

THE DEADLY COUNTERFEIT DRUG TRADE THRIVES IN KENTUCKY

May 2013: 16 doctor's offices received FDA warnings to stop purchasing drugs from an unlicensed wholesaler that had sold a counterfeit cancer medication.

August 2019: The DEA warned that fake Adderall pills made with methamphetamine had been shipped to Kentucky addresses.

October 2019, Louisville: police uncovered and shut down a large-scale counterfeit fentanyl pill operation.

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.

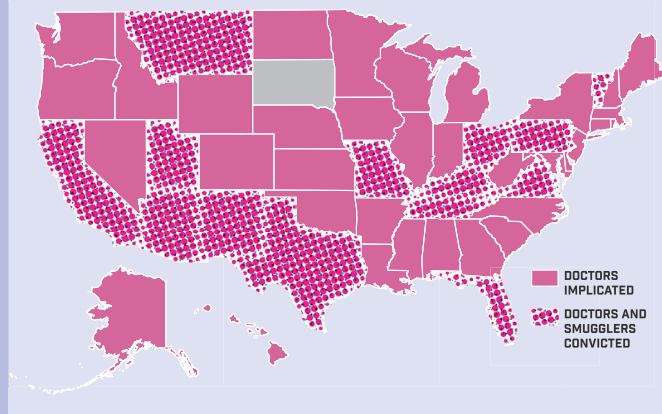
Fentanyl is a serious threat in Kentucky. In July 2015, a woman in Versailles died after she unknowingly took a fentanyl-laced painkiller. In January 2019, police in Louisville discovered 20,000 counterfeit fentanyl pills hidden in a vehicle during a traffic stop. The following August the Marshall County Sheriff's Office issued a public warning after two juveniles overdosed on counterfeit Xanax pills containing fentanyl.

50 KENTUCKY DOCTORS LINKED TO FAKE DRUG RINGS

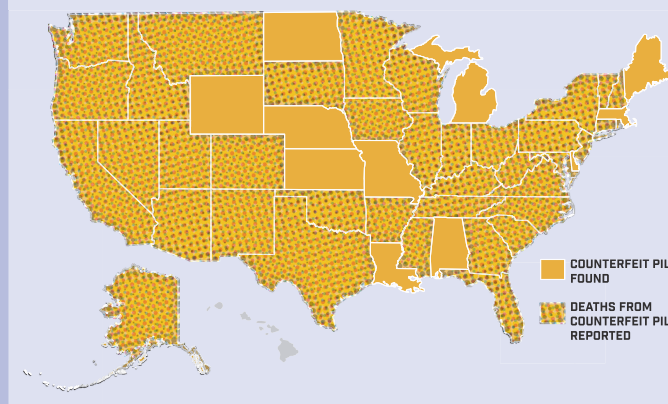
Counterfeit cancer drugs threaten Kentucky as well. 50 different medical practices in Kentucky have been implicated in various black market supply chains associated with counterfeit cancer treatments and other therapies. Families who have lost relatives to cancer will never know if their loved ones were given real medication or fake, and if they died from a lack of treatment.

OPENING THE U.S.'S CLOSED DRUG SUPPLY CHAIN PUTS KENTUCKY LIVES AT RISK OF SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH.

Fake Cancer Drug Crisis



Fentanyl-Laced Counterfeits & Related Deaths



COUNTERFEIT AND BLACK MARKET DRUG INVESTIGATIONS IN KENTUCKY (2012–2020)



BASED ON REPORTED INVESTIGATIONS.

NOTE THAT EACH INVESTIGATION COULD HAVE AFFECTED HUNDREDS OF KENTUCKY RESIDENTS.

