

The Deadly Counterfeit Drug Trade Thrives in Illinois

**Cook County, 2014–2016:
Fentanyl overdoses
increased by 2,700%**

**Kankakee County,
Spring 2016: At least
four people died of
fentanyl poisoning over
a three-month period**

**February 2016:
State police warn that
counterfeit Xanax made
with fentanyl were being
sold on the street**

The country has seen an upsurge in counterfeit prescription pills masquerading as painkillers and Xanax. These pills are disguised as real medications but made with deadly fentanyl or its even deadlier variants, and even a fraction of a single pill can mean death in less than 30 minutes of ingesting it.

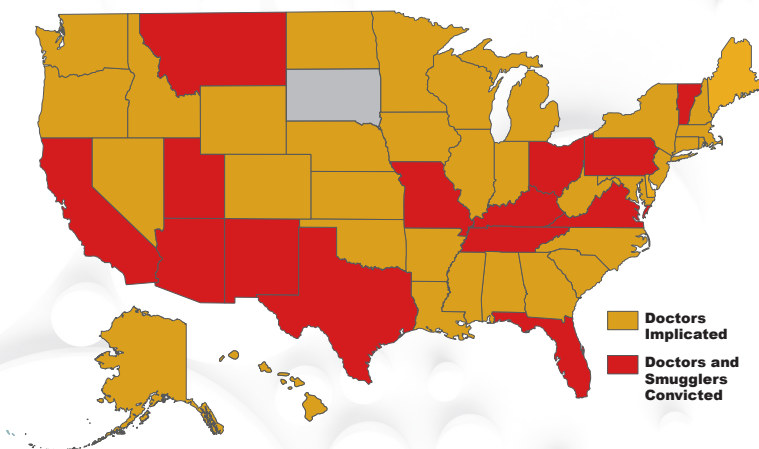
Fentanyl is a serious threat to Illinoisans. In July 2017, federal agents arrested 13 members of a drug ring operating in Chicago and the West Side. **Included in the massive seizure was 13 kilograms of fentanyl, enough to kill one-third of the state's residents.** Seizures like this one help to explain why fentanyl overdoses in Cook County increased by 2,700% between 2014 and 2016.

135 Illinois Doctors Linked to Fake Drug Rings

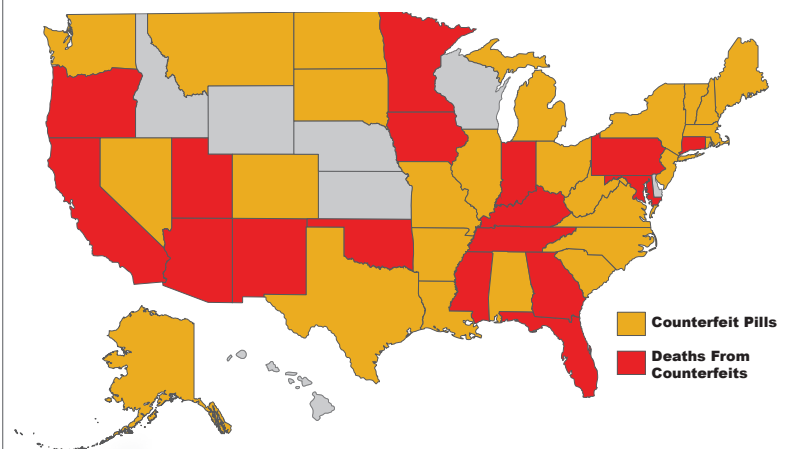
Counterfeit cancer drugs have touched Illinois as well. 135 different medical practices in Illinois have been implicated in various black market supply chains associated with counterfeit cancer treatments and other therapies. Families who have lost relatives to cancer will never know if their loved ones were given real medication or fake, and if they died from a lack of treatment.

**Opening the U.S.'s closed drug supply chain puts
Illinoisan lives at risk of serious injury or death.**

Fake Cancer Drug Crisis



Fentanyl-Laced Counterfeits & Related Deaths



Counterfeit and Black Market Drug Investigations in Illinois (2010–2018)

Based on reported investigations.

Note that each investigation could have affected hundreds of Illinois residents.

Fentanyl and Counterfeit Pills Made with Fentanyl

- August 2017:** Cook County recorded a 2,700 percent increase in overdoses caused by fentanyl from 2014 to 2016. In 2014 there were 20 fatal overdoses due to fentanyl and in 2016 there were 582.¹
- July 2017:** Police busted a drug ring operating out of Chicago and the western suburbs and seized 13 kilograms of fentanyl, enough to make over 4 million fatal overdoses.²
- November 2016:** A Utah-based drug counterfeiting operation shipped buyers in Illinois fentanyl-laced counterfeit oxycodone pills.³
- July 2016:** Kankakee County reported four deaths as the result of illicit fentanyl in pill or powder form over a three-month period beginning in March 2016.⁴
- February 2016:** Illinois State Police issued a warning about counterfeit Xanax pills made with fentanyl being available on the street.⁵

