The country has seen an upsurge in counterfeit prescription pills masquerading as painkillers and Xanax. These pills are disguised as real medications but are 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 Vermonter. In May 2017, police arrested Burlington resident Dean Shores, who was purchasing counterfeit oxycodone that contained both fentanyl and methamphetamine and mailing the drugs to customers across the U.S. The criminal complaint stated that in just the previous month, he had mailed 500 such pills to one individual.

**Four Vermont Doctors Linked to Fake Drug Rings**

Counterfeit cancer drugs have touched Vermont as well. Four different medical practices in Vermont 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.
Fentanyl and Counterfeit Pills Made with Fentanyl

January 2018: Morrisville residents Esperanza Delarosa and Susan Mateo were charged with conspiracy to distribute heroin, fentanyl, and oxycodone.

May 2017: Police arrested Dean Shores of Burlington, who was buying large amounts of oxycodone laced with both fentanyl and methamphetamine and redistributing it over the United States.

April 2017: Burlington experienced a string of 19 mostly non-fatal overdoses in the span of two weeks, which caused the mayor and the police to call for a crackdown on fentanyl dealers.

March 2017: Vermont's Health Department released a report showing a spike in drug overdoses from both heroin and prescription drugs in the state during 2016. Authorities attributed about half of overdose deaths to fentanyl.

August 2016: The city of Barre had nine overdoses, including one fatality, over a single weekend from what authorities suspected was a batch of heroin that contained fentanyl.

November 2014: In mid-October, a rash of fentanyl deaths that started in Hartford and spread to neighboring towns and across the Connecticut River in New Hampshire left two people dead and seven others lucky to be alive. This was the second wave of overdoses to hit the state this year.

Black Market and Counterfeit Cancer Drugs

2012–2013: The FDA warned two Vermont doctors offices and more than 500 across the country to stop buying from CanadaDrugs.com subsidiaries that had sold American doctors counterfeit Avastin.

Misbranded and Counterfeit Botox

March 2016: The FDA warned two doctors and clinics in Vermont and more than 1,200 nationwide to stop buying from Canadian distributor TC Medical, which sold 22 different kinds of non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Botox.

Footnotes