

What Every Parent and Caregiver Needs to Know About COUNTERFEIT PILLS



DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION • Public Safety Alert

What is fentanyl?

- It is a deadly synthetic opioid that is being pressed into counterfeit pills or cut into heroin, cocaine, and other street drugs to drive addiction.

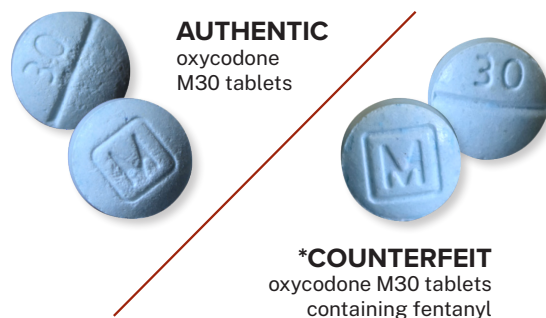
FENTANYL IS

50x

**MORE POTENT
THAN HEROIN**

What are counterfeit pills?

- The Sinaloa Cartel and Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion are making fentanyl and pressing it into counterfeit pills. Counterfeit pills are made to look like OxyContin®, Xanax®, Adderall®, and other pharmaceuticals. These counterfeit pills contain no legitimate medicine.
- Fentanyl can also be made in a rainbow of colors so it looks like candy.



***COUNTERFEIT**
rainbow oxycodone M30 tablets containing fentanyl

Why is fentanyl so dangerous?

- DEA lab testing reveals that 29 percent of counterfeit pills with fentanyl contain a potentially lethal dose.



What are the physical and mental effects of fentanyl?

- Fentanyl use can cause confusion, drowsiness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, changes in pupil size, cold and clammy skin, coma, and respiratory failure leading to death.

Visit www.dea.gov/onepill for more information and resources for parents and caregivers

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

**ONE
PILL CAN
KILL**

Data as of January 2026

How would my child get fentanyl?

- Drug traffickers are using social media to advertise drugs and conduct sales. If you have a smartphone and a social media account, then a drug trafficker can find you. This also means they are finding your kids who have social media accounts.
- To learn about emoji codes used on social media, visit [Emoji Drug Code Decoded](https://www.dea.gov/onepill) on www.dea.gov/onepill.

PERCOCET® & OXYCODONE



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Why you should be concerned.

- The drug landscape is dramatically different from when you grew up, or even from just a few years ago.
- All parents and caregivers need to be educated on current drug threats to be able to have informed talks with their kids.

Tips for Parents and Caregivers

- Encourage open and honest communication
- Explain what fentanyl is and why it is so dangerous
- Stress not to take any pills that were not prescribed to you from a doctor and dispensed by a trusted pharmacy
- No pill purchased on social media is safe
- Make sure they know fentanyl has been found in most kinds of illegal drugs
- Create an “exit plan” to help your child know what to do if they’re pressured to take a pill or use drugs
- For more tips on how to talk to your child about drugs, read Chapter 4 of *Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent’s Guide to Substance Use Prevention* at www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com/growingup



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