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COUNTERFEIT MEDICINE REPORT

Georgia, March 2022 – January 2023

Fake prescription pills made with fentanyl and other drugs have dominated Georgia's medicine safety news for several years. The state saw its first counterfeit pill deaths in 2015. Between 2019 and 2021, fentanyl-involved drug deaths—many of them the result of these pills—[increased by 218 percent](#). Over the last ten months, law enforcement has seized fentanyl pills and a single pill press in Chickamauga, Gainesville, Tifton, and Coweta and Crisp counties. Federal and state judges have sentenced men in Dekalb County, Roswell, Tifton and Tucker for making or distributing fentanyl pills. Two of those cases involved the death of Georgia residents. In March, LaGrange police reported that 20 people had been poisoned by fake oxycodone pills made with fentanyl over a nine-month period.

Georgians have also been harmed by other kinds of fake treatments. In December, authorities seized more than 1,000 bottles of supplements that contained tianeptine from a convenience store in Tallapoosa. The non-FDA approved antidepressant has serious side effects and has been banned in Georgia. The state has seen [supplements made with undeclared drugs](#) and deaths from black market silicone injections in [2012](#) and [2015](#). In addition, between 2012 and 2016, the Food and Drug Administration warned 115 different medical practices in Georgia to stop buying medicine from unlicensed distributors that had sold counterfeit cancer treatments and fake Botox.

Recent Incidents

January 2023:

Seizure of a pill press, fentanyl powder, suspected fentanyl pills, and other drugs, Chickamauga: Courtney Goins, "[Fentanyl distribution bust in Walker and Hamilton counties](#)," *WDEF News 12*, January 20, 2023.

Dekalb County man sentenced in 2020 fentanyl pill death: Matt Johnson, "[Judge orders suspect to keep photo of man he sold fentanyl to as part of sentencing](#)," *WSB-TV*, January 17, 2023.

December 2022:

Seizure of over 1,000 bottles of supplements made with tianeptine, Tallapoosa: "[Georgia convenience store caught selling 'Za Za.' other drugs in pill form](#)," *WSB-TV*, December 5, 2022.

November 2022:

Roswell dealer sentenced in 2017 death from fentanyl pills disguised as roxicodone: "[Roswell fentanyl dealer and his supplier sentenced to federal prison for causing overdose death](#)," U.S. Department of Justice, November 22, 2022.

Scan the QR CODE or go to <https://safedr ug/GA-page> for more information about counterfeit medicine incidents in Georgia.



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October 2022:

Tucker man sentenced for leading pill press operation that made methamphetamine pills. "[Lead defendant in pill-production conspiracy sentenced to federal prison](#)," U.S. Department of Justice, October 21, 2022.

Seizure of fentanyl pills at a package hub, Gainesville: "[Georgia K9 police discover \\$172,000 worth of fentanyl tablets during routine search at package delivery hub](#)," Fox News, October 8, 2022.

September 2022:

Seizure of illicit drugs, including fentanyl pills, during a traffic stop, Coweta County: "[THC ice cream, fentanyl disguised as pain pills found during traffic stop, deputies say](#)," Fox 5 Atlanta, September 29, 2022.

August 2022:

Seizure of almost 20 pounds of drugs, including fake prescription pills, Tifton: "[Four arrested for trafficking fentanyl & methamphetamine after two-month drug trafficking investigation](#)," Georgia Bureau of Investigation, September 13, 2022.

July 2022:

Tifton man pleaded guilty to distribution of fentanyl pills and methamphetamine: "[Tifton Bartender Pleads Guilty for Distributing Meth, Fentanyl from L.A. to South Central Georgia](#)," U.S. Department of Justice, July 1, 2022.

May 2022:

Seizure of illicit drugs, including fentanyl pills, Gainesville: Nick Watson, "[Gainesville man charged with murder in fentanyl overdose death](#)," *The Gainesville Times*, July 21, 2022.

April 2022:

Seizure of fake pills made with fentanyl in traffic stop, Crisp County: Claire Helm, "['It is killing citizens': Crisp Co. deputies seize \\$300K in fentanyl during traffic stop](#)," WGXA News, May 19, 2022.

March 2022:

LaGrange Police warn about almost 20 fake oxycodone poisoning cases in fiscal year 2022: "[LaGrange police warn of fentanyl-laced pills after 2 found unconscious](#)," WTVM, March 14, 2022.

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