COUNTERFEIT PILLS CONTAINING FENTANYL

- January 2020:** Police arrested the resident of a home in Paducah after a search turned up multiple drugs, including about 100 suspected counterfeit fentanyl pills.¹
- October 2019:** Police searching a Louisville home found a large-scale counterfeit pill operation including two pill presses, a large quantity of fake pills suspected of containing fentanyl, and suspected fentanyl powder.²
- October 2019:** Two residents of Mayfield were arrested after an overdose investigation led to the seizure of fentanyl pills in their home.³
- October 2019:** Detectives with the Paducah Police Department arrested two individuals after they were found in possession of counterfeit pills suspected to contain fentanyl.⁴
- September 2019:** Police in Richland County, Ohio arrested a 35-year-old Kentucky man after he was found in possession of 1,500 counterfeit oxycodone pills. According to the police, the amount of fentanyl in the pills could have killed 168,500 people.⁵
- August 2019:** The Marshall County Sheriff's Office issued a public warning about fentanyl-laced counterfeit Xanax being sold in the area. Deputies seized over 20 of the suspected pills while responding to a call about two juveniles who had overdosed.⁶
- June 2019:** "Operation River Sweep" in northern Kentucky ended with charges filed against 20 people and the seizure of a variety of drugs, including hundreds of fentanyl pills and 64 grams of fentanyl powder.⁷
- June 2019:** The Appalachia HIDTA Gateway Area Task Force announced multiple arrests and the seizure of drugs, including suspected fentanyl pills and powder, along with a pill press.⁸
- January 2019:** While performing a traffic stop, Louisville Metro Police Department discovered 20,000 counterfeit Xanax pills made with fentanyl in a hidden compartment in a vehicle.⁹
- December 2018:** Police arrested a Louisville resident for allegedly selling counterfeit Percocet pills to an individual who had died after taking them in October.¹⁰
- December 2018:** Three Ohio residents received prison sentences of 21, 60, and 188 months, respectively, after they pleaded guilty to a charge related to fentanyl distribution. They were indicted in May 2018 for trafficking counterfeit, fentanyl-laced oxycodone pills, which they had purchased in Louisville.¹¹
- March 2017:** Florida resident Eric C. Falkowski received a more than 15-year sentence for importing fentanyl, pressing it into counterfeit pills such as Xanax and Percocet and selling them to people in Tennessee and Kentucky.¹²
- July 2015:** A woman in Versailles died after Gill Dewayne Garrett knowingly gave her a counterfeit oxycodone pill that actually contained fentanyl. Garrett and his suppliers, Luis Aguirre-Jerardo and Allen P. White, pleaded guilty to charges related to distributing fentanyl at different times over the course of 2016. Garrett was sentenced to 20 years in September 2016.¹³

PILL PRESS AND DIES

- March 2019:** Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents in Louisville seized a pill press that was part of a clandestine lab used by a darknet vendor to manufacture counterfeit pills.¹⁴
- January–February 2019:** Agents with CBP found one pill press and 18 pill dies when they seized seven packages destined for two addresses in Erlanger.¹⁵

BLACK MARKET AND COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

- April 2015:** The FDA warned two Kentucky medical practices and more than 270 nationwide to stop buying drugs from Gallant Pharmaceuticals, which sold more than 39 non-FDA approved medications.¹⁶
- January 2015:** Dr. Mark Heinicke pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a year of probation and to pay more than \$500,000 after he treated unknowing patients with foreign, non-FDA approved versions of Rituxan, Actemra, Remicade, Aclasta, Prolia, and Synvisc and submitted false claims to Medicare.¹⁷
- October 2014:** Hematology and Oncology Center (HOC) and its former office manager, Natarajan Murugesan, received probation for charges related to buying and treating patients with imported cancer drugs. In a parallel civil case, HOC, Murugesan, and an oncologist, N. Mullai, agreed to pay \$2 million plus interest for billing Medicare fraudulently for the illegal medicines.¹⁸
- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 medical practices, 16 in Kentucky, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.¹⁹
- 2012–2013:** The FDA warned eight Kentucky doctors' offices and more than 500 across the country to stop buying medicine from CanadaDrugs.com subsidiaries that had sold American doctors counterfeit Avastin.²⁰

OTHER DRUGS

- January 2020:** Four Lyon County men between the ages of 37 and 66 died after taking pills laced with an unknown substance.²¹
- August 2019:** The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration issued a warning after seizing packages containing counterfeit Adderall pills made with methamphetamine that were destined for addresses in Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia.²²
- November 2017:** Illinois resident Skyler Dean Prahel pleaded guilty to manufacturing his own tramadol pills using imported tramadol powder and an encapsulation machine, and shipping them to Daviess County and elsewhere. Prahel sold 80,000 units of tramadol to customers without regard for whether they had a prescription.²³
- March 2016:** The FDA warned 18 Kentucky 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.²⁴
- May 2015:** The Greater Hardin County Narcotics Task Force arrested 12 people for drug trafficking, seizing a variety of illicit drugs (including approximately 5 pounds of synthetic drugs), a pill press, and several fake oxycodone pills.²⁵
- March 2015:** The Northern Kentucky Drug Strike Force seized counterfeit Percocet pills made with heroin during a raid of a house in Newport.²⁶
- December 2013:** Dr. Canh Jeff Vo of Bluegrass Women's Healthcare in Elizabethtown received a sentence of one year of probation and paid more than \$75,000 in fines and restitution after he purchased foreign, non-FDA approved Intrauterine Devices (IUDs), inserted them into his patients, and falsely billed the Kentucky Medicaid Program and other insurers for them.²⁷
- July 2013:** The FDA warned six medical practices in Kentucky to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.²⁸

FOOTNOTES

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