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# Patient FAQ

## Fentanyl Patch Return Program

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### What is the Fentanyl Patch Return Program?

A Fentanyl Patch Return Program is when a doctor, pharmacist and patient work together to promote the safe, effective and responsible use of fentanyl patches. In general, it applies a “one in, one out” model, where you will be asked to return any used or unused patches back to the pharmacy before you are able to receive more.

### What is the doctor writing on my prescription?

Your doctor should direct the pharmacist to collect used or unused patches before dispensing the next set of patches. In consultation with you, your doctor may also write the specific pharmacy that the prescription can be filled at.

Your doctor may put in place a three-way Narcotic Agreement between themselves, you, and the pharmacy that outlines the conditions for safe, effective and responsible use of your fentanyl patch prescription. This agreement may include the Fentanyl Patch Return Program.

### What if my pharmacist chooses to not follow the instructions of my doctor?

That decision should be discussed with you, the decision should be documented, and the doctor should be notified.

### Why can't I just return my used patches to my doctor when I get my next prescription?

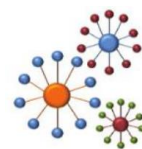
Doctors generally do not have a system set up for the safe disposal of hazardous wastes such as medications. Pharmacists do have a system for medication disposal available to them at no charge through the Ontario government. In addition, pharmacists are in a unique position as they see patients more often and handle new and discarded medications on a daily basis.

### Why can't I just dispose of my patches at home?

Fentanyl patches, along with every other type of medication (pills, ointments, liquids, prescriptions, vitamins, over-the-counter drugs and herbals) are considered to be hazardous waste. This means they need to be safely disposed of to prevent poisoning, injury, misuse and diversion while also protecting the environment. All pharmacies already have a system in place to carry out this safe disposal as described above.

### What if I only bring back 8 out of 10 patches?

If it happens once you will be reminded of the need to return all used patches. If it happens again, you will only receive one patch until the doctor can be reached by the pharmacist. You will likely have to see your doctor to decide if this medication is the right one for you.



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**For my first prescription there will be only 9 out of 10 patches returned.**

Yes, that is expected to be a one-time occurrence and should be documented.

**How should the used patches be stored?**

It is recommended that you stick the used patches onto the sheet of paper provided (with no overlap) so that each patch can easily be recognized and accounted for.

Store the sheet with used patches out of sight and out of the reach of children and/or pets. Treat it with the same care and concern as other medications, which should ideally be stored in a secure, locked cabinet. Fentanyl can cause serious unwanted effects or a fatal overdose if taken by children, pets, or adults who are not used to strong narcotic medication. It is important to store the used and unused patches in a safe place.

Once the used patch sheets are returned to the pharmacy, they are placed in the pharmacy’s drug disposal bin, removed, and destroyed on a regular basis.

**What If I am going on vacation and need a larger supply of patches?**

Speak to your pharmacist to let them know that you are going on vacation and for how long. Always return the quantity of patches that you received in your last refill. If you received a larger quantity than usual, you must return the same number in order to receive the next refill, even if the next prescription is for a smaller quantity than the current prescription. The pharmacist will document the changes for appropriate record keeping.

**I get my medications delivered how will this affect me?**

Place the used patch sheet in a paper bag for safe return to the pharmacy. In a similar way in which pharmacy delivery personnel collect money, drug cards, expired medications, and other items such as signatures under the Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act 2010, they can also be entrusted to collect and return used patches to the pharmacy.

As a best practice when delivering a fentanyl patch prescription, both you and the delivery personnel may sign the Narcotics Safety and Awareness Act delivery record to indicate that used patches were picked up from you.

**If you have any questions about the program, discuss them with your doctor and/or pharmacist.**



*\*Adapted from the Peterborough County-City Health Unit*