

**ONE  
PILL CAN  
KILL**

Department of Justice | Drug Enforcement Administration  
**COUNTERFEIT PILLS FACT SHEET**

FAKE PRESCRIPTION PILLS • WIDELY AVAILABLE • INCREASINGLY LETHAL

DEA LAB TESTING REVEALS THAT  
**4 OUT OF EVERY 10 PILLS**  
WITH FENTANYL CONTAIN A POTENTIALLY  
**LETHAL DOSE**



**Counterfeit pills often contain fentanyl and are more lethal than ever before.**

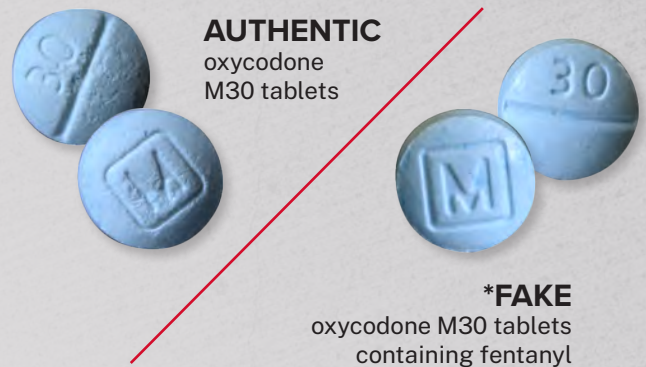
DEA officials report a dramatic rise in the number of counterfeit pills containing at least 2 mg of fentanyl, which is considered a deadly dose.

Drug traffickers are using fake pills to exploit the opioid crisis and prescription drug misuse. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports more than 100,000 drug overdose deaths in the United States in the most recent 12-month reporting period, the most ever recorded.

Fentanyl, the synthetic opioid most commonly found in counterfeit pills, is the primary driver in this alarming increase in overdose deaths.

**Criminal drug networks are flooding the U.S. with deadly fake pills.**

- Criminal drug networks are mass-producing fake pills and falsely marketing them as legitimate prescription pills to deceive the American public.
- Counterfeit pills are easy to purchase, widely available, often contain fentanyl or methamphetamine, and can be deadly.
- Fake prescription pills are easily accessible and often sold on social media and e-commerce platforms, making them available to anyone with a smartphone, including minors.
- Many counterfeit pills are made to look like prescription opioids such as oxycodone (Oxycontin®, Percocet®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), and alprazolam (Xanax®); or stimulants like amphetamines (Adderall®).



**AUTHENTIC**  
oxycodone  
M30 tablets

**\*FAKE**  
oxycodone M30 tablets  
containing fentanyl

For more information about counterfeit pills, go to [DEA.gov/OnePill](https://www.dea.gov/OnePill)

Data as of December 2021



\*Photos of counterfeit pills do not represent all available fake pills.

**Counterfeit pills are widely available across every state in the Country.**

- DEA and its law enforcement partners are seizing deadly fake pills at record rates.
- Counterfeit pills have been identified in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- Drug trafficking is also inextricably linked with violence.
- DEA has opened 912 investigations with a nexus to violent crime so far this year, and with our partners, seized more than 8,700 guns connected to crimes.

So far this year, DEA has seized  
**20,000,000**

**fake pills often laced with fentanyl  
-more than the last 2 years combined-**



The **only safe medications** are ones that come from **licensed and accredited medical professionals.**

DEA warns that pills purchased outside of a licensed pharmacy are illegal, dangerous, and potentially lethal.

For more information about counterfeit pills, go to [DEA.gov/OnePill](https://www.dea.gov/OnePill)

Data as of December 2021



The Drug Enforcement Administration ensures the safety and health of the American public by fighting against violent criminal drug networks and foreign cartels trafficking in illicit drugs. To accomplish that mission, the Drug Enforcement Administration employs approximately 10,000 men and women throughout the world—Special Agents, diversion investigators, intelligence analysts, and chemists—across 239 domestic offices in 23 U.S. divisions and 91 foreign offices in 68 countries.