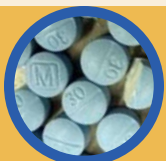
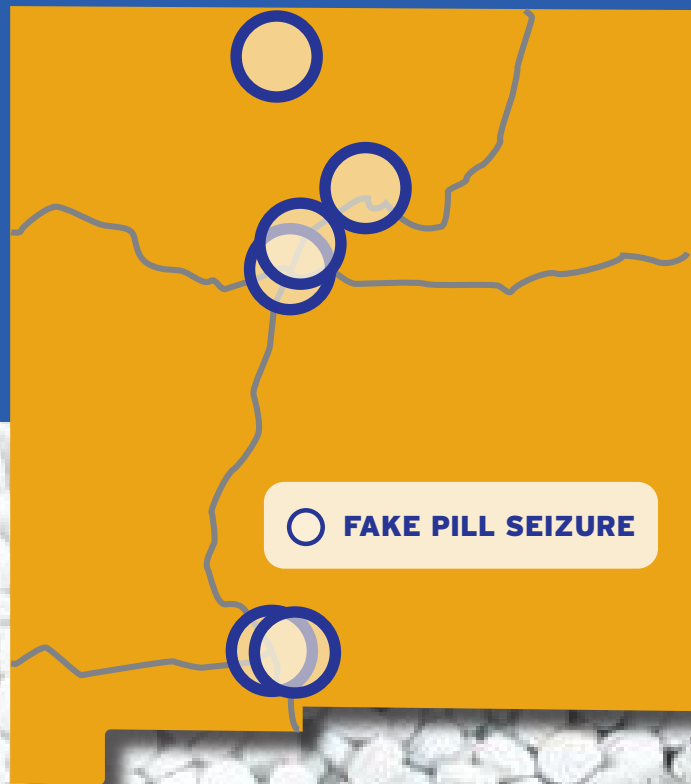


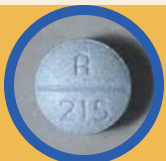
Fake Medicine Is a Problem in New Mexico

FENTANYL PILLS CONTINUE TO KILL AND POISON NEW MEXICANS

In the first five months of 2021, police seized over 26,000 fentanyl pills around the state and prosecutors charged multiple individuals. The Las Cruces-Doña Ana County Metro Narcotics Task Force seized **over 2,600 percent more fentanyl pills in the first four months of 2021 than it did in all of 2020**. Police seized counterfeit pills containing fentanyl in **Albuquerque, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, and Bernalillo, Doña Ana and Rio Arriba Counties**.



May 2021, Albuquerque: Police arrested a man with **18,000 fentanyl pills and other illicit narcotics**.



March 2021, Hobbs: Multiple people poisoned after they ingested counterfeit pills made with fentanyl.



January 2021, Albuquerque: CPB prevented a shipment of over 4,000 steroid pills from being delivered.

COUNTERFEIT MEDICINE IN THE LEGITIMATE SUPPLY CHAIN



Despite having one of the most secure drug supply chains in the world, counterfeiters have managed to sneak fake medicine into doctors' offices before.

Between 2012 and 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration sent over 1,300 warning letters telling doctors and medical practices to stop purchasing medicine from known black-market wholesalers. Ten of those letters went to doctors in New Mexico.

New Mexicans need medicine they can rely on. Protect them by securing the U.S. drug supply chain.

COUNTERFEIT AND BLACK MARKET DRUG INVESTIGATIONS IN NEW MEXICO (2012-2021)



