

The Deadly Counterfeit Drug Trade Thrives in Georgia

June 2016, Bartow County: Deputies seized 40 kilograms of fentanyl during a traffic stop

August 2017, Houston and Bibb Counties: Eight people overdosed on counterfeit pills made with fentanyl

Counterfeit Percocet may have caused five deaths and 30 hospitalizations across central Georgia

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.

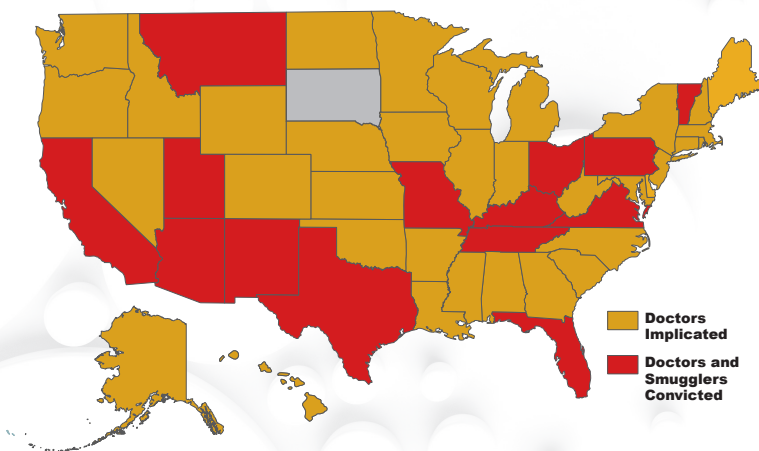
Fentanyl is a serious threat to Georgia. **In May 2017, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation began investigating the large quantity of overdoses** in middle Georgia believed to be caused by counterfeit Percocet pills made with fentanyl. A second wave of counterfeit pain pills hit in August 2017, sending eight people to the hospital. Deputies in Bartow County saved as many as 13 million lives when they seized 40 kilograms of fentanyl during a traffic stop.

115 Georgia Doctors Linked to Fake Drug Rings

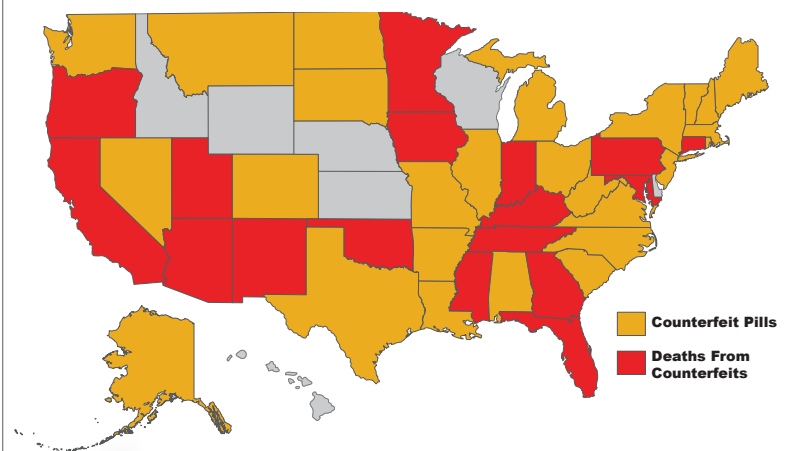
Counterfeit cancer drugs have touched Georgia as well. 115 different medical practices in Georgia have been implicated in various black market supply chains associated with counterfeit cancer treatments and other therapies. Families who have lost relatives to cancer will never know if their loved ones 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 Georgia lives at risk of serious injury or death.

Fake Cancer Drug Crisis



Fentanyl-Laced Counterfeits & Related Deaths



Counterfeit and Black Market Drug Investigations in Georgia (2012–2018)

Based on reported investigations.

