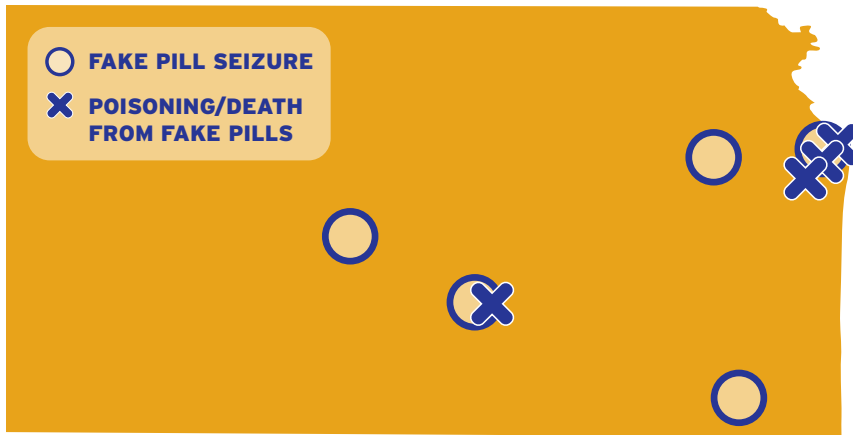
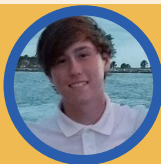




# Counterfeit Pills Have Made Steady Inroads in Kansas



Law enforcement saw a terrible uptick in the availability of **counterfeit pills made with fentanyl** in 2020 and 2021, with **poisonings and deaths—particularly of teenagers—in Kansas City, Olathe, Overland Park, Wichita** and the areas around them. These reports followed **seizures of fentanyl pills made in Barton, Labette, Sedgwick, Wabaunsee and Wyandotte Counties** in late 2018 and 2019, and large seizures of fentanyl powder in 2017 and early 2018.



**July 2020, Overland Park: A 19-year-old died of fentanyl poisoning after taking a Xanax.**



**November 2019, Sedgwick County: Law enforcement seized approximately 1,000 fake OxyContin pills.**



**June 2019, Wyandotte County: A Massachusetts man was charged with making and selling fake oxycodone pills to Kansas residents via the dark web.**

**Black market medicines have also reached Kansas' medical practices, spas and corner stores.**

In 2018, a **Leawood** woman received a one-year prison sentence for using **illegally imported, non-FDA approved beauty injections** on her clients.

An **Overland Park** man was fined \$1.6 million for **repackaging and selling imported ED drugs as herbal supplements** between 2013 and 2018.

And in 2013, a Tennessee pharmacist was sentenced to two years in prison after non-FDA approved **iron sucrose** he sold to a **Kansas dialysis practice** reached patients.

**Kansas residents deserve safe and effective medicine they can always rely on. Protect their health by protecting the U.S. secure drug supply chain.**

# COUNTERFEIT AND BLACK MARKET DRUG INCIDENTS IN KANSAS, 2011-2021

BASED ON REPORTED INVESTIGATIONS.