Black Market and Counterfeit Cancer Drugs

- April 2016:** Dr. Ann Kinnealey relinquished her controlled substance license and her physician and surgeon license after the Illinois State Medical Board found that she bought misbranded cancer medication from Quality Specialty Products, a supplier of counterfeit Avastin and subsidiary of CanadaDrugs.⁶
- April 2015:** The FDA sent letters to seven Illinois doctors and more than 271 nationwide warning them to stop buying drugs from Gallant Pharmaceuticals, which sold more than 39 non-FDA approved medications.⁷
- May 2013:** The FDA warned 781 doctors, 34 in Illinois, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.⁸
- February–June 2012:** Ten Illinois doctors were among the 136 nationwide that received warning letters indicating that they may have purchased counterfeit Avastin or Altzuan from Quality Specialty Products (QSP), a CanadaDrugs subsidiary.⁹

Misbranded/Counterfeit Botox and Beauty Treatments

- March 2016:** 52 Illinois doctors and more than 1,225 nationwide were sent letters telling them to stop buying from Canadian distributor TC Medical, which sold 22 different kinds of non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Botox. Four Illinois doctors had to be warned a second time for buying from TC Medical.¹⁰
- June 2014:** Christopher Carstens, owner of Orthopedic Solutions, Inc., pleaded guilty to distributing more than \$3 million in misbranded and imported Botox & Juvederm.¹¹
- July 2013:** The FDA warned seven doctors and medical practices in Illinois to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.¹²
- November 2012:** 25 Illinois doctors were among over 350 U.S. medical practices that received warning letters indicating that they may have purchased counterfeit versions of Botox from Quality Specialty Products (QSP), a CanadaDrugs subsidiary.¹³

Counterfeit Drug incidents

- November 2017:** A Champaign resident was found guilty of making over 80,000 homemade tramadol capsules and selling them throughout the United States.¹⁴
- January 2016:** Chicago pharmacist Michael Mankiewicz, whose license was revoked in 2012, was sentenced to a year in prison for importing shipments of counterfeit erectile dysfunction drugs from China.¹⁵
- July 2014:** Chicago resident Faye Al-Jabri was sentenced to 41 months in prison for smuggling thousands of counterfeit erectile dysfunction pills from China into the United States for further distribution.¹⁶
- December 2010:** During an investigation of a local businessman, authorities in Naperville found that he possessed 20,000 counterfeit Valium pills and 20,000 counterfeit Xanax pills. They suspected the drugs were manufactured in China.¹⁷
- July 2010:** A 44-year-old man from Orland Park faced charges after Will County authorities found 200,000 counterfeit pills made to look like an unspecified Pfizer product.¹⁸

Footnotes

1. Nicole Lewis, Emma Ockerman, Joel Achenbach and Wesley Lowery, "Thousands of Urban Overdose Deaths Linked to Shocking Increase of Fentanyl in Drug Supply," *Chicago Tribune*, August 15, 2017, <http://trib.in/2sqeXmr>.
2. Lisa Marie Farver, "Feds Bust Giant Fentanyl, Cocaine, And Heroin Ring In Chicago And Western Suburbs," *Downers Grove Patch*, July 28, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2BovASi>.
3. Superseding Indictment, U.S. District Court, District of Utah, Central Division, Case No. 2:16-cr-00631-DAK, <http://bit.ly/2mGXekE>.
4. Dimitrios Kalantzis, "Fentanyl Deaths on the Rise in Kankakee County," *Daily Journal*, July 5, 2016, <http://bit.ly/2BpV2aa>.
5. "Counterfeit 'Xanax' Pills Could Cause Dangerous Overdose," *Fox 59*, February 2, 2016, <http://bit.ly/2CfMaRr>.
6. Robert Channick, "Evanston Doctor Gives Up License After Cancer Drug Probe," *Chicago Tribune*, May 11, 2016, <http://trib.in/2CyUbRo>.
7. "FDA Issues Letters to Doctors Who May Have Purchased Counterfeit or Unapproved Prescription Drugs," U.S. Food and Drug Administration, last updated August 17, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2DqFh4c>.
8. "Historical Information: FDA Issues Letters to Doctors Who May Have Purchased Counterfeit or Unapproved Prescription Drugs, 2012-2014," U.S. Food and Drug Administration, last updated June 12, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2rkvR5s>.
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13. "Historical Information: FDA Issues Letters to Doctors...", <http://bit.ly/2rkvR5s>.
14. "Champaign, Illinois, Resident Guilty Of Producing And Selling Over 80,000 Homemade Tramadol Capsules To Customers Without Verifying Prescriptions," U.S. Department of Justice, November 28, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2EalDqh>.
15. "Northwest Side Pharmacist Sentenced to a Year and a Day in Federal Prison for Selling Counterfeit Viagra and Cialis," U.S. Department of Justice, January 29, 2016, <http://bit.ly/2C9gieg>.
16. "Illinois Man Sentenced for Smuggling Counterfeit Goods and Drugs into the U.S.," U.S. Department of Justice, July 17, 2014, <http://bit.ly/2BOYzjq>.
17. Ted Cox, "Elk Grove Business Owner Charged with Possessing Phony Valium," *Daily Herald*, December 13, 2010, <http://bit.ly/2Ef8Enq>.
18. "A Dose of Charges for Alleged Sale of Counterfeit Drugs," *Chicago Tribune*, July 16, 2010, <http://trib.in/2EvkKvM>.