Optum

Designed for sustainability

Shipping boxes save CO_2, water, energy and plastic waste



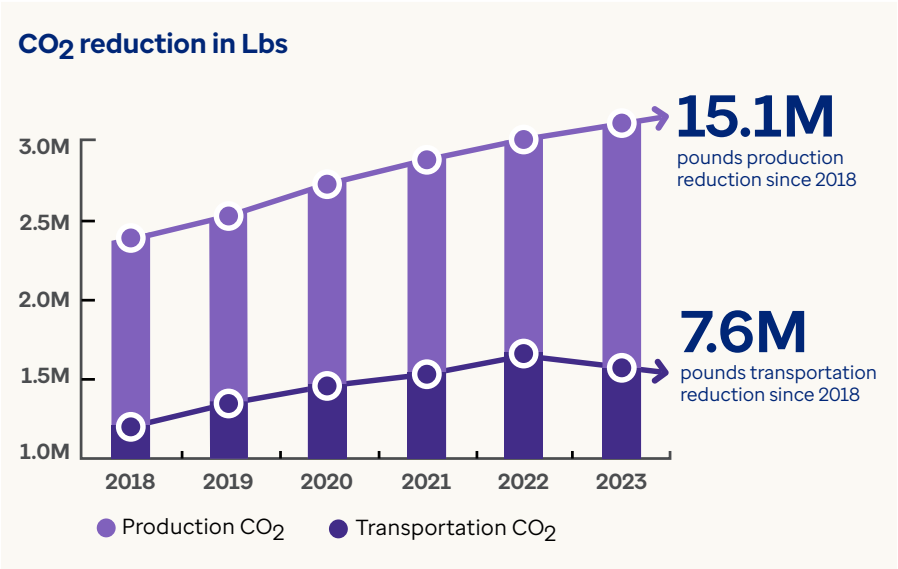
Mailing prescriptions in eco-friendly shipping boxes

In 2018, Optum® became the first major pharmacy care services company to introduce fully sustainable, cold-chain medication packaging. Since then, it's protected **millions of Optum® prescriptions each year.**[1]

Doing our part for the planet

Our packaging does not use polystyrene, a plastic-based foam often used for temperature-sensitive deliveries. Instead, the innovative packaging is made from 100-percent renewable cotton. It is biodegradable, compostable, reusable and recyclable.

This helps lower the environmental effect in several ways. One key advantage is that eliminating the use of polystyrene foam **saves massive amounts of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions.** These savings come in both the production and transportation of the packaging.



Even the cold packs are environmentally friendly

Because of their unique formulation, Enviro Ice™ packs allow convenient, drain-safe disposal that won't harm PVC pipes or septic systems. They're also the only cold pack that can be recycled as plant food. When thawed and diluted with water, the Enviro Ice coolant mixture is a safe, suitable fertilizer for both indoor and outdoor plants.

Shrinking waste

The switch to sustainable packaging saves more than CO2. It also saves massive amounts of water, energy and plastic waste. In total, since 2018 our sustainable packaging has saved[2]:

190 million
gallons of water saved.
That's enough to fill 288 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

24 million
kWh of energy saved.
That's enough to power 2,224 homes for a year.

30 million
pounds of plastic waste saved.
That's equal to 2,000 adult African elephants.

Protecting against extreme temperatures

Safeguarding medications during home delivery is vital. Many must be kept within strict temperature ranges to arrive safely and undamaged at their destinations. Our packaging is designed to maintain a constant temperature to make sure the quality of the medicine stays intact.

Biodegradable, 100% recyclable materials keep medication at correct temperatures for up to 80 hours in most climates.[3] This switch to sustainable packaging is part of broader efforts to lessen the environmental effects of health care.

Let's get started

Talk to your Optum representative to learn how we are working to lessen our environmental footprint while making the health care system work better for everyone.

About Optum

We're evolving health care so everyone can have the opportunity to live their healthiest life. Together, for better health.

*** Notes**

1. Optum. Internal sustainability analysis. 2023.
2. Ibid.
3. For shipments during extreme weather conditions (cold or warm), our materials will keep medication at correct temperature for more than 36 hours.

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