

## Ask the Pharmacist

# About Storing Medication



Let's take this simple exercise - take a look in your medicine chest. Bet you could find at least a couple of expired items; the cough syrup you give to your toddler who is now attending kindergarten, the birth control pills you used to take and perhaps a packet of spotted or discolored pills! So, what are some of the simple but extremely vital do's pertaining to storing your medication?

- **Do** store medications and vitamins in a cool, dry place away from bright windows or storage rooms affected by outdoor weather. This may be your bedroom inside a dresser drawer, or in a kitchen cabinet. However, make sure that the cabinet is not above a stove or sink where heat and steam could create moisture.
- **Do** keep medication and vitamins out of reach and in a locked cabinet. Children are able to scale cabinets often through sheer determination, and they might mistake the bright-colored vitamins and supplements as candies.

- **Do** make sure your pharmacist dispenses medications in childproof containers.
- **Do** store medications only in its original containers. Certain drugs such as the heart medications containing nitrate should not be transferred to another container. If they are exposed to oxygen, nitrate evaporates.
- **Do** check on medication expiry. If the date has passed, throw the medication out in the toilet or sink. If your doctor has advised you to stop consuming a particular medicine, dispose of it immediately.
- **Do** throw away medicines that have unreadable labels.
- **Do** throw away pills that are obviously discolored, crumbly, smelly or appear moist.
- **Do** use a pill dispenser to ration out your doses. This can be helpful to an elderly. **OH!**

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