



# News from Walgreens

Walgreen Co. Corporate Communications 108 Wilmot Road, Deerfield, Ill. 60015 (847) 315-2500

Contact: Emily Hartwig  
Phone: 847-315-3316  
emily.hartwig@walgreens.com

<http://news.walgreens.com>  
 [@WalgreensNews](https://twitter.com/WalgreensNews)  
 [facebook.com/Walgreens](https://facebook.com/Walgreens)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Walgreens Leads Fight Against Prescription Drug Abuse with New Programs to Help Curb Misuse of Medications and the Rise in Overdose Deaths**

*Launch of safe medication disposal program will install kiosks in more than 500 Walgreens drugstores in 39 states and Washington, D.C.*

*Lifesaving opioid antidote naloxone to be made available without a prescription at Walgreens pharmacies in 35 states and Washington, D.C.*

*Director of National Drug Control Policy Michael Botticelli joins Walgreens for the program launch*

DEERFIELD, Ill., Feb. 9, 2016 – Walgreens today announced the launch of a comprehensive new effort to combat drug abuse, introducing two programs that address key contributors to the crisis.

In the first ongoing national effort of its kind by a retailer, Walgreens will install safe medication disposal kiosks in more than 500 drugstores in 39 states and Washington, D.C., primarily at locations open 24 hours. A full listing of the states to be included in the program is below. The program will make the disposal of medications — including opioids and other controlled substances — easier and more convenient while helping to reduce the misuse of medications and the rise in overdose deaths.

Walgreens also will make naloxone, a lifesaving opioid antidote, available without a prescription at its pharmacies in 35 states and Washington, D.C., rolling out the program state-by-state throughout this year. Naloxone can be used in the event of an overdose to reverse the effects of heroin or other opioid drugs, and is administered by injection or nasal spray. The medication became available without a prescription last week at Walgreens pharmacies throughout the state of New York and will be introduced without a prescription in Indiana and Ohio later this month. A full listing of the states to be included in the program is below. When implementation of the program is complete, naloxone will be available without a prescription in more than 5,800 of Walgreens nearly 8,200 stores. In states where a prescription is required, Walgreens is available and eager to work with regulators to help update rules to allow for dispensing of naloxone without a prescription.

Walgreens will be joined at today's launch, held at its Washington, D.C. flagship store, by Director of National Drug Control Policy for the White House Michael Botticelli. Also joining Director Botticelli at

**Walgreens**  
at the corner of **happy & healthy**<sup>®</sup>

the launch are special guests Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.); Rep. Bob Dold, (R-Ill. 10); Lou Milione, Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Diversion Control, Drug Enforcement Administration; and Michael Nerheim, Lake County, Ill. State's Attorney, who will share their support for the program.

The medication disposal kiosks allow individuals to safely and conveniently dispose of their unwanted, unused or expired prescriptions, including controlled substances, and over-the-counter medications, at no cost. The kiosks at Walgreens pharmacies will be available during regular pharmacy hours (24 hours a day at most of these locations) and will offer one of the best ways to ensure medications are not accidentally used or intentionally misused by someone else. The initial installation of the safe medication disposal kiosks has begun in California and is expected to be completed at more than 500 Walgreens locations this year.

“Walgreens pharmacists play an important role in counseling patients on the safe use of their medications, and now we are leading the way in retail pharmacy’s fight against prescription drug abuse,” said Richard Ashworth, Walgreens president of pharmacy and retail operations. “We understand the challenges our communities face, and we stand ready to help our patients and customers lead healthier lives. When the stakes are this high, the solutions must be comprehensive.”

Prescription drug abuse continues to be a public health and safety risk. According to the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an estimated 6.5 million Americans misused a prescription drug in 2014, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported a total of 47,055 drug overdose deaths, which include prescription and illicit drugs, during the same year. That is a 6.5 percent increase from 2013 and a 140 percent increase since 2000. Most people who misuse prescription drugs first obtain them from a family member or friend, often from a home medicine cabinet.