## FENTANYL AND COUNTERFEIT PILLS MADE WITH FENTANYL

- February 2021:** Anthony Stokes of South Deerfield, Massachusetts pleaded guilty to distributing counterfeit oxycodone pills containing fentanyl and heroin. Stokes sold fake pills to an undercover U.S. Food and Drug Administration agent in Kansas City via the dark web, and agents busted his manufacturing operation in a warehouse in South Deerfield in April 2019.<sup>1</sup>
- December 2020:** Kansas City area law enforcement warned that counterfeit OxyContin pills made with fentanyl were poisoning and killing area teenagers.<sup>2</sup> Law enforcement on the Missouri side of the border also issued warnings in April<sup>3</sup> and February 2021.<sup>4</sup>
- July 2020:** An Overland Park 19-year-old was found dead in his apartment after he unknowingly took counterfeit Xanax that contained fentanyl.<sup>5</sup>
- March 2020:** A 22-year-old in Olathe died of fentanyl poisoning after taking what he thought was an oxycodone pill he got from an acquaintance.<sup>6</sup>
- March 2020:** The Shawnee County Sheriff's Office arrested a Topeka man while investigating a fentanyl poisoning caused by counterfeit oxycodone in February 2020.<sup>7</sup>
- February 2020:** The Wichita Police Department announced that they were investigating the poisonings—one fatal—of four teenagers who had taken fake oxycodone pills made with fentanyl.<sup>8</sup>
- November 2019:** Law enforcement agencies in Sedgwick County warned that they had confiscated about a thousand counterfeit oxycodone pills made with fentanyl. The medical director of a Wichita-based addiction recovery center had seen several deaths from the pills.<sup>9</sup>
- May 2019:** A DEA operation took 1,500 counterfeit oxycodone pills containing fentanyl off Kansas City streets and led to the arrest of multiple suspects.<sup>10</sup>
- May 2019:** A Wabaunsee County deputy sheriff and a drug detection dog found several hundred suspected fentanyl pills and other drugs after a traffic stop.<sup>11</sup>
- October 2018:** The Barton County Sheriff's Office seized counterfeit hydrocodone made with fentanyl and more than 14 kilograms of other drugs during a raid in Great Bend.<sup>12</sup>
- October 2018:** Law enforcement seized 31 counterfeit pills made with fentanyl among other illicit drugs and weapons during a raid on a hotel room in Parsons.<sup>13</sup>
- June 2018:** Carlos Fernando Fernandez-Gonzalez received a 63-month prison sentence after he was found with more than 30 pounds of fentanyl during a traffic stop in Russell County in May 2017.<sup>14</sup>
- January 2018:** A traffic stop in Dickinson County resulted in two arrests and the seizure of 2.5 pounds of fentanyl powder.<sup>15</sup>
- May 2017:** DEA agents found 16 pounds of fentanyl during a raid on a house in Kansas City.<sup>16</sup>

## BLACK MARKET AND COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

- May 2013:** The FDA warned 780 medical practices, six in Kansas, to stop doing business with unlicensed drug seller Medical Device King, which had sold 31 non-FDA approved medications, including counterfeit Avastin.<sup>17</sup>

## MISBRANDED AND COUNTERFEIT BOTOX

- June 2018:** Kathleen Stegman of Leawood pleaded guilty and received a one-year sentence for illegally importing and injecting her clients with non-FDA approved beauty injections including Botox, Dysport, Restylane, Perlane and Sculptra.<sup>18</sup>
- March 2017:** Joel Erskin, a physician's assistant in Garden City, pleaded guilty and was permanently banned from providing medical services in Kansas after he purchased and used non-FDA approved Botox on his clients while he did not have a medical license.<sup>19</sup>

- March 2016:** The FDA warned two Kansas 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.<sup>20</sup>
- July 2013:** The FDA warned two medical practices in Kansas to stop purchasing fraudulent versions of Botox sold by Online Botox Pharmacy, Onlinebotox.com, and Onlinebotox.<sup>21</sup>

## OTHER DRUGS

- September 2020:** Overland Park resident Rick Shepard was sentenced to five years of probation and to pay over \$1.6 million in forfeitures for importing and selling misbranded Chinese pharmaceutical-grade erectile dysfunction drugs that he marketed as herbal remedies between 2013 and 2018.<sup>22</sup>
- May 2015:** A 20/20 investigation about the sale of counterfeit drugs in the United States revealed that two storefronts—one in Overland Park and another in Wichita—helped American citizens order non-FDA approved prescription drugs from unlicensed foreign pharmacies.<sup>23</sup>
- November 2013:** Tennessee pharmacist Robert Harshbarger received a 48-month prison sentence for distributing a misbranded drug and for health care fraud after selling non-FDA approved iron sucrose that Kansas Dialysis Services, L.C administered to their patients.<sup>24</sup>
- June 2011:** Manuel Calvelo of Belgium received a 48-month prison sentence after being convicted in Kansas of operating an internet pharmacy that sold misbranded and counterfeit drugs and controlled substances.<sup>25</sup>

## Footnotes

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