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Pharmacists worldwide worry about drug counterfeiting

There is growing concern among pharmacists in developed countries, including the U.S., that drug counterfeiting is a serious problem that current policies and technology have been unable to solve.

In a recently published survey commissioned by Pfizer and the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), 63% of 2,000 community, retail and hospital pharmacists in the U.S., Europe and Australia believe current policies and technologies are insufficient to deal with drug counterfeiting, while 61% of those surveyed also say the prevalence of counterfeit medication is a serious issue in their country.

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Long a problem in Africa and Southeast Asia -- where the World Health Organization has estimated that anywhere between 25% and 50% of medicines may be counterfeit – the number of these fake medications in the U.S. market has increased dramatically in recent years. In 2009, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency stated that the value of seizures of counterfeit pharmaceuticals had increased by 500 percent over the previous 3 years. By some estimates, annual earnings from fake and substandard medicines worldwide is more than \$32 billion.

A counterfeit drug is a pharmaceutical product produced and sold with the intent to deceptively represent its origin, authenticity or effectiveness. Generic drug products or drug products whose only violation is that of patent laws are not counterfeit drug products. A counterfeit drug may contain inappropriate quantities of active ingredients, may be improperly processed within the body (e.g., absorption by the body), or may contain ingredients that are not on the label (which may or may not be harmful), and is often sold with inaccurate, incorrect, or fake packaging and labeling.

Source: HealthcarePackaging.com

You'll find information on how to access an indepth study of the global drug counterfeiting problem [here](#).

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