

The Partnership for **SAFER MEDICINES[®]** **COUNTERFEIT MEDICINE REPORT**

Florida, July - December 2022

The fake fentanyl pill crisis continues to poison and kill people in Florida, as it does in the rest of the country. However, counterfeit medicine news since mid-2022 paints a more insidious picture in the Sunshine State. The president of a pharmaceutical company in Boca Raton pleaded guilty to his part in a conspiracy that distributed misbranded and counterfeit cough syrup in 12 states for more than five years. A lawsuit filed by Gilead Sciences named a Pensacola man as the leader of a ring that sold counterfeit HIV drugs to U.S. pharmacies. 49 of the more than 150 named defendants in this lawsuit are in Florida. Even with these substantial supply chain breaks, Florida has spent millions on an as-yet unapproved drug importation program [that will undermine the Drug Supply Chain Security Act](#) and risk exposing its citizens to unreliable medicines.

Other fake medicine has found its way into Florida. The state has seen cases of fake Adderall and Xanax, illegally imported prescription drugs, and supplements with undeclared pharmaceutical ingredients. Members of the healthcare profession have sourced medicine from outside the U.S.'s secure drug supply chain. Between 2012 and 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration sent letters to 325 doctors and medical practices across Florida warning them to stop buying medicine from known black market wholesalers. These letters were in reference to medicines used to treat cancer and osteoporosis.

Recent Incidents

December 2022

Man indicted in fake Xanax death of a Hollywood woman: Rosh Lowe, "[Man indicted for murder after allegedly selling fake Xanax to Broward woman who overdosed on fentanyl](#)," *Local10*, December 14, 2022.

Dunedin woman charged with injecting patients with unapproved drugs: "[Dunedin woman charged with scheme to distribute unapproved new drugs and money laundering](#)," U.S. Department of Justice, December 12, 2022.

Gainesville man convicted of distributing fake oxycodone made with fentanyl: "[Gainesville man convicted of drug trafficking and firearm offense](#)," U.S. Department of Justice, December 5, 2022.

Scan the QR code or go to safedr.org/FL-page for more information on counterfeit incidents in Florida.



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November 2022

Man charged with selling fentanyl pills in West Boca Raton: [“2nd suspect arrested, accused of selling fentanyl in West Boca Raton,”](#) *Boca Post*, November 20, 2022.

Fentanyl pills seized in Tampa: BriShon Mitchell, [“Police: 2 men arrested after officers recover 23 guns, cocaine, fentanyl pills from Tampa home,”](#) *WTSP*, November 19, 2022.

October 2022

Pensacola man named as leader of fake HIV drug ring: Jim Little, [“Pensacola businessman alleged to be 'leader' in HIV drug counterfeit ring, lawsuit says,”](#) *Pensacola News Journal*, October 18, 2022.

September 2022

Deputies in Highland County seized fentanyl pills: Evan Axelbank, [“Highlands deputies bust 'prolific' drug dealer with enough fentanyl to kill a quarter of the county,”](#) *Fox13 News*, September 22, 2022.

Jacksonville Sheriff's Office seized fentanyl pills: Mackenzie Cummings-Grady, [“Florida police seize enough fentanyl to kill 1.5 million adults,”](#) *Complex*, September 20, 2022.

August 2022

Boca Raton resident admitted to trafficking counterfeit medicine: [“Pharmaceutical president and company guilty in counterfeit drug trafficking conspiracy,”](#) U.S. Department of Justice, August 22, 2022.

Fentanyl pills seized from Port Charlotte home: Lauren Silver, [“Deputies: 6 pounds of meth, 400 fentanyl pills found during Florida drug raid,”](#) *WSB-TV*, August 10, 2022.

July 2022

Man who illegally imported and resold controlled medicines sentenced: [“Rockledge man sentenced to four years for conspiring to distribute pharmaceutical opiates from India,”](#) U.S. Department of Justice, July 25, 2022.

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