

Illegal Online Drug Sellers: What You Need to Know

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About the Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global)

ASOP Global is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. with projects in the U.S., Canada, Europe, India and Asia. ASOP Global is dedicated to protecting consumers around the world, ensuring safe access to medications, and combating illegal online drug sellers and counterfeit medicines.



Educate

Provide consumers, providers, policymakers and other stakeholders information about how to stay safe when shopping for medicines online and offline.

Research

Development of credible data, trends and information on counterfeit medicines and illicit online drug sellers.



Influence

Protect consumers by influencing policymakers, ecommerce and online platforms, law enforcement and NGOs.

Collaborate

Work alongside U.S. and international partners to raise awareness and improve patient safety.



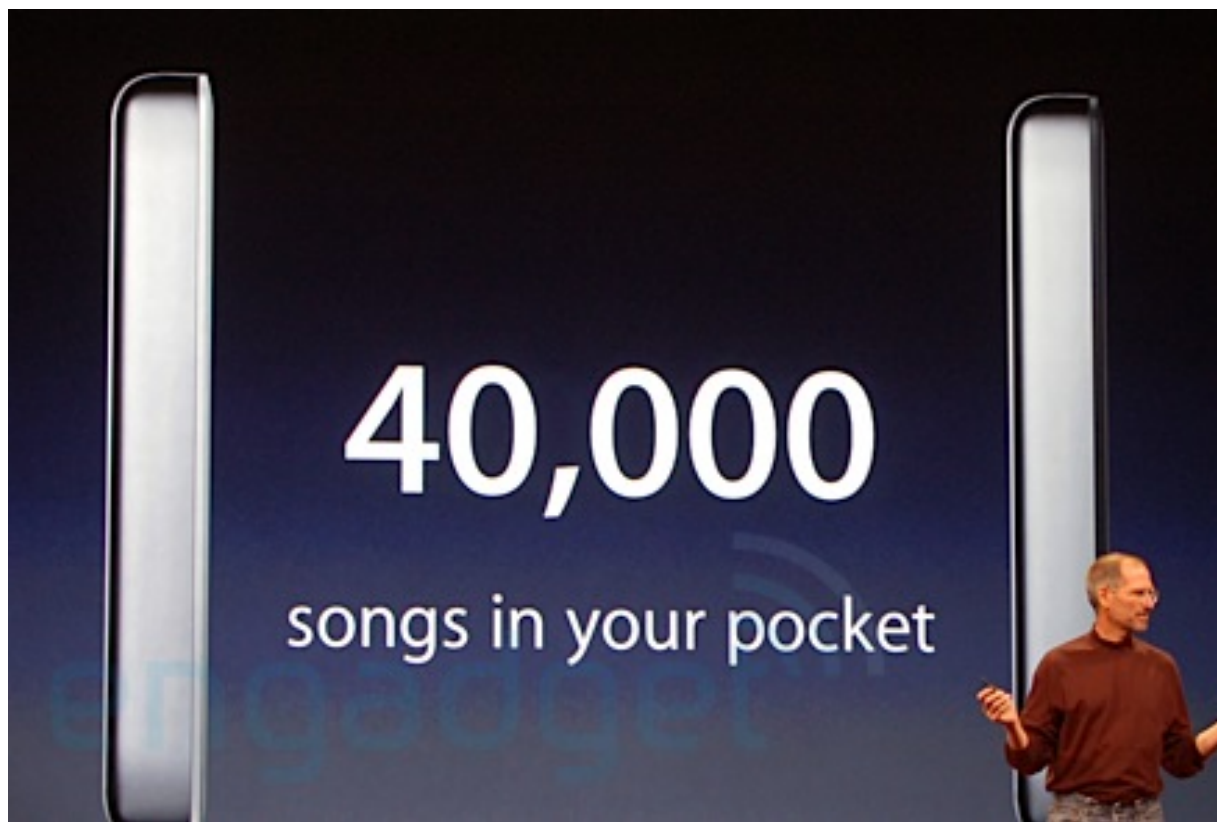
The Issue

“If you're selling a drug with the potential for abuse and misuse through an online website, you're no longer in the business of selling widgets or books...You have a social contract to take voluntary steps to help address public-health challenges.”

