

The Deadly Counterfeit Drug Trade Thrives in the Rocky Mountain States of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming

Billings, October 2017: Police seize 100 fentanyl-laced oxycodone pills

Salt Lake County, November 2016: Federal Agents seize 95,000 counterfeit pills made with fentanyl

Colorado, 2011–2016: Naloxone doses administered by EMS increased 350%

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

Fentanyl is a threat to residents of the Rocky Mountain States. Authorities have seized the drug in Billings, Bozeman, and on the Rocky Boy Reservation in Montana, and busted two high-volume fentanyl pill distribution rings based in suburban homes in Utah that was shipping fake fentanyl pills all over the United States.

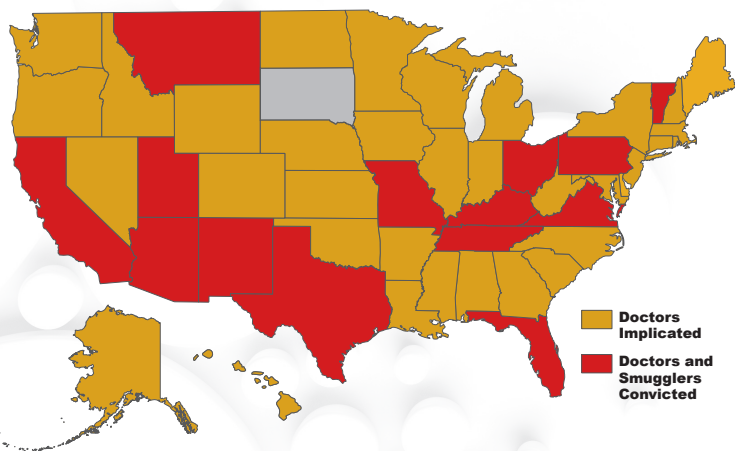
107 Rocky Mountain States Doctors Linked to Fake Drug Rings

Counterfeit cancer drugs have touched the Rocky Mountain States as well. 107 different medical practices in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah and Wyoming 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.

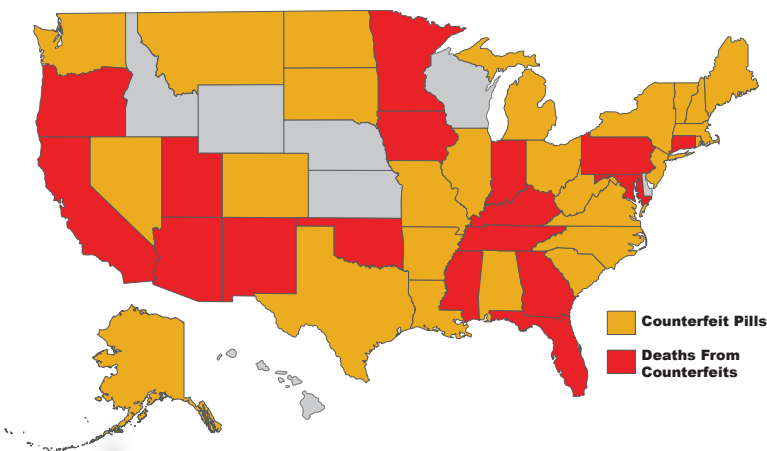
Opening the U.S. closed drug supply chain puts Rocky Mountain States residents' lives at risk for serious injury or death.

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

Fake Cancer Drug Crisis



Fentanyl-Laced Counterfeits & Related Deaths



Counterfeit and Black Market Drug Investigations in Rocky Mountain States (2012–2018)

Based on reported investigations.

Note that each investigation could have affected hundreds of Rocky Mountain residents.

Fentanyl and Counterfeit Pills Made with Fentanyl

- February 2018:** DEA agents arrested four people and searched multiple properties in culmination to a year-long investigation into a counterfeit fentanyl pill mill centered in South Jordan, Utah.¹
- December 2017:** Five Chippewa Cree tribe members on the Rocky Boy Reservation in Montana suffered near fatal overdoses after taking counterfeit pills that contained a mixture of fentanyl, heroin and other opioids.²
- November 2017:** Colorado reporting indicated a crisis in opioid use, including prescription opioids, heroin and fentanyl. In 2011, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) administered 997 doses of naloxone, an opioid overdose reversal drug, in Colorado. By 2016, that rate had risen to 3,465 doses.³
- October 2017:** Billings, Montana police seized approximately 100 counterfeit oxycodone pills made of fentanyl while arresting alleged dealer Christopher Samuel Fear, who had sold fake pills to an informant.⁴
- October 2017:** The Utah Department of Health reported that fentanyl-related deaths increased by 78 percent between 2015 and 2016.⁵
- September 2017:** Bozeman, Montana police warned that seven residents of Gallatin County had overdosed over a two week period, and that they suspected that fentanyl was to blame.⁶ Lewis and Clark County's sheriff issued a similar warning in November 2017.⁷
- July 2017:** Investigators arrested three people in Bozeman, Montana for allegedly distributing a heroin-fentanyl mixture connected with at least four overdoses in Butte.⁸
- March 2017:** A 17-year-old in Morgan County, Utah was revived by EMS and sheriff deputies after he overdosed on half of what he thought was an Adderall pill. He allegedly purchased the pill from 19-year-old Parker Lewis Pentz, who allegedly ordered the counterfeits on the internet.⁹
- November 2016:** Federal agents raided two homes in Salt Lake County, Utah and found synthetic opioid components, cash, a pill press, and 95,000 fentanyl-laced oxycodone pills and counterfeit Xanax. A May 2017 superseding indictment alleges that Aaron Michael Shamo and five co-conspirators, who were charged with possession of fentanyl with intent to distribute, shipped counterfeit pills to 24 states.¹⁰ In November 2017, prosecutors announced that they were investigating 28 overdose deaths that may be linked to the Utah-based drug operation, and in April 2018 prosecutors indicted an additional man in the case.¹¹ The case is still in progress.
- June 2016:** Layton police officers reported one overdose death as a result of counterfeit Roxicodone pills circulating in Davis County, Utah.¹²
- June 2016:** Nathaniel Craigen Jetter was arrested in Sandy, Utah after police found a pill press and other counterfeiting equipment in his hotel room. Jetter, who subsequently pleaded guilty, told police that he was making fentanyl-laced oxycodone pills.¹³

