

# The Deadly Counterfeit Drug Trade Thrives in Oregon

**August 2016: A 24-year-old Portland resident died after taking counterfeit OxyContin authorities believed was laced with fentanyl**


**June 2017: Salem police warned that hundreds of fentanyl pills disguised as oxycodone pills were circulating in the area**

**January 2018: Oregon State Police stopped testing drugs during traffic stops because of the risk of fentanyl exposure**

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.

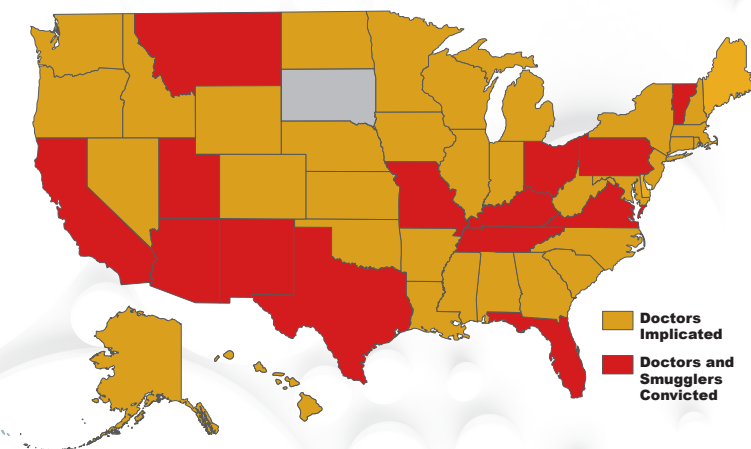
Fentanyl is a serious threat in Oregon. Authorities in Portland and Salem have reported seizing counterfeit oxycodone pills laced with fentanyl four times since August 2016. **Residents in eleven counties have died as a result of non-prescription fentanyl** and at least four residents have been indicted for trafficking fentanyl both in and out of the state.

## 39 Oregon Doctors Linked to Fake Drug Rings

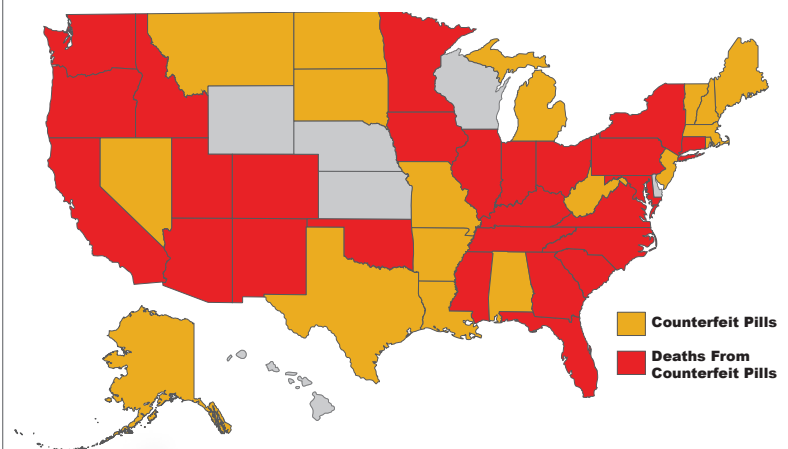
Counterfeit cancer drugs have touched Oregon as well. 39 medical practices in Oregon have been implicated in various black market supply chains associated with counterfeit cancer treatments and other therapies. Families who have lost relatives to cancer will never know if their loved ones were given real medication or fake, and if they died from a lack of treatment. 

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

**Fake Cancer Drug Crisis**



**Fentanyl-Laced Counterfeits & Related Deaths**



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

**Based on reported investigations.**

**Note that each investigation could have affected hundreds of Oregon residents.**

## Fentanyl and Counterfeit Pills Containing Fentanyl

- March 2018:** Six U.S. residents were charged with selling fentanyl and fentanyl precursors in Oregon and other states<sup>1</sup> as part of “Operation Denial,” the investigation of an international fentanyl trafficking conspiracy that has led to the indictment of 32 people since 2015.<sup>2</sup>
- January 2018:** Oregon State Police discontinued drug testing during traffic stops because of the risk of fentanyl exposure.<sup>3</sup>
- November 2017:** Federal authorities arrested a Portland man after intercepting 103 grams of a fentanyl analogue bound for his house. During a search of his home, they also found 800 counterfeit Oxycodone and Valium pills, two pill presses, multiple dye casts, and other pill manufacturing paraphernalia.<sup>4</sup>
- October 2017:** Portland Police circulated photographs of fake tablets that contained combinations of fentanyl, heroin, tramadol, and alprazolam, which they found in the area.<sup>5</sup>
- June 2017:** Salem Police warned that hundreds of fentanyl pills falsely marked as oxycodone pills were circulating in the area.<sup>6</sup>
- August 2016:** A 24-year-old Portland resident died after taking counterfeit OxyContin authorities believed was laced with fentanyl. Police seized approximately 2,000 counterfeit oxycodone pills in the course of the investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- July 2016:** “Operation Denial” defendant Brandon Corde Hubbard of Portland, received a life sentence and agreed to pay \$17,000 in restitution for importing and distributing fentanyl that led to the death of two North Dakota teenagers and four overdoses (one fatal) at the Multnomah County Jail in March 2015.<sup>8</sup>

## Black Market and Counterfeit Cancer Drugs

- April 2015:** The FDA warned 271 medical practices, three in Oregon, to stop buying medicine from unlicensed drug distributor Gallant Pharmaceuticals, which sold more than 39 non-FDA approved medications.<sup>9</sup>
- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 medical practices, five in Oregon, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.<sup>10</sup>
- 2012–2013:** The FDA warned more than 500 medical practices across the country—14 in Oregon—to stop buying from CanadaDrugs.com subsidiaries that had sold American doctors counterfeit Avastin.<sup>11</sup>

## Other Drugs:

- June 2018:** Dr. Brenda Roberts surrendered her medical license and pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor for injecting patients with illegally imported Botox and Juvéderm. The DEA also found that Roberts operated a rogue pharmacy that distributed controlled substances to customers across the U.S.<sup>12</sup>
- March 2017:** Christopher Stella of Keizer was sentenced to eight months of home detention, five years of probation and to pay \$91,071.68 in restitution for selling counterfeit erectile-dysfunction drugs on Craigslist between March 2013 and January 2016.<sup>13</sup>
- March 2016:** The FDA warned 12 Oregon 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.<sup>14</sup>
- July 2013:** The FDA warned five medical practices in Oregon to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.<sup>15</sup>

## Footnotes

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4. Jordan Aleck, “Feds Bust Portland Man for Importing Opioid from China,” *KOIN 6*, December 1, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2QQ7Vzt>.
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10. “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>.
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13. Maxine Bernstein, “Man Who Sold Counterfeit Viagra on Craigslist Gets Home Detention,” *The Oregonian*, March 17, 2017, <http://bit.ly/2BbWxdx>.
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