– Dr. Scott Gottlieb, Commissioner, US FDA (January 30, 2018)

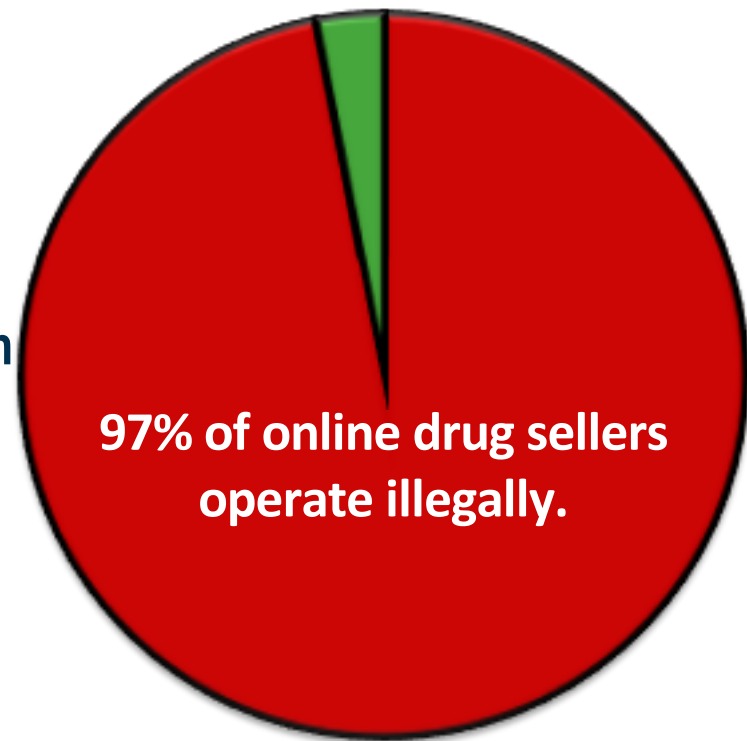
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2018/01/30/fda-wants-to-curb-abuse-of-imodium-the-poor-mans-methadone/>

Cost, Convenience and Access to Care



Why Is This A Problem?

- ▶ Every day, approximately **20 new illegal** online pharmacy websites go live globally.
- ▶ **3,300** sites sell controlled substances like **opioids**, often without a prescription.
- ▶ Online searches for **prescription opioids** across the three major sites found nearly **91% of the first search results** led users to an rogue online pharmacy.
- ▶ A **February 2018 study** by NABP found of 100 online pharmacy websites targeting U.S. consumers, that:
 - ▶ 100% were operating illegally;
 - ▶ 98% were selling Rx drugs without valid prescription;
 - ▶ 54% offered controlled substances; and
 - ▶ 40% offered one or more drugs frequently counterfeited with fentanyl.



Why Is This A Problem?

- ▶ Common violations by illegal drug sellers include:
 - ▶ Selling **falsified, adulterated** and **unapproved medicines**;
 - ▶ Selling prescription **medications without a prescription**; and
 - ▶ Operating with **no pharmacy license**.
- ▶ Risks of over/under-dosing, drug interactions, adverse events and financial fraud.
- ▶ Online drug sellers can make between **\$1 – 2.5 million** in sales each month.
- ▶ Counterfeiters make **10x more profit** than that of illicit drug traders.

Why Is This A Problem?

Hidden Poisons in Counterfeit Medications

There are a lot of shady ingredients that go into counterfeit medications that consumers can be exposed to by buying directly from unlicensed drug sellers on the internet, or when medical professionals purchase medications from outside the secured supply chain.

Investigators have found these dangerous ingredients in fake medicine.

Heavy metals



mercury
aluminum
lead
cadmium
arsenic
chrome
uranium
strontium
selenium

Actual poison



PCBs
benzopyrenes
rat poison
boric acid
antifreeze

Common household items



road paint
wall paint
brick dust
floor wax
sheet rock
paint thinner

Drugs you didn't ask for



aminotadalafil
homosildenafil
xanthoanthrafil
pseudovardenafil
hongdenafil
sibutramine
haloperidol

No drugs at all



dextrose
dextrin
lactose
starch
saline
salt



FAKE



Brick Dust: Used by counterfeiters to provide color and texture to pills, brick dust can contain poisonous heavy metals and other chemicals.

What We Know About U.S. Consumers

Americans are buying prescription medicine online.

- ▶ **33%** have already purchased prescription medicines online for themselves or someone under their care
- ▶ While only **27%** of consumers are very familiar with online pharmacies, a **majority (55%) has or would consider buying medication online**
- ▶ **88%** of people who have purchased prescription drugs online **did not discuss** it with their healthcare provider.
- ▶ Those most likely to consider purchasing medications online are those who are younger, have higher incomes, and purchase other items online.

ASOP Global 2017 Study

Good Work Underway...But More Needs To Be Done

Internet Drug Outlet Identification Program Progress Report for State and Federal Regulators: February 2018

Prepared By
The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy



United States Senate
PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Rob Portman, Chairman
Tom Carper, Ranking Member

COMBATTING THE OPIOID CRISIS: EXPLOITING VULNERABILITIES IN INTERNATIONAL MAIL

STAFF REPORT

PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INVESTIGATIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE



The FDA is cracking down on websites illegally selling opioids

Published: June 7, 2018 7:26 a.m. ET



The internet is 'virtually awash in illegal narcotics'

Google Now Deindexing Some Web Pages Based on FDA's Administrative Agency Findings

A new Google policy calls for such deindexing based on administrative agency findings—without a court order—in cases where the agency is “charged with protecting consumers’ physical safety from harm by products or services that they consume.”

