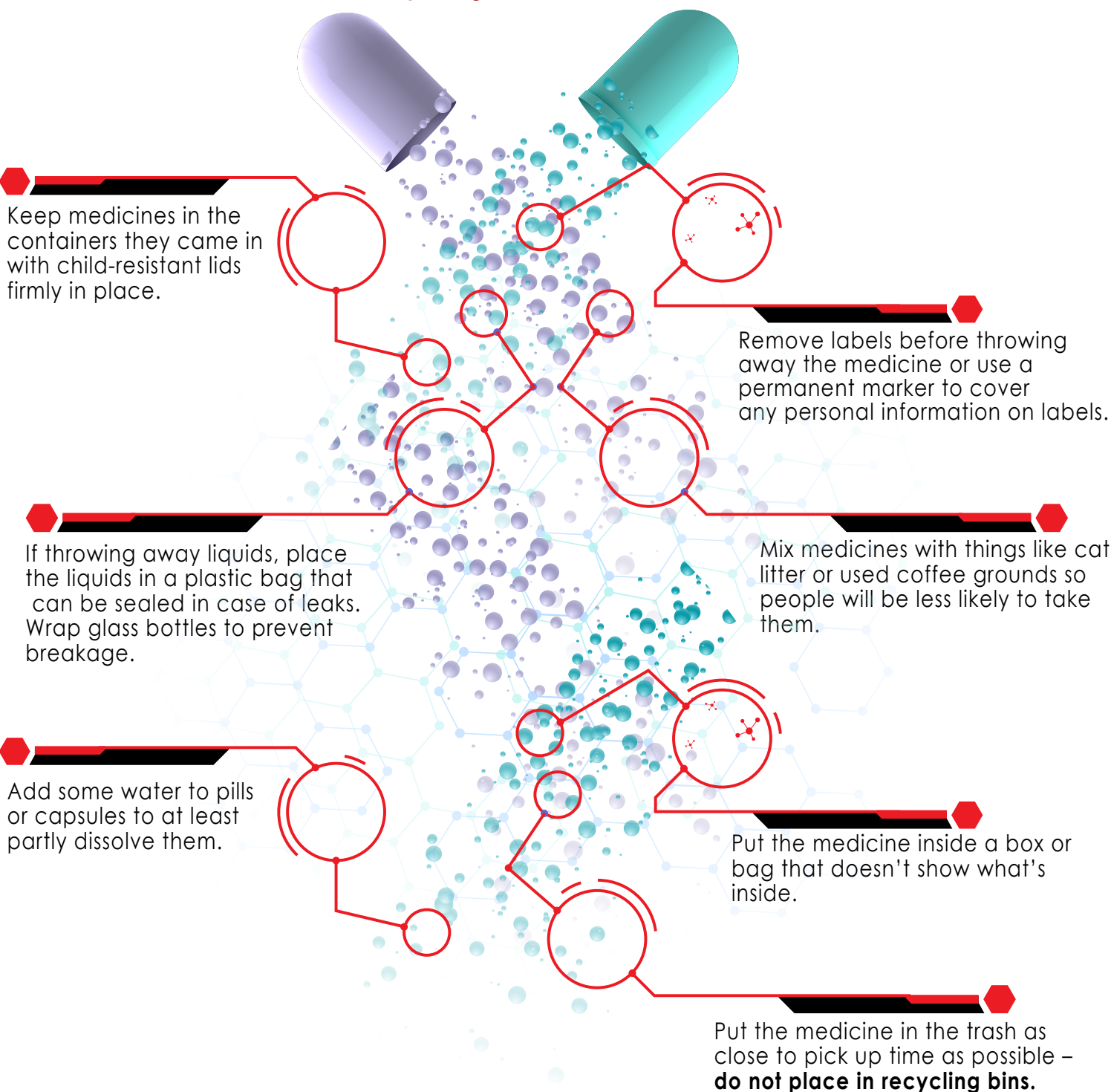# What Can I Do With Old And Unused Medicine?

Flushing medicine down the sink or toilet may be bad for the environment. Throwing it away with the trash may cause less pollution, but there is a risk that other people or animals may find it. Privacy may also be a concernif containers have labels with names and other personal information.

Follow these steps to get rid of unused and old medicine:

Keep medicines in the containers they came in with child-resistant lids firmly in place.

Remove labels before throwing away the medicine or use a permanent marker to cover any personal information on labels.

If throwing away liquids, place the liquids in a plastic bag that can be sealed in case of leaks. Wrap glass bottles to prevent breakage.

Mix medicines with things like cat litter or used coffee grounds so people will be less likely to take them.

Add some water to pills or capsules to at least partly dissolve them.

Put the medicine inside a box or bag that doesn't show what's inside.

Put the medicine in the trash as close to pick up time as possible – **do not place in recycling bins.**

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- Keep medicines locked up and put them back in the locked place as soon as you've finished using them.

- "Child resistant" caps only slow children down – **they are not "child proof".**

- Turn on lights and wear your reading glasses so you take the right medicine and right dose.

- **Check labels** every time. Don't rely on how bottles or pills look to identify medicine.

- Over the counter products can hurt you if you use them the wrong way or the wrong amount. Read all the directions and follow them.

- Never guess how to use a product. Using too much or more than one product with the same or similar ingredients (e.g. acetaminophen in cold and cough medicines) can cause problems. **Taking medicines with the same ingredients through your skin and by mouth at the same time can cause an overdose.**

- When taking more than one medicine at a time, use a chart to check off when you take each medicine so you don't take the same medicine twice by mistake.

- If there's a chance that more than one person might give medicine to a child or senior, choose one person to do the job to prevent double dosing.

- More is not always better. Taking more than directions tell you to can cause serious problems. If the amount you're supposed to take doesn't work – don't just take more; call your doctor or pharmacist and ask what you should do.

- Never take medicine in front of children or call it "candy". Children like to copy adults and it can be hard for them to tell the difference between medicine and candy.

**If you think someone has been poisoned, don't wait to see
if they get sick – call the poison center immediately.**

1.800.222.1222

INDIANA **POISON** CENTER

POISON **Help** 1-800-222-1222

www.indianapoisoncenter.org