



## PRESS RELEASE

Tacoma Police Department  
Tacoma, Washington  
[cityoftacoma.org/police](http://cityoftacoma.org/police)

### IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Public Service Announcement - [Rainbow Fentanyl & Counterfeit Drugs](#)

You may have heard on the news the DEA's warning that agencies are recovering large quantities of "rainbow fentanyl", multicolored counterfeit drugs laced with fentanyl that are being illegally sold throughout the United States. At first reading you might initially think the main danger lies in the pills looking like candy, which could encourage kids to try them.

The real danger in these counterfeit pills is that it is almost impossible to tell a counterfeit from an actual legitimate prescription pill. Criminals are making pills that look like OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, Adderall, and Xanax to name just a few. Fake pills are easily accessible and often sold on social media and over the internet as the real thing. These counterfeit pills, unlike the pills dispensed by a licensed pharmacist, often contain fentanyl or methamphetamine. Fentanyl is a highly addictive synthetic opioid that is 50 – 100 times stronger than morphine. It is so dangerously potent, only two milligrams of fentanyl, which is equal to 10-15 grains of table salt, is considered a lethal dose.

The DEA has reported that their lab testing of recovered counterfeit pills has found that 4 out of every 10 pills with fentanyl contain a possibly lethal dose. This has contributed to drug poisoning / overdose becoming the top killer in the United States of people between the ages of 18 – 45. In 2021 alone, 107,622 Americans died from drug overdose or poisoning. Sixty-six percent of those deaths were attributed to synthetic opioids such as fentanyl.

So, when you talk to your kids about drugs, youth need to know that any pill that does not come from a properly labeled prescription bottle could be counterfeit. And if it is, that one pill could have deadly consequences.

[DEA Warns of Brightly-Colored Fentanyl Used to Target Young Americans](#)  
[DEA One Pill Can Kill Social Media Campaign](#)  
[Fentanyl | Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department \(tpchd.org\)](#)

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