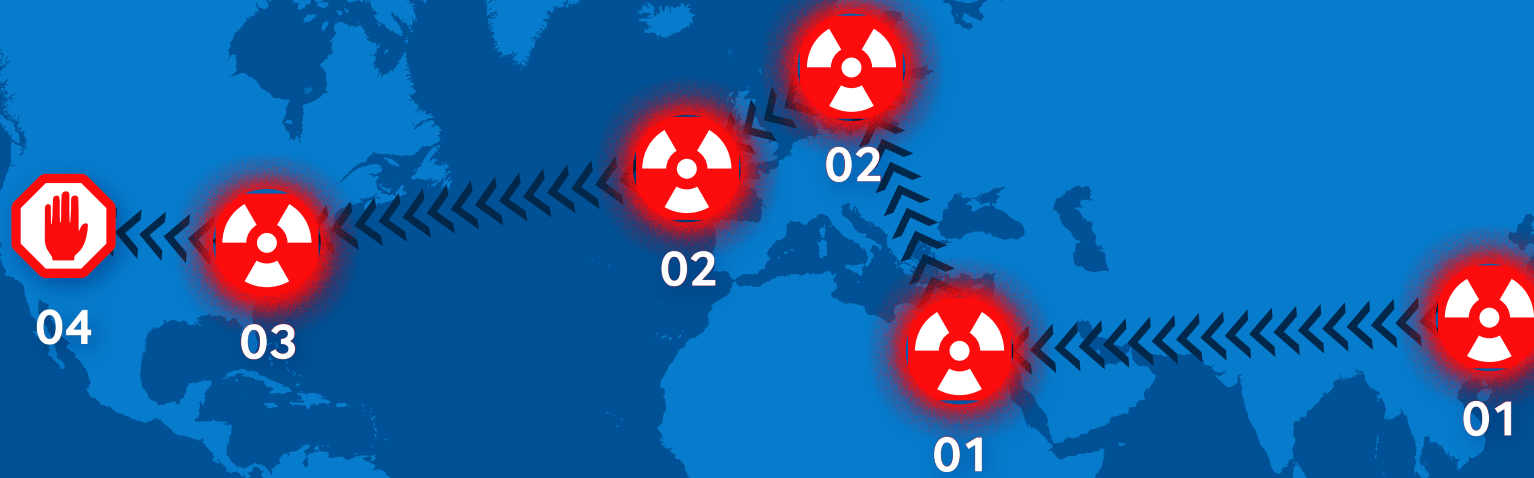


THE DANGERS OF DRUG IMPORTATION: A CASE OF COUNTERFEIT CANCER DRUGS

This case study illustrates how counterfeiters operate and how the importation of drugs would make it easier for more of these dangerous counterfeits to reach U.S. patients.



This map illustrates a composite case drawn from real-life examples of counterfeit drug distribution.

PART 01

Fake Cancer Drugs Made Using Empty Vials Washed with Dirty Water

A counterfeiter in China collects empty vials of cancer medicines from the trash of a local hospital, washes them in dirty water, and then fills them with a solution containing cornstarch, acetone, and other chemicals, but no active ingredient. The vials are stored in a filthy, hot warehouse before being routed to a Danish supply company, with a pit stop first in Egypt.



PART 02

Overseas Distributors Hide Country of Origin by Shipping through Europe

A company called CanadaPharma.net purchases, on behalf of its U.K. subsidiary, the Chinese-made counterfeit cancer drugs from the Danish supplier. The drugs, now growing mold, make their way to a distributor in the U.K.



PART 03

U.S. Physicians Administer Counterfeit Drugs to Cancer Patients

A few unethical U.S. physicians, trying to make a profit at the expense of patient safety, decide to purchase cases of low-cost oncology drugs through CanadaPharma.net. The U.K. distributors falsify customs documents and ship the product out to a small U.S. wholesale distributor, who then sends the counterfeit vials to physicians in Kentucky, California and Maryland. At least two patients are injected with solution from the dirty vials.



PART 04

Importation Dangerously Opens U.S. Borders and Impairs FDA's Ability to Intervene

Fortunately, some health care providers notice that the counterfeit vials have labels with foreign language and are missing features seen in FDA-approved labeling. Once notified, the FDA quickly confirms that the drugs are counterfeit and quickly issues warning letters and prevents hundreds of patients from being administered these potentially deadly counterfeit drugs. Healthcare providers' ability to detect, and FDA's powers to respond to, cases of counterfeit drugs would be far more difficult if importation freely allowed prescription medicines from overseas into the U.S. for distribution.

