

Pfizer Identifies Fake Covid-19 Shots Abroad as Criminals Exploit Vaccine Demand - WSJ

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Pfizer Inc. says it has identified in Mexico and Poland the first confirmed instances of counterfeit versions of the Covid-19 vaccine it developed with BioNTech SE, the latest attempt by criminals trying to exploit the world-wide vaccination campaign.

Vials seized by authorities in separate investigations were tested by the company and confirmed to contain bogus vaccine. The vials recovered in Mexico also had fraudulent labeling, while a substance inside vials in Poland was likely an antiwrinkle treatment, Pfizer said.

About 80 people at a clinic in Mexico received a fake vaccine going for about \$1,000 a dose, though they don't appear to have been physically harmed. The vials, found in beach-style beer coolers, had different lot numbers than those sent to the state, and a wrong expiration date, said Dr. Manuel de la O Cavazos, the health secretary of Nuevo León state.

Polish authorities said no one there had received the counterfeit vaccine, which was seized at a man's apartment.

The findings are the latest in an effort between law enforcement and drugmakers such as Pfizer, Moderna Inc. and Johnson & Johnson to stem criminal activity related to the Covid-19 vaccines. The global rollout of shots has [provided criminals a fresh opportunity](#) to take advantage of unsuspecting people.