

FAKE PILLS



WHAT ARE THEY?

Fake pills are not legitimate medications. They may contain fentanyl or methamphetamine and are extremely dangerous because they often appear identical to legitimate prescription pills.

WHAT IS THEIR ORIGIN?

Fake pills are usually produced in substandard conditions, labeled incorrectly, and may include dangerous and deadly substances. Online sales via internet marketplaces and social media are the major sources for obtaining fake pills.

WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

Fake pills are nearly identical to prescription medications. They may resemble oxycodone, alprazolam (Xanax), Adderall, and other medications. Students may purchase Xanax for anxiety, and Adderall in the belief that it will aid their academics, with many of these purchases made on the internet or social media sites. Many of these sites sell fake versions of these drugs tainted with fentanyl and/or meth, which can lead to death.



30mg Authentic (left)
and Fake Oxycodone
(right)



A lethal dose of fentanyl

WHAT ARE THEIR EFFECTS ON THE BODY?

Fake pills that contain fentanyl can be deadly. A lethal dose of fentanyl is about two milligrams, equivalent in size to a few grains of salt.

Fake pills containing methamphetamine are highly addictive and act on the central nervous system. Taking even small amounts of meth can result in wakefulness, increased physical activity, decreased appetite, rapid breathing and heart rate, irregular heartbeat, increased blood pressure, and hyperthermia (overheating).

WHAT ARE THE OVERDOSE EFFECTS?

Fentanyl overdose may result in changes in pupil size, cold and clammy skin, coma, and respiratory failure leading to death.

Methamphetamine overdose may result in death from stroke, heart attack, or multiple organ problems caused by overheating.

The best way to avoid fake medication is to take only medications prescribed by a licensed medical professional and dispensed by a registered pharmacist.

FOR DRUG USE PREVENTION INFORMATION, VISIT DEA'S WEBSITES:

For parents, caregivers,
and educators
GetSmartAboutDrugs.com

For teens
JustThinkTwice.com

For college and university
campuses
CampusDrugPrevention.gov

For more on fake pills
dea.gov/onepill