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COUNTERFEIT MEDICINE REPORT

Massachusetts, July 2022 - January 2023

A review of the counterfeit medicine news coming out of Massachusetts since mid-2022 paints a bleak and dangerous picture. While all states are dealing with counterfeit pills made with fentanyl, Massachusetts is facing a few other issues: counterfeit Adderall pills made with methamphetamine and drug traffickers using pill presses to manufacture and distribute pills locally. When combined, these three issues create a dangerous powderkeg for communities not just in Massachusetts, but throughout New England.

Fake medicine has found its way into Massachusetts from places other than street corners or social media apps. In January 2023, a member of a ring that illegally imported and sold millions of prescription pills to Americans, including some in Massachusetts, was sentenced. Sometimes, members of the medical profession have purchased medicine from unlicensed sources. Between 2012 and 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration sent letters to 59 doctors and medical practices across Massachusetts warning them to stop buying medicine from known black market wholesalers. These letters were in reference to cancer medications and Botox.

Recent Incidents

January 2023

Member of prescription drug smuggling conspiracy sentenced: “[Partner in Mumbai-based prescription drug company sentenced for \\$3.5 million drug smuggling conspiracy](#),” U.S. Department of Justice, January 19, 2023.

Springfield man found in possession of nearly 14,000 fentanyl pills: James Paleologopoulos, “[30 pounds of cocaine, nearly 14,000 fentanyl pills seized in Springfield drug bust](#),” *WHDH*, January 4, 2023.

December 2022

Quincy man sentenced for selling fentanyl pills: “[Quincy man sentenced to eight years in prison for fentanyl trafficking offenses](#),” U.S. Department of Justice, December 19, 2022.

Scan the QR code or go to safedr.ug/MA-page for more information on counterfeit incidents in Massachusetts.



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Woman sentenced for selling fake Percocet made with fentanyl: [“Saugus woman sentenced for trafficking counterfeit Percocet pills containing fentanyl,”](#) U.S. Department of Justice, December 15, 2022.

November 2022

Boston Police arrested three in fentanyl trafficking case: Ken Paiva, [“Massachusetts authorities arrested 4, seized pills, 100 pounds of fentanyl worth over \\$2 million,”](#) *Fall River Reporter*, November 26, 2022.

October 2022

23 Charged in North Shore-based counterfeit pill ring: [“23 individuals charged with trafficking counterfeit prescription pills,”](#) U.S. Department of Justice, October 26, 2022.

Guilty plea from Lawrence man for making and selling fentanyl pills: [“Lawrence man pleads guilty to distributing fentanyl pills produced using multiple pill press machines,”](#) U.S. Department of Justice, October 12, 2022.

September 2022

New Bedford Police arrested couple, seized hundreds of fentanyl pills: Kate Robinson, [“New Bedford Police arrest city couple for fentanyl trafficking,”](#) *WBSM*, September 20, 2022.

August 2022

Sandwich Police arrested man found with fentanyl pills: [“Hyannis man arrested on gun and drug charges following investigation,”](#) *Cape Cod*, August 10, 2022.

July 2022

Worcester man charged after search turned up fentanyl pills: Matt Fortin, [“Hundreds of Fentanyl Pills Seized by Worcester Police,”](#) *NBC Boston*, July 27, 2022.

Taunton pair indicted after being found with pills and pill press: David Linton, [“Alleged drug dealers arrested in Foxboro indicted by Norfolk County grand jury,”](#) *The Sun Chronicle*, July 12, 2022.

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