Eugene Volokh | May. 17, 2018 3:37 pm

Facebook Redirects Users Searching for Opioids to Federal Crisis Help Line

Tech giants are grappling with questions about illicit sales on their platforms

By Levi Facher, STAT on June 20, 2018

Your Prescription
Easy. Search, Prepay
Pick Up Immediately.

Lowest Rx Prices
The Lowest Prices on Nearly All
Generic Rx Medication. Guaranteed.

Canadian Pharmacy Online - Official Site

canadianpharmacyonline.com
Canadian Pharmacy Online is a fully certified Canadian online pharmacy from Canada located in Canada. Proud to serve Americans with discount prescriptions!

Refills · New Order · Canada Pharmacy Online · Contact Us · Asthma Medications

Canadian Pharmacy - Official Site

canadianpharmacy.com

The Canadian Pharmacy is a licensed online pharmacy in Canada dedicated to offering safe and high

WARNING

Site might be dangerous

The FDA has issued a Warning Letter related to this site, and it may offer drugs that are unsafe. We recommend you choose another result or you can go to this site anyways.

Here is information to make safe online health purchases.

What To Remember

Verify Before You Buy:

<http://buysaferx.pharmacy/find-a-safe-online-pharmacy/>

Find Safe Online Pharmacies in the U.S.

With more than 33,000 illegal online pharmacies, ASOP Global is dedicated to helping consumers stay safe online. To ensure the online pharmacy sites you visit are safe and legitimate, use the LegitScript URL verification tool or search the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy's database of verified .pharmacy websites.

LegitScript's Verification Program

LegitScript maintains the world's largest comprehensive database of regulated healthcare products, organized by legitimacy and safety. LegitScript monitors and catalogs warnings from over 100 government agencies on an on-going basis and follows regulatory developments in nearly 20 countries around the world.

NABP's .Pharmacy Program

The .pharmacy verified domain, established by NABP, creates a safe space for consumers throughout the world to purchase medicine online, while enabling businesses to show that their websites are trustworthy. Unlike seals of approval posted on websites, the .pharmacy domain is part of a website's address and cannot be faked.

Verify your online pharmacy

www.example.com

Verify

Powered by:  LegitScript

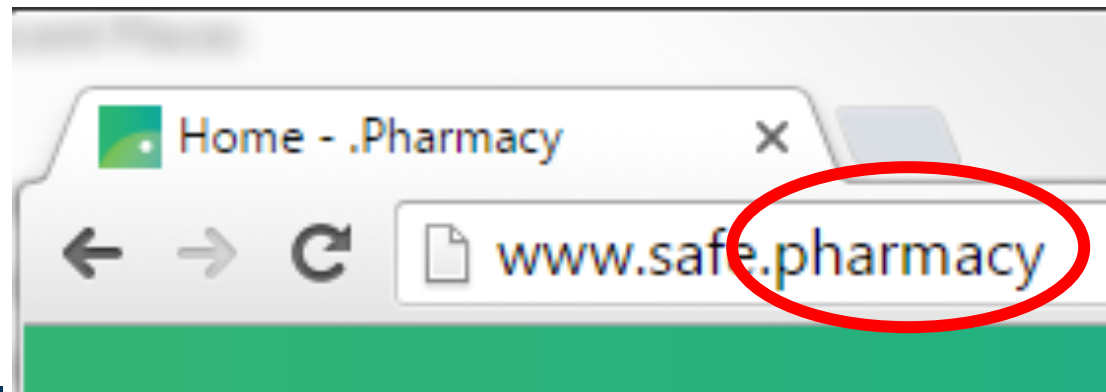
 pharmacy

With .pharmacy in the URL, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy "seal of quality" is built into the website address.

[Find an NABP-approved .pharmacy website](#)

