FDA warning letters target illegal online sales of opioids

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(HealthDay)—Four more online networks that operate 21 websites

illegally selling potentially dangerous, unapproved, and misbranded versions of opioid pain medications have been told to immediately stop their sales, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says. The order was made in warning letters sent to the networks.

"The illegal online sale of opioids represents a serious risk to Americans and is helping to fuel the opioid crisis. Cutting off this flow of illicit internet traffic in opioids is critical, and we'll continue to pursue all means of enforcement to hinder online drug dealers and curb this dangerous practice," FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D., said in a statement. "Today's effort builds on previous actions against the illegal online sale of opioids, for a total of 13 warning letters to more than 70 websites just this summer."

Americans who buy prescription medicines such as opioids from illegal online pharmacies may be putting their health at risk because the drugs may be counterfeit, contaminated, expired, or otherwise unsafe, according to the FDA. Along with the health risks, consumers who use illegal online pharmacies face other threats, including credit card fraud, identity theft, and computer viruses.

The companies have 10 working days to respond to the warning letters. If they fail to correct the violations outlined in the warning letters, they may face legal enforcement action, the FDA said.

More information: More Information

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