25 CONNECTICUT DOCTORS LINKED TO FAKE DRUG RINGS

Counterfeit cancer drugs have touched Connecticut as well. 25 different medical practices in Connecticut 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.

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 Connecticut. Authorities have seized counterfeit pills in Waterbury, New Haven and Essex. In February 2018, a 29-year-old Manchester resident died after he took a fake oxycodone pill laced with fentanyl. In October 2019, law enforcement seized 1,000 counterfeit Percocet pills that contained fentanyl.

OPENING THE U.S.’S CLOSED DRUG SUPPLY CHAIN PUTS CONNECTICUT LIVES AT RISK OF SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH.
COUNTERFEIT AND BLACK MARKET DRUG
INVESTIGATIONS IN CONNECTICUT (2011–2019)

BASED ON REPORTED INVESTIGATIONS.
NOTE THAT EACH INVESTIGATION COULD HAVE AFFECTED HUNDREDS OF CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS.

FENTANYL AND COUNTERFEIT PILLS MADE WITH FENTANYL

November 2019: Two Waterbury residents pleaded guilty to charges related to supplying a Plymouth man with counterfeit oxycodone pills that killed him.1

October 2019: The DEA New Haven Task Force and the Waterbury Police Department seized 1,000 fentanyl pills disguised as Percocet pills and a large volume of suspected heroin/fentanyl while breaking up a fentanyl trafficking ring.2

June 2019: Six people between the ages of 51 and 60 died in a 36-hour period after taking fentanyl-laced pills mixed with heroin, cocaine and crack cocaine.3 Harford Police reported two similar deaths in May 2019.4

August 2018: Federal authorities indicted three men for importing fentanyl analogues from China, pressing them into counterfeit oxycodone pills in a residence in Stamford, and selling them online.5 Two defendants pleaded not guilty after being extradited from Albania in April 2019. The third defendant, David Reichard, pleaded guilty in May 2019 for his role in the conspiracy.6

February 2018: A 29-year-old man from Manchester died after taking a counterfeit oxycodone pill laced with fentanyl.7

January 2018: An Essex man pleaded guilty to charges related to distributing fentanyl and other drugs. Investigation showed that he had purchased 500 fentanyl-laced oxycodone in April 2017.8

June 2017: Federal law enforcement confiscated 20 kilograms of heroin mixed with fentanyl in Hartford.9 Authorities also seized 2.5 kilograms of fentanyl (as well as 50,000 counterfeit Xanax pills and other drugs) in New Britain in May 2016, and another 25 kilograms in a tractor trailer on Route 34 Derby in December 2016.10

March 2017: A 30-year-old man in Hamden died after ingesting a counterfeit oxycodone made of fentanyl, acetaminophen and dipyprone.11

September 2016: Eleven members of a police SWAT team became ill after being exposed to suspected fentanyl during a drug bust in Hartford.12

PILL PRESS SEIZURES

March 2018: West Hartford resident Pablo Texidor sentenced to 18 months in prison for possessing a pill press and making counterfeit oxycodone pills containing heroin.13

July 2013: A former traffic agent for the Westport Police, and a second man were charged with importing a pill press from China for the purpose of manufacturing counterfeit pain pills.14 David Wolvovsky, and Jason Oliviera pleaded guilty and were sentenced to four and three years probation respectively in 2015.15

BLACK MARKET AND COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

April 2015: The FDA warned 271 medical practices, five in Connecticut, to stop buying medicine from unlicensed drug distributor Gallant Pharmaceuticals, which sold more than 39 non-FDA approved medications.16

May 2013: The FDA warned 780 medical practices, three in Connecticut, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.17

2012–2013: The FDA warned more than 500 medical practices across the country—three in Connecticut—to stop buying from CanadaDrugs.com subsidiaries that had sold American doctors counterfeit Avastin.18

MISBRANDED AND COUNTERFEIT BOTOX

March 2016: The FDA warned 15 Connecticut 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.19

July 2013: The FDA warned one medical practice in Connecticut to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.20

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**OTHER COUNTERFEIT DRUGS**

**February 2019:** Norwich resident Jason Chen received three years of probation for manufacturing and distributing more than 213,000 counterfeit Xanax tablets and thousands of units of anabolic steroids online.  

**October 2018:** After investigators linked the counterfeit Xanax pills he sold to the death of a man in Seymour in July 2017, Shelton resident Kamil Golebiowski pleaded guilty to distributing alprazolam.  

**September 2017:** Ansonia resident and juvenile detention officer Jeffrey Gentile was sentenced to three years of probation for importing and selling counterfeit prescription pills including steroids and oxycodone.  

**April 2017:** A federal grand jury in Bridgeport indicted Pyotr Levashov, charging that he controlled a network of more than 100,000 compromised computers that sent phony emails advertising counterfeit drugs, harvested users’ logins and installed malware that intercepted bank account passwords.  

**August 2016:** A former Newtown police sergeant was sentenced to 16 months in federal prison for his part in a distribution ring that imported ingredients from China so that they could manufacture and distribute steroids to area bodybuilders.  

**April 2011:** Kurt Donsbach pleaded guilty to charges that he pretended to be a doctor and treated many people with illicit steroids and anti-inflammatories that he said would cure them. Among his victims was a Connecticut woman who suffers from severe osteoporosis as a result of Donsbach’s fake treatments.  

**February 2011:** A Providence, Rhode Island resident pleaded guilty to smuggling erectile dysfunction drugs from China that were falsely labelled as herbal dietary supplements, and sold them to retailers and distributors in Rhode Island, Connecticut and elsewhere.

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**FOOTNOTES**


