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FDA warns websites marketing unapproved opioids

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(HealthDay)—Nine online networks, operating 53 websites, have been

warned that they must stop illegally marketing potentially dangerous, unapproved, and misbranded versions of opioid medications, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

As part of the effort to crack down on sales of illegal narcotics over the internet, a summit will be hosted with stakeholders to find new ways to collaborate and address these issues. In addition, the FDA will be taking action against companies whose websites break the law. Warning letters were sent to nine online networks; these will be followed by additional steps to prevent the flow of illegal, unapproved opioids.

Patients who buy prescription medicines from illegal online pharmacies may be putting their health at risk as these products could be counterfeit, contaminated, expired, or unsafe. In violation of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the websites offer opioids for sale that are misbranded and new drugs that are unapproved. The companies have been asked to respond within 10 working days, and are directed to inform the agency of specific actions taken.

"This illegal online marketing of unapproved opioids is contributing to the nation's opioid crisis," FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D., said in a statement. "The new warning letters are part of a comprehensive campaign to target illegal sales of unapproved opioids."

More information: More Information

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