COUNTERFEIT PILLS CONTAINING FENTANYL

- May 2021:** The First Judicial District Attorney's Office announced three fentanyl trafficking prosecutions in the Santa Fe area since March. One case was against a Rio Arriba man found in possession of 1,300 fentanyl pills, a second case was filed against an individual found in possession of 900 fentanyl pills in their vehicle, and a third was against the occupant of a hotel who was in possession of 500 fentanyl pills.¹
- May 2021:** Police arrested and charged an Arizona man with multiple trafficking counts after finding him in possession of 18,000 fentanyl pills and other illicit narcotics destined to be distributed in the Albuquerque area.²
- May 2021:** The Las Cruces-Doña Ana County Metro Narcotics Task Force reported seizing nearly 3,200 fentanyl pills between January and most of April. With eight months left in the year, the number of pills seized in 2021 is already over 2020's total by 2,682 percent.³
- April 2021:** Police in Albuquerque arrested three and recovered an array of drugs, including 362 fentanyl pills, while searching a stolen vehicle.⁴
- March 2021:** The Hobbs Police Department issued a public warning after several people were poisoned by counterfeit oxycodone pills containing fentanyl.⁵
- January 2021:** The Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office seized approximately 2,500 fentanyl pills from a northeast Albuquerque home.⁶
- December 2020:** After a year-long investigation, the Cortez Police Department arrested a man for allegedly distributing fentanyl in the area. At the time of his arrest, he was found to be in possession of 83 grams of fentanyl pills.⁷
- October 2019:** The DEA searched three Albuquerque apartments as part of a state-wide law enforcement action dubbed Operation Triple Beam. Authorities charged a resident of one of the apartments with allegedly trafficking cocaine and counterfeit fentanyl-laced pills.⁸
- October 2019:** Mike Fuselier of Los Alamos died after ingesting a counterfeit pill made with fentanyl.⁹
- September 2019:** Twelve individuals faced charges for their roles in a poly-drug trafficking ring that allegedly operated between Las Vegas and Albuquerque. Investigators seized 2,000 fentanyl pills along with other illicit drugs.¹⁰ This case is still working its way through the federal court system.
- August 2019:** A federal grand jury indicted three Las Cruces residents for conspiracy to distribute controlled substances after they allegedly sold or attempted to sell over 1,000 fentanyl pills to an undercover agent over the course of the investigation.¹¹ Martin Peña Astorga, Jessie Adel Dunlap, and Alejandra Gomez each pleaded guilty and received terms of 136 months, 27 months, and 60 months, respectively.¹²
- June 2019:** Agents with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration arrested five people who had allegedly sold counterfeit oxycodone pills in an Albuquerque motel. The pills contained fentanyl and had caused multiple deaths.¹³
- June 2019:** Police arrested a 17-year-old in Albuquerque for allegedly using a social media platform to sell fake fentanyl pills.¹⁴
- May 2019:** Law enforcement officers in the Carlsbad area seized hundreds of counterfeit oxycodone pills made with fentanyl.¹⁵
- May 2019:** Three undercover police officers in Albuquerque warned the public about the dangers of fake oxycodone pills circulating in the state.¹⁶
- November 2018:** Jeremy Brown of Albuquerque received a 60-month sentence after admitting to having arranged to sell fentanyl pills to a customer in May 2017.¹⁷
- April 2018:** During a traffic stop, Arizona authorities found 5,000 fentanyl pills stashed in a vehicle that was en route to New Mexico from California. Police arrested a man and a woman.¹⁸
- July 2017:** Santa Fe Police reported that fentanyl has contaminated the illicit drug supply in their city.¹⁹
- April 2017:** Federal drug officials warned that fake oxycodone made with fentanyl had begun appearing on Albuquerque streets.²⁰
- March 2017:** 21-year-old Chuckie Miller died after ingesting a counterfeit oxycodone pill laced with fentanyl.²¹
- October 2016:** Health officials and federal narcotic agents opened an investigation after 20 New Mexico residents died after taking counterfeit oxycodone pills laced with fentanyl.²²

BLACK MARKET AND COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 medical practices, including one doctor's office in New Mexico, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.²³
- February–June 2012:** One New Mexico doctor was among the 136 nationwide who received warning letters indicating that they may have purchased counterfeit Avastin or Altzuan from Quality Specialty Products (QSP), a CanadaDrugs subsidiary.²⁴

MISBRANDED AND COUNTERFEIT BOTOX

- March 2016:** The FDA warned seven New Mexico doctors 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. Seven doctors had to be warned twice.²⁵
- July 2013:** The FDA warned one doctor in New Mexico and more than 230 nationwide to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.²⁶

OTHER DRUGS

- January 2021:** U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents in Chicago seized over 4,000 various steroid pills shipped from Lithuania to a private residence in Albuquerque.²⁷

Footnotes

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