



Drug Take Back Programs Save Lives

Drug overdose deaths in the United States have **surpassed one million since 1999**, with **opioids** involved in most cases. Many people unknowingly contribute to this crisis by keeping unused prescriptions at home, where they can be misused by friends, family, or even children who mistake pills for candy. The CDC **reports a 109% increase** in overdose deaths among children from 2019 to 2021, often due to accidental ingestion of accessible medications.

Prescription drug take-back programs offer a safe solution by providing **drop-off sites** at pharmacies, police stations, and through mail-back envelopes. These programs allow people to properly dispose of unwanted medications, reducing the risk of overdose, theft, and accidental poisoning. For those without access to a drop-off site, mixing medications with cat litter or coffee grounds and obscuring personal information before discarding can help. Proper disposal saves lives — participate today and help prevent the next tragedy.

Take action today by tracking the medications in your home and locating the **nearest drop-off site**. You can call the DEA Diversion Control Division Registration Call Center for more information about their drug take-back locations at 800-882-9539.

By participating in take-back programs and spreading awareness about safe disposal, you're playing a part in combating the overdose epidemic — one prescription at a time.

Supporting a Loved One Through Depression

Depression is a common yet complex condition that can present in different ways depending on the individual **affecting millions globally**, often going undiagnosed and untreated — yet with proper care and support, recovery is possible. Recognizing symptoms like persistent sadness, fatigue, changes in sleep or appetite, and withdrawal from social activities is essential to helping someone who may be struggling. Depression takes many forms, including persistent depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, seasonal affective disorder, postpartum depression, and psychotic depression — each with unique challenges and treatment needs.

Recovery from depression is possible, especially when treatment begins early. Most depressive disorders are managed successfully through a combination of psychotherapy, medication, and lifestyle changes. Supporting someone through this journey requires empathy, patience, and education. Encouraging them to seek professional help, offering a listening ear, and avoiding judgment can foster a supportive environment. Often, the most powerful way to help is by simply being there, offering consistent care, understanding, and reassurance that they are not alone. Your support can be life changing.

In the United States alone, around 21 million individuals have been diagnosed with a major depressive disorder.

BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT

Lantern (Formerly SurgeryPlus)

Lantern is a benefit program offered by some employers to help employees and their families access high-quality, non-emergency surgeries including those in categories like spine, general surgery, orthopedic, ear, nose, and throat, cardiac, gastrointestinal, and injections.

The program partners with a nationwide network of carefully selected surgeons and facilities that meet strict quality and safety standards. And here's the best part: when you use Lantern, your costs could be dramatically reduced — or even eliminated completely depending on your employer's plan. This isn't just a different way to schedule surgery. It's a better, smarter, more supportive experience from start to finish.

Benefits

- Lower (or No) Out-of-Pocket Costs
- Access to High-Quality Surgeons
- Full-Service Support

How to Use Lantern

Getting started with Lantern is easy, and your HR team or benefits provider can confirm if it's part of your plan. Once you're enrolled, just follow these steps:

1. Call the Lantern member services line to speak to a Care Advocate who will walk you through the process and ask a few questions about your needs.
2. Get matched with a surgeon based on your procedure and location. If travel is required, they'll help you plan that too — and in most cases, those travel costs are covered!

Your Care Advocate will coordinate everything, from the consultation to surgery day and follow-up appointments. You'll know what to expect every step of the way. If you or a family member has a planned surgery coming up, check with your HR department or benefits provider to see if Lantern is available to you.

