

PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE BINS QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

What is Pharmaceutical Waste

Substances and containers of:

- Patients' unused pharmaceutical products;
- Pharmaceutical product from incomplete infusions;
- Any Schedule 8 and 11 medicines, including residue or trace;
- Pharmaceutical products that are unwanted or out of date;
- Sharps, packages and equipment containing extractable volumes of pharmaceutical products.

This excludes:

- Materials where all extractable contents have been removed (other than cytotoxic and Schedule 8 and S11 medicines) e.g. empty vial, empty syringe.
- saline, sugar (glucose), nutrient solutions (parenteral nutrition) and associated packaging and containers are not pharmaceutical waste



Destruction and Disposal of Schedule 8 and Schedule 11 Medicines

When discarding S8 or S11 medicines, additional actions must be taken to render medication non-recoverable and non-identifiable prior to disposal in a pharmaceutical bin.

More specifically:

















- Tablets/capsules must be crushed
- Injectable liquid contents must be removed and expelled from open ampoule/vial/syringe
- Patches must be cut

Disposal of Non-S8 and S11 Medicines

Medications that are no longer required and not suitable to be reused can be discarded in a Pharmaceutical waste bin or returned to pharmacy.

Opened sterile dose units or medications that have come into direct patient contact, e.g. regurgitated tablets or used patches, should be immediately discarded in a Pharmaceutical waste bin.

Medicine Waste Disposal

Medication Type	Dose form	Additional actions	Bin type
CYTOTOXIC	All	Nil	
SCHEDULE 8 AND SCHEDULE 11* ¹ Authorised personnel can only destroy partially used doses of S8s (e.g. ampoule, vial, tablet or lozenge). ² Destruction by two authorised personnel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered nurses (RN) • Registered midwives (RM) • Enrolled nurses with medication endorsement (ENmed) • Medical officer (MO) • Pharmacist Pharmacist involvement required on wards for destruction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full doses (S8) - includes dose refused, dropped or removed in error • Patient's Own (S8/S11) • Expired (S8/S11) 	Tablets/Capsules ² S8 - partial tablet S11 - full tablet 	Crush 	
	Injectable liquids ² Remnants of S8 or S11 dose in open ampoule OR S8 or S11 vial that has had medication removed from it 	Extract contents 	
	Used patches ² 	Cut 	
	Empty containers (bottles, blister packs, vials/amps)	Nil	
ALL OTHER SCHEDULED MEDICATION	Tablets Capsules 	Nil	
	Liquids 		
	Patches 		
SHARPS (excluding S8/S11)	Ampoules/needles (no medication residue)	Nil	
NON-SHARP ITEMS (excluding S8/S11)	Other containers e.g., bottles, blister strips, empty vials (no medication residue)	Nil	
FLUIDS (excluding S8/S11)	Fluids with medicine additives ³	Extract contents 	
	³ Empty bags should be discarded in general waste or into the appropriate recycling stream (where one exists) Glucose containing solutions ³ (includes parenteral nutrition)	Extract contents 	Approved sink (dirty utility room)
	Other fluids ³ e.g., sodium chloride, Hartmann's, fluids with electrolytes, dialysate fluid		

* Schedule 8 drugs must be destroyed in accordance with Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Regulations 2017 (non-identifiable, non-recoverable)

¹ Refer to procedure *OP-GC6 Medication Prescription, Supply, Storage and Administration* (Table 9 page 29) for details on the destruction of S8 and S11 medicines

¹ Refer to procedure *Management of Unknown Substances (including Illicit and Unidentifiable Substances)* on destruction of unknown substance