

THE DEADLY COUNTERFEIT DRUG TRADE THRIVES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

May 2013: FDA warned 14 doctors' offices in South Carolina to stop buying drugs from an unlicensed seller which had sold counterfeit cancer medicine.

Berea, February 2020: Police arrested two people making counterfeit pills with heroin, fentanyl and methamphetamine.

41 SOUTH CAROLINA DOCTORS LINKED TO FAKE DRUG RINGS

Counterfeit cancer drugs also threaten South Carolina. 41 different medical practices in South Carolina have been implicated in 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.

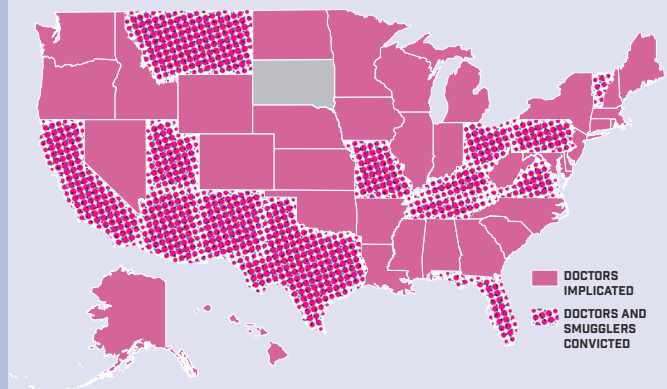
OPENING THE U.S.'S CLOSED DRUG SUPPLY CHAIN PUTS SOUTH CAROLINA LIVES AT RISK OF SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH.

THE COUNTRY HAS SEEN AN UPSURGE IN COUNTERFEIT PRESCRIPTION PILLS MASQUERADING AS PAINKILLERS AND XANAX.

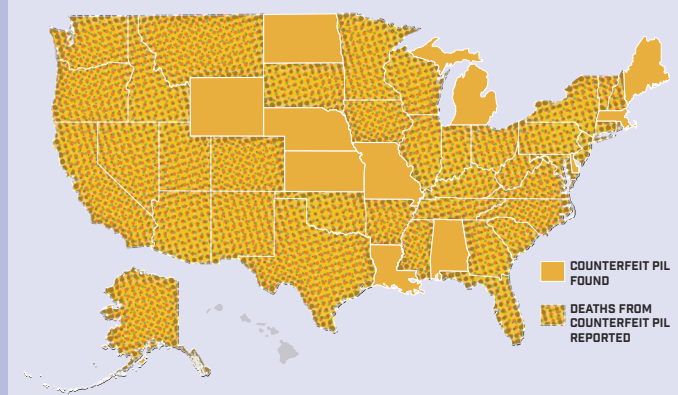
These pills are disguised as real medications but are made with deadly fentanyl or its even deadlier variants, and even a fraction of a single pill can mean death in less than 30 minutes of ingesting it.

Fentanyl is a serious threat in South Carolina. In 2016, a Lexington man died after taking a fentanyl-laced Xanax. Since then, there are been public reports of two more South Carolina residents dying and law enforcement has seized fake fentanyl pills in Berea, Camden, Hilton Head, Lancaster, Laurens, Lexington, Myrtle Beach, Ninety Six, Rock Hill, and Varnville.

Fake Cancer Drug Crisis



Fentanyl-Laced Counterfeits & Related Deaths



COUNTERFEIT AND BLACK MARKET DRUG INVESTIGATIONS IN SOUTH CAROLINA (2012-2020)



BASED ON REPORTED INVESTIGATIONS.

NOTE THAT EACH INVESTIGATION COULD HAVE AFFECTED HUNDREDS OF SOUTH CAROLINA RESIDENTS.

