A Word about Sharps Disposal

"Sharps" include needles, syringes and lancets used for checking blood glucose levels.

Karmanos Cancer Center is not able to accept used sharps, except those containing chemotherapy medication. We would like to offer some useful tips on how you can safely dispose of all other sharps:

- Contact your local health department, county waste authority or check the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Medical Waste Regulatory Program’s Web site for a list of community service collections programs, by county at www.michigan.gov/deqmedwaste or call (517) 241-1320.

- Contract with a U.S. Postal Service approved mail-back service. These companies provide containers and directions on packaging your used sharps so they can be returned to the company through the U.S. mail. A list of these companies can be found by visiting www.safeneeded disposal.org or by calling (800) 643-1643.

Questions?
Please contact the Karmanos Pharmacy at (313) 576-8814 or Patient Education at (313) 576-9288.
Most people have been told to flush unwanted medications down the drain or toilet rather than keeping them around so they would not be misused by someone else who was not prescribed the medication. Although this prevents the possibility of medication misuse, flushing creates a new and growing environmental problem.

A growing number of community-based “take back” programs offer a safe disposal alternative. Call your city or county government household trash and recycling service and ask if a drug “take back” program is available.

Karmanos patients may bring unused chemotherapy medications with them to their clinic appointment/s to have the Karmanos Pharmacy safely dispose of them. This includes used sharps containing chemotherapy medication (see back panel for more information).

If you have unused or expired prescription drugs or other medicines in your medicine cabinet, you are not alone. Knowing how to properly dispose of unwanted medicines can be confusing.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) joined the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) to develop consumer guidelines to reduce the possibility of misuse of prescription drugs while also protecting the environment.

This brochure outlines these guidelines and provides helpful tips for safe disposal of unused or expired medicines.

Remember to always follow specific disposal instructions on the drug label or patient information that accompany the medication. Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet unless this information specifically instructs you to do so.

You may call your pharmacist or pharmacy to get information on the best way to dispose of a particular drug or medication. Generally if no instructions are given, you may throw the drugs in the household trash, but first — follow the simple bulleted steps on the “How to properly and safely dispose of medications” panel.