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## **Carrollton physician facing more charges of overprescribing controlled substances**

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A Carrollton, Ga. doctor has been indicted Thursday by a federal grand jury on more 150 more counts of overprescribing prescription drugs.

Dr. Phillip C. Astin III, 52, was first charged in July 2007 in a federal criminal complaint and then a seven-count indictment for illegal distribution of prescription drugs, including Percocet, Adderall, Lorcet and Xanax, to two patients.

The new indictment includes charges alleged in the first indictment and adds more than 150 counts relating to 17 additional patients, who are alleged to have received hundreds of illegal prescriptions for methadone, Percocet, Oxycontin, Demerol, Lorcet, Ritalin, Vicodin, Xanax, Adderall and Soma. The indictment also alleges the prescription drugs Astin dispensed caused death or serious bodily injury to one patient.

The indictment further alleges Astin wrote and filled 16 prescriptions for Lortab, Xanax, Dexedrine, Adderall and Ritalin in the names of two patients without their knowledge. Under federal law, each allegedly illegal prescription is charged as a separate count.

Federal law requires medical practitioners to sign and date each prescription for controlled substances on the date that it is issued.

"Since the initial indictment in this case, investigators have carefully reviewed hundreds of patient files and interviewed dozens of witnesses, and we now see a much broader picture of the disturbing and dangerous distribution of prescription drugs," said David E. Nahmias, U.S. Attorney. "The superseding indictment alleges that Dr. Astin illegally distributed prescription drugs in many ways to many patients, whether by providing multiple, undated prescriptions for the same drug on the same day, writing prescriptions for inappropriate combinations of drugs, or feeding the methadone addictions of patients for months or even years."