FENTANYL AND COUNTERFEIT PILLS CONTAINING FENTANYL

- February 2020:** The Greenville County Drug Enforcement Unit arrested two individuals using a house in Berea to manufacture counterfeit pills that contained heroin, fentanyl and methamphetamine.¹
- February 2020:** Lareckius Jaron Price of Lancaster received a 15-year prison sentence after pleading guilty to multiple counts. At the time of his arrest, Price was in possession of nearly 1,000 fentanyl pills.²
- December 2019:** Marques Quantez Heath of Rock Hill was convicted of nine drug and weapons offenses, including the possession of over 700 counterfeit fentanyl pills.³
- November 2019:** A search of a vehicle during a traffic stop in Rock Hill turned up over 2,000 pills made with fentanyl and led to charges filed against ten people.⁴
- May 2019:** A state grand jury indicted two Lexington residents and a Batesburg man for drug trafficking. The indictment alleges that the pair from Lexington “conspired to deal counterfeit ‘Roxies’ consisting of a mixture containing heroin and other substances, including in some instances fentanyl.”⁵
- February 2019:** Jeffrey Jermaine Joe of Camden pleaded guilty in federal court to possession with intent to distribute. Joe was caught with illicit drugs during a traffic stop and subsequently was filmed selling pills laced with fentanyl.⁶
- February 2019:** Two suspected drug dealers led police on a chase from Rock Hill to Fort Mill, throwing 50 fentanyl pills out the window of their moving vehicle while police were in pursuit.⁷
- February 2019:** Police in Myrtle Beach warned the public about an increase in the number of counterfeit oxycodone and Xanax pills made with fentanyl being found in the area.⁸
- October 2018:** An investigation into a May death led to charges against a Laurens County man who allegedly sold the counterfeit fentanyl pill to the victim.⁹
- June 2018:** Varnville resident Reginald Jenkins, who supplied an Ohio-based multi-drug trafficking ring with counterfeit Percocet pills, was indicted along with 24 other co-conspirators by the U.S. Department of Justice.¹⁰ Jenkins received a 46-month sentence in May 2019.¹¹
- June 2018:** Rock Hill Police seized two presses when they raided 17 homes to stop a large drug trafficking ring. Later, a member of the public discovered nearly 7,000 pills dumped on the street.¹²
- June 2018:** Robert Bryan Mansfield of Ladson received a 20-year sentence for online sales of fentanyl that led to the death of one person. In February 2017, the Department of Homeland Security seized two pounds of fentanyl in John F. Kennedy International Airport’s airmail facility that was bound for Mansfield. Subsequently, postal inspectors intercepted ten packages Mansfield shipped, and agents confiscated three and one-half ounces of fentanyl in his home.¹³
- August 2017:** Michael Pridmore of Ninety Six died after taking counterfeit pills made with fentanyl. Octavious Vashon Calliham, the Greenwood resident who unwittingly sold him fentanyl-laced pills, pleaded guilty to manslaughter and distribution of fentanyl. He was sentenced to five years in prison and four years of probation in May 2018.¹⁴
- January 2017:** A Hilton Head man overdosed on a counterfeit fentanyl-laced oxycodone mixed with heroin.¹⁵
- November 2016:** Utah-based drug trafficker Aaron Shamo allegedly shipped three packages of counterfeit oxycodone made with fentanyl and two packages of counterfeit alprazolam to buyers in South Carolina.¹⁶
- May 2016:** Eric Highsmith Griffin of Lexington died after taking a Xanax that he did not know was laced with fentanyl.¹⁷

BLACK MARKET AND COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

- April 2015:** The FDA sent warning letters to one South Carolina doctor and more than 270 nationwide to stop buying drugs from Gallant Pharmaceuticals, which sold more than 39 non-FDA approved medications.¹⁸
- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 medical practices, including 14 doctors' offices in South Carolina, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.¹⁹
- February—June 2012:** Two South Carolina doctors were among the 350 nationwide who received warning letters indicating that they may have purchased counterfeit versions of Avastin from Quality Specialty Products (QSP), a CanadaDrugs subsidiary.²⁰

MISBRANDED AND COUNTERFEIT BOTOX

- August 2016:** Neurology Associates of Greenville, P.A. pleaded guilty to and was sentenced to three years probation for receiving misbranded Botox in interstate commerce. The practice, which had purchased non-FDA approved Botox from an Irish factory from 2010-2013, also paid \$300,000 in a parallel civil case.²¹
- March 2016:** The FDA warned 20 South Carolina 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.²²
- July 2013:** The FDA warned a medical practice in South Carolina to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.²³
- November 2012:** Three South Carolina doctors were among the 350 nationwide who received warning letters indicating that they may have purchased counterfeit versions of Botox from Quality Specialty Products (QSP), a CanadaDrugs subsidiary.²⁴

OTHER COUNTERFEIT DRUGS

- April 2019:** Police in Rock Hill arrested a man who allegedly used a pill press in his home to manufacture counterfeit oxycodone pills made with heroin.²⁵
- March 2018:** In Charleston, Arturo Rafael Salazar Cruz was sentenced to 60 months in prison and three years supervised release for importing counterfeit pharmaceuticals, including Xanax and OxyContin, from China and India and selling them to people without prescriptions.²⁶
- September 2017:** A woman in Rock Hill opened a package that she thought contained a yoga mat and found that it actually contained 20,000 counterfeit oxycodone pills.²⁷
- August 2017:** Bluffton residents Eric Hughes, Taylor Place and Willie Rice were indicted for importing synthetic narcotics from China, manufacturing counterfeit Xanax and oxycodone pills in vacation rentals in Hilton Head, Kiawah and Fripp islands in South Carolina, and at Tybee Island in Georgia, and selling them online.²⁸ All three men pleaded guilty and received sentences of 168, 108, and 12 months, respectively.²⁹
- March 2013:** Over a two-week period, agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations, working jointly with the South Carolina Secretary of State's Office, Blazer Investigations and Pfizer, seized approximately \$3.6 million in counterfeit pharmaceuticals including Viagra, Cialis and Proscar shipped from India to a warehouse in Columbia.³⁰

FOOTNOTES

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