**EXPIRATION DATES**

All prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications are required to have an expiration date to guarantee freshness when kept appropriately. "It is not recommended to take medicine once it's expired," Akoh said. Pills, capsules and tablets usually have a longer shelf life than liquids, ointments and creams (including eye drops). Most expiration dates for pills range from one to five years, while some liquids can destabilize within months.

After a medication has passed its expiration date, it begins to lose its efficacy and, in some cases, it may be dangerous to use. Medication can go bad before the expiration date if it's been stored improperly. Signs that medication is no longer good include discoloration, a change in texture (crumbling pills, cream that has liquefied, etc.) and/or odor. Medicine in liquid form may also grow bacteria or mold.

Useful resource Websites:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/qid/nationalsafetyprogrammes>

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)