Black Market and Counterfeit Cancer Drugs

- April 2015:** The FDA sent letters to seven Rocky Mountain States doctors and more than 270 nationwide warning them to stop buying drugs from Gallant Pharmaceuticals, which sold more than 39 non-FDA approved medications.¹⁴
- April 2015:** Dr. Ali Ben-Jacob and Cache Valley Treatment and Research Clinic in Salt Lake City, Utah pleaded guilty to charges they bought misbranded oncology drugs from Canada Drugs subsidiary Quality Specialty Products (QSP).¹⁵
- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 doctors, 24 in the Rocky Mountain States, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.¹⁶
- 2012–2013:** The FDA warned eighteen doctors offices in the Rocky Mountain States as part of the more than 500 across the country that were warned to stop buying from CanadaDrugs.com subsidiaries that had sold American doctors counterfeit Avastin.¹⁷

Misbranded/Counterfeit Botox and Other Beauty Treatments

- March 2015:** 60 Rocky Mountain States doctors and more than 1,200 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 Rocky Mountain States doctors had to be warned a second time for buying from TC Medical.¹⁸
- July 2013:** The FDA warned seven doctors in Rocky Mountain States to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.¹⁹

Other Drugs/Medical Devices

- January 2018:** Wyoming resident Michael David Watson was indicted in Riverton for importing hundreds of misbranded steroid pills from Korea.²⁰

1. Pat Reavy, "Feds arrest 4 in Utah-based pill pressing operation," *Deseret News*, February 2, 2018, <http://bit.ly/2B9477b>.
2. Letter from Harlan Baker, Chairman of the Chippewa Cree Tribe, to Montana Senator Steve Daines, December 13, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2BO9FAB>.
3. John Frank, "Colorado's opioid epidemic explained in 10 graphics," *The Denver Post*, last updated November 7, 2017, <http://dpo.st/2nqcqDn>.
4. "Billings Police Bust Alleged Drug Dealer With Over 99 Fentanyl Pills," *KTVQ*, November 1, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2DzpTn1>.
5. Utah Health Status Update: Fentanyl Abuse in Utah and Risks to First Responders, Utah Department of Health, October 2017, <http://bit.ly/2Bes7Ci>.
6. Kolby Crossley, "Bozeman Police Send Out Warning For Uptick in Opioid Use, Specifically Fentanyl," *KUZRL* 8, September 12, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2F6Hori>.
7. Dennis Carlson, "Rise of Drug Overdoses Linked to Synthetic Painkiller," *KXLH*, November 11, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2BmKZiC>.
8. Whitney Berme, "Three Accused of Dealing Drug Linked to Overdoses in Butte," *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, July 21, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2DRqY5H>.
9. Pat Reavy, "Morgan Deputies Looking At Fentanyl In Overdose Case, Warrant States," *KSL*, April 24, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2EVh82C>.
10. Ben Guarino, "DEA Raids Colossal Fentanyl Operation. Could Produce Thousands Of Pills Per Hour," *Washington Post*, November 23, 2016, <http://wapo.st/2mTP1ZY>; "Drug Trafficking Organization Faces Indictment For Involvement In Manufacturing Fake Prescriptions Drugs With Fentanyl," U.S. Department of Justice, May 31, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2DiNyb6>. Superseding Indictment, U.S. District Court, District of Utah, Central Division, Case 2:16-cr-00631-DAK, <http://bit.ly/2mNteU1>.
11. "Prosecutors Say 28 Deaths Probed In Salt Lake City Opioid-drug Ring Case," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 20, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2DN6hJ6> and Dennis Romboy, "Associate of Utah Man Accused of Running International Drug Ring Faces Federal Charges," *Deseret News*, April 26, 2018, <http://bit.ly/2rGgwKa>.
12. "Counterfeit Prescription Pills Circulating Streets Of Davis County, Police Say," *Fox13*, June 14, 2016, <http://bit.ly/2DMFzQK>.
13. Complaint, U.S. District Court, District of Utah, Central Division, Case 2:16-cr-00324-DB, <http://bit.ly/2ERnH6E>; Judgment In A Criminal Case, U.S. District Court, District of Utah, Central Division, Case 2:16-cr-00324-DB, <http://bit.ly/2mOtaU6>.
14. "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>.
15. "Cache Valley Cancer Treatment And Research Clinic Pleads Guilty To Misdemeanor Information Involving Receipt And Delivery Of Misbranded Drugs," U.S. Department of Justice, April 7, 2015, <https://bit.ly/2jToF9S>.
16. "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>.
17. "Historical Information: FDA Issues Letters to Doctors...", <http://bit.ly/2rkvR5s>.
18. "FDA Issues Letters to Doctors...", <http://bit.ly/2DqFh4c>.
19. "Historical Information: FDA Issues Letters to Doctors...", <http://bit.ly/2rkvR5s>.
20. "Steroids shipment results in Wyoming charges," *KTVQ*, January 8, 2018, <http://bit.ly/2oDdV27>.