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

Fentanyl and Counterfeit Pills Containing Fentanyl

- March 2018:** Authorities charged two men in Buckhead with selling counterfeit Roxycodone pills laced with fentanyl.¹
- February 2018:** Christopher Ramone West of Peachtree Corners was found guilty of manufacturing and selling counterfeit oxycodone made with furanyl fentanyl. West used supplies ordered from a Canadian company.²
- August 2017:** Eight people in Houston and Bibb Counties overdosed on what police believed were counterfeit pain pills made with fentanyl. Some individuals were hospitalized and needed to be put on ventilators.³
- July 2017:** Toxicology results for a Monroe County man who died in June showed the presence of carfentanil in his system.⁴
- June 2017:** Georgia Bureau of Investigation announced that a new fentanyl analogue, acrylfentanyl, tied to two overdose deaths in Forsyth County in April, was resistant to naloxone.⁵
- June 2017:** DEA agents arrested Cat Sellers of Roswell after an undercover officer purchased 100 fentanyl pills from her.⁶
- June 2017:** Department of Public Health confirmed that five deaths may be linked to counterfeit Percocet pills purchased on the street.⁷ At least 30 other people were hospitalized after taking the pills.⁸
- June 2017:** Georgia Bureau of Investigation warned the public of finding counterfeit oxycodone and Xanax made with fentanyl, furanyl fentanyl and U-47700.⁹
- May 2017:** Georgia Bureau of Investigation announced that it was investigating a link between a large quantity of overdoses in middle Georgia and counterfeit Percocet pills made with fentanyl.¹⁰
- April 2017:** Two people died and two additional people were hospitalized in Forsyth County over a 36 hour period after ingesting fentanyl. Police found evidence of significant drug trafficking at the location of one of the overdoses including over 1,000 prescription narcotic pills and unknown white powders.¹¹
- June 2016:** Deputies in Bartow County seized 40 kilograms of fentanyl during a traffic stop on I-75.¹²
- May 2016:** The increase in deaths from counterfeit drugs made with fentanyl in the metro Atlanta-area caused federal authorities to step-up inspections at the Port of Savannah.¹³
- March 2016:** Atlanta authorities warned the public about counterfeit pain prescription pills being sold on the street that were made with fentanyl. At least one death was linked to these pills.¹⁴
- February 2015:** 23-year-old Joe Patterson of died after accidentally taking a counterfeit oxycodone made with fentanyl.¹⁵

Black Market and Counterfeit Cancer Drugs

- April 2015:** The FDA sent warning letters to three Georgia doctors and more than 270 nationwide to stop buying drugs from Gallant Pharmaceuticals, which sold more than 39 non-FDA approved medications.¹⁶
- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 medical practices, including 20 doctors offices in Georgia, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.¹⁷
- February–June 2012:** Three Georgia 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.¹⁸

Misbranded and Counterfeit Botox

- March 2016:** 64 doctors offices and practices in Georgia were among more than 1,227 doctors nationwide who received warning letters from the FDA to stop buying infusion drugs from TC Medical Group, which sold more than \$33 million worth of non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Botox.¹⁹

- July 2013:** The FDA warned ten doctors and medical practices in Georgia to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.²⁰
- November 2012:** 15 Georgia doctors were among the 350 nationwide that received warning letters indicating that they may have purchased counterfeit versions of Botox from Quality Specialty Products (QSP), a CanadaDrugs subsidiary.²¹

Misbranded Drugs

- October 2017:** The U.S. Department of Justice announced an 18-count indictment against Jared Wheat, CEO of a Norcross-based supplement company. Wheat stood accused of putting anabolic steroids, Schedule III controlled substance, into the company's supplements.²²

Beauty Treatments

- March 2017:** Deanna Roberts pleaded guilty in federal court to injecting multiple people with liquid silicone. One of her victims died 36 hours later.²³
- March 2012:** A doctor at a Georgia hospital said that Karmina Gordon died a painful death because a silicone embolism eight days caused by illegal silicone injections.²⁴

Footnotes

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16. "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>.
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