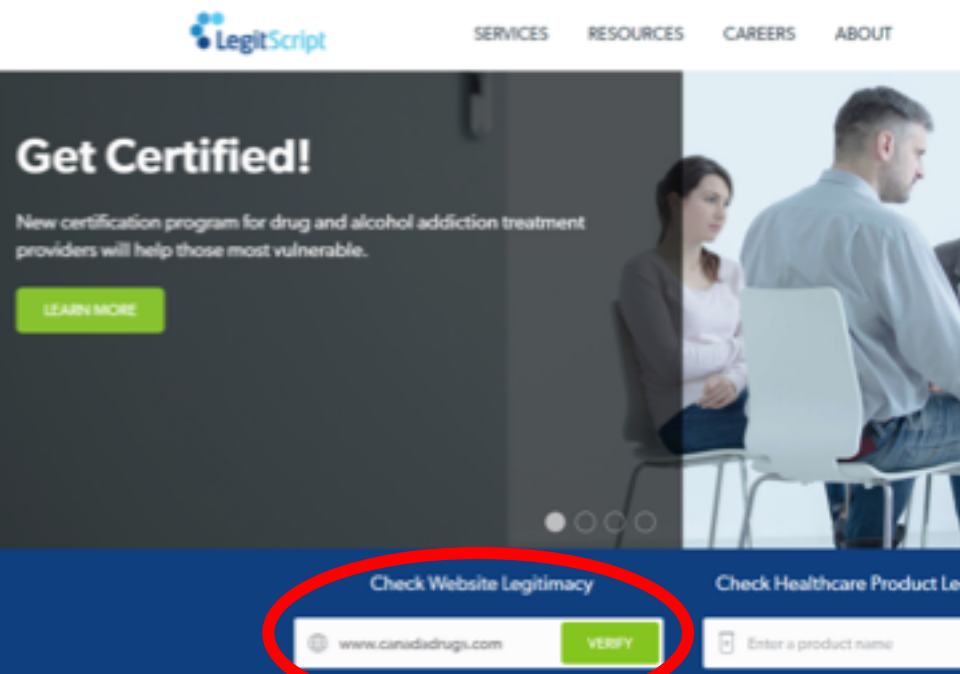
The NABP .Pharmacy Verified Websites Program

- ▶ Distinct from verification sites and certification badges: the “seal of approval” is built into the website’s URL. Works just like a ‘.com’ or ‘.org’.
- ▶ Easy for consumers to spot a legitimate pharmacy: ***look to the right of the dot.***
- ▶ All online pharmacy websites ending in ***.PHARMACY*** have met ten core safety standards set by NABP.



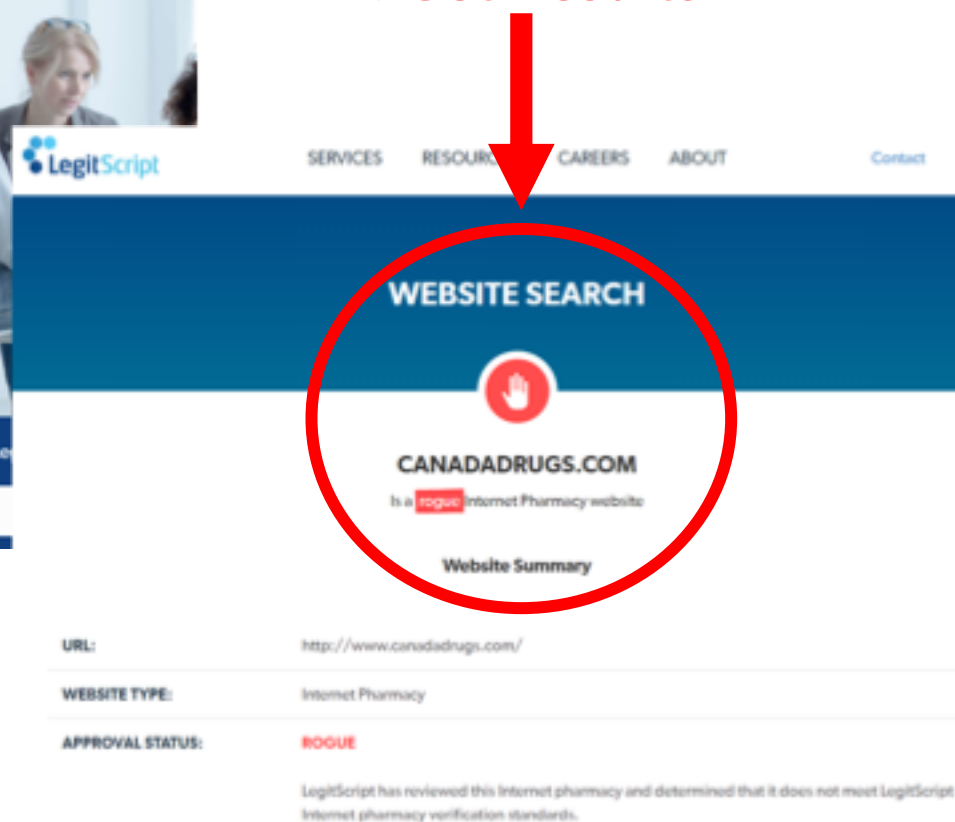
LegitScript's URL Verification Tool

Check the legitimacy of a website at www.LegitScript.com.



1. Type in a URL

2. Get Results



Thank you on behalf of ASOP Global.

www.BuySafeRx.Pharmacy

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