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Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

Fentanyl Alert - March 15, 2023



Feds knew fentanyl-tainted pills from Mexican pharmacies were killing Americans

CAMARILLO, Calif. — Officials at the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and State Department have known for more than three years that some pharmacies in Mexico are selling counterfeit medications laced with illicit fentanyl — and that American tourists are overdosing and dying from them. A California medical examiner first alerted federal authorities in the spring of 2019, when 29-year-old Brennan Harrell died of a fentanyl overdose after he and a friend bought pills at a drugstore in Cabo San Lucas.

Afterward, his family cooperated with the DEA during a monthslong investigation they say ended with the agency promising to take action that did not materialize. Last month, a Los Angeles Times investigation found that some pharmacies in northwestern Mexico — including several in Cabo — are not only passing off fentanyl pills as legitimate oxycodone but also selling methamphetamine tablets as Adderall.

It's impossible to tell how many people have been harmed by this practice, because Mexican fatality data are notoriously unreliable and the U.S. government has been tight-lipped about the problem. [READ](#)

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