

OxyContin maker will stop promoting opioids to doctors

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This Feb. 19, 2013 file photo shows OxyContin pills arranged for a photo at a pharmacy in Montpelier, Vt. The maker of the powerful painkiller said it will stop marketing opioid drugs to doctors, a surprise reversal after lawsuits blaming the company for helping trigger the current drug abuse epidemic. OxyContin has long been the world's top-selling opioid painkiller and generated billions in sales for privately-held Purdue. (AP Photo/Toby Talbot, File)

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marketing opioid drugs to doctors, a surprise reversal following lawsuits that blamed the company for helping trigger the current drug abuse epidemic.

OxyContin has long been the world's top-selling opioid painkiller. It generated billions in sales for privately-held Purdue.

The pill, a time-release version of oxycodone, was hailed as a breakthrough treatment for [chronic pain](#) when it was approved in late 1995. But some users quickly discovered they could get a heroin-like high by crushing the pills and snorting or injecting the entire dose at once.

Purdue's promotions exaggerated the drug's safety and risks of addiction, leading to [lawsuits](#) and federal investigations. But the drug continued to rack up blockbuster sales.

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