“Providing safe and convenient disposal options for prescription drugs and expanding access to the lifesaving overdose-reversal drug naloxone are critical parts of our national strategy to stop the prescription drug and heroin overdose epidemic, along with effective enforcement, prevention and treatment,” said Director Botticelli. “Today’s announcement builds on the public and private sector actions announced by President Obama in October and demonstrates our strong commitment to addressing the prescription drug abuse and heroin use epidemic as both a public health and a public safety issue.”

“Prescription drug abuse is an epidemic among American teens. At the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids, we’re asking parents and grandparents to pledge to safeguard their medicines and speak to their families about medicine abuse,” said Marcia Lee Taylor, President and CEO of Partnership for Drug-Free Kids. “The programs announced by Walgreens today will go a long way toward helping put that pledge into practice.”

Walgreens also continues to participate in U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) sponsored National Prescription Drug Take Back Days, serving as a collection point in communities for law enforcement to collect unwanted, unused or expired medications for safe disposal. The next DEA sponsored National Prescription Drug Take Back Day will be held on April 30.

“I commend Walgreens for stepping up to address the national epidemic of prescription drug abuse and heroin overdose. Drug take-back programs and over the counter access to naloxone are strong steps toward confronting this crisis and preventing further tragedies like we see in Chicago’s suburbs where heroin is taking a life, on average, every three days. My Anti-Heroin Task Force and I have been working to get naloxone available over the counter for families struggling with addiction, and now thanks to

Walgreens Illinois is one of 35 states where families will be able to purchase this life-saving drug without a prescription,” said Sen. Kirk.

“Nearly one-quarter of people who try heroin become addicted, and their addiction frequently starts with recreational use of the kind of drugs that people too often leave lying around in medicine cabinets,” said Rep. Dold. “But the statistics don’t even begin to tell the whole story. As a co-chair of the Suburban Anti-Heroin Task Force in Illinois, I’ve seen firsthand how these drugs destroy families. That’s why I’ve been working with local leaders and businesses, such as Walgreens, to find common-sense solutions to curb drug abuse, and in the coming days we’ll also be introducing new legislation that will help save lives.”

“Take-back programs are an important and easy way for the public to anonymously dispose of their unwanted, unused or expired medications, and today’s announcement is a step in the right direction,” said DEA Acting Administrator Chuck Rosenberg. “We look forward to the day when safe drug disposal options are commonplace and hope this action inspires others to create similar programs.”

“Our office is working tirelessly to increase awareness of the dangers of drug overdose in Lake County,” said Nerheim, Lake County, Ill. State’s Attorney. “Now, Walgreens is an important partner in helping to bring change to our community, one I’ve called home my entire life.”

### **States Included in Walgreens Safe Medication Disposal Kiosk Program**

By the end of the year, Walgreens will install safe medication disposal kiosks at more than 500 drugstores in the following states:

Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin

State specific regulations prevent Walgreens from installing safe medication disposal kiosks at this time in certain states.

### **States Included in Walgreens Naloxone Program**

By the end of the year, Walgreens will make naloxone available without a prescription at its pharmacies in the following states<sup>1</sup>:

Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin

### **About Walgreens**

Walgreens ([www.walgreens.com](http://www.walgreens.com)), one of the nation's largest drugstore chains, is included in the Retail Pharmacy USA Division of Walgreens Boots Alliance, Inc. (NASDAQ: WBA), the first global pharmacy-led, health and wellbeing enterprise. More than 8 million customers interact with Walgreens each day in communities across America, using the most convenient, multichannel access to consumer goods and services and trusted, cost-effective pharmacy, health and wellness services and advice.

Walgreens operates 8,173 drugstores with a presence in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto

Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Walgreens digital business includes Walgreens.com, drugstore.com, Beauty.com, SkinStore.com and VisionDirect.com. Walgreens also manages more than 400 Healthcare Clinic and provider practice locations around the country.

# # #

---

<sup>i</sup> Montana and South Dakota only allow naloxone to be dispensed without a prescription to the patient.