



91
AMERICANS

die every day from
an **opioid overdose**
(that includes prescription
opioids and heroin).

Preventing the Misuse of Medications

As many of us have sadly become aware, the issue of misuse of prescription drugs and overdose is a serious public health problem in the United States and in Franklin County. Nonmedical use of prescription drugs is highest among young adults, and each year many young children also accidentally ingest unsafe medications. Reasons for the high prevalence of drug misuse vary by age, gender, and other factors, but likely include ease of access.

Do you have prescription opioids, depressants or stimulants in your home? Here are three recommended steps to prevent the misuse of medications:

1. **Counting** includes not just knowing how many pills you have but keeping a record of your pill count with your bottle showing the amount remaining.
2. **Locking** means keeping all medications out of reach to household visitors, contractors, and family members. Through a grant from the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County and the North County Region, a limited number of free medication lock boxes are available to residents.
3. **Dropping** is proper disposal of medications that are no longer needed. Unused medication (no liquids or injectables) can be disposed of at any one of the Drug Drop-Off Boxes located at Police Stations throughout the region. The Drop Box located at the Deerfield Police Department is available 24 hours/7 days a week.

For more information on medication safety, or to request a medication lock box, please call FRCOG Cooperative Public Health Service Nurse Lisa White at 413-665-1400 x 114 or stop by her regular hours each Wednesday 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. in the Deerfield Town Offices.