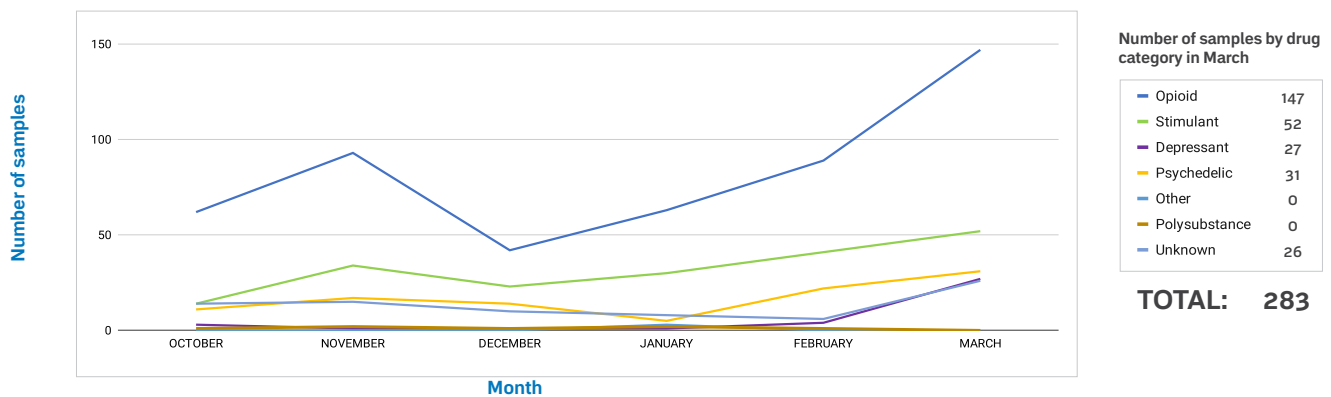


Key Findings

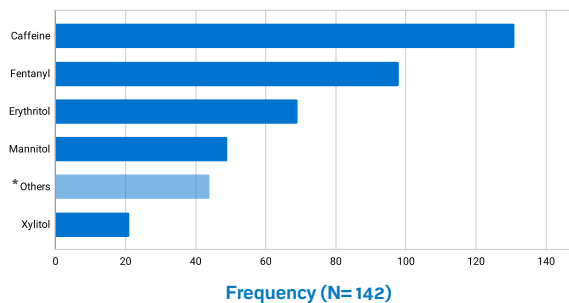
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region remained high (67.4%, 99 of 147 samples), but trends may be hard to infer due to the large geographic region. Etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies. This means that the true rate may be higher than reported here.
- Drug checking is available in many different communities in the Interior Health region. For updated times and locations, visit our [website](#).

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

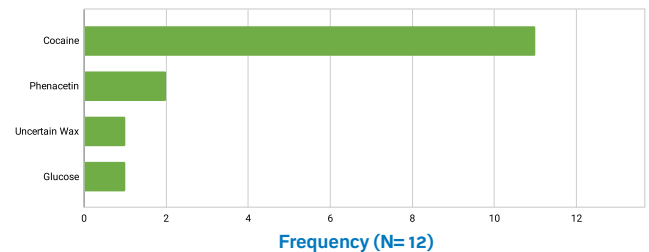


Components found in drug samples in March

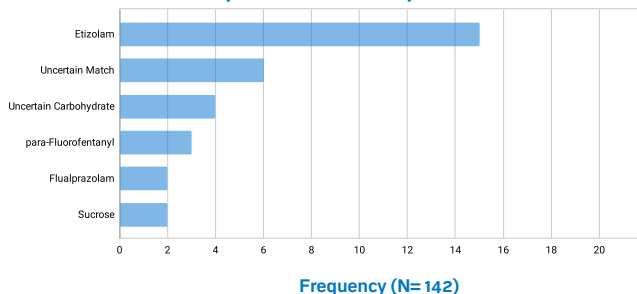
Components in opioids



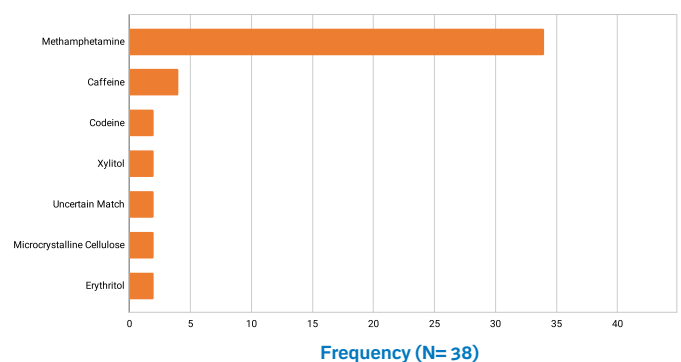
Components in cocaine



*Other components found in opioids

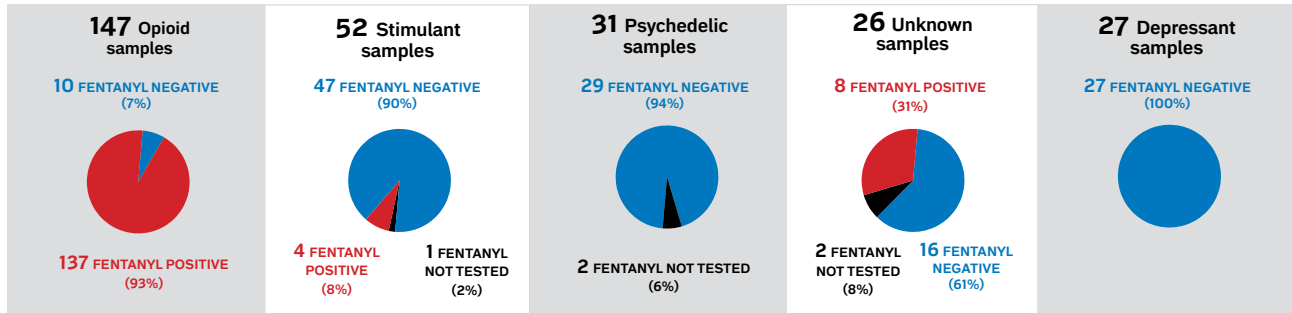


Components in methamphetamine



There were additional compounds detected a single time each. To save space, they have been omitted from these charts. For the full list of compounds detected, visit our data dashboard at www.drugcheckingbc.ca/dashboard/

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

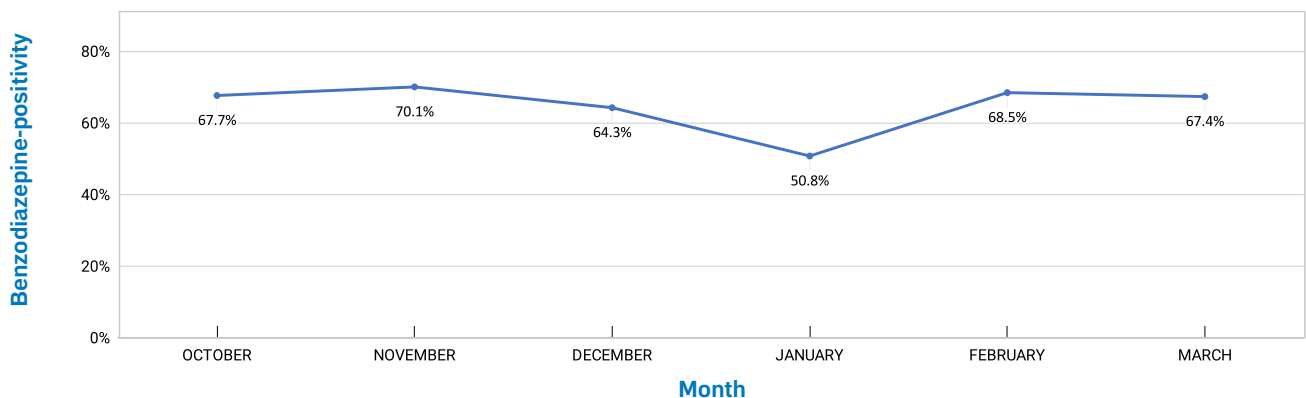


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
March 25 2022 ASK Wellness Penticton	Down or fentanyl Grey pebbles	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Penticton	Higher than normal concentration of fentanyl in a sample adulterated with benzodiazepines poses a risk of opioid toxicity.
Health authorities and community organizations issue further toxic drug alerts from sources other than drug checking. See their respective websites or social media accounts for more alerts.						

For information about public health alerts in the Interior Health region, please visit:
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Leadership/MHQ/Pages/PHEmergency.aspx>

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the past 6 months



During the month of March, **67.4%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**99 samples of 147 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are derived from both of these technologies and are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

Number of drugs checks at each site

Organization	City/Town	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS	Nelson	52
	Trail	8
	Castlegar	1
	Grand Forks	16
	Cranbrook	25
ASK Wellness	Kamloops	42
	Penticton	35
	Meritt	3
UBCO Hart	Kelowna	59
	Vernon	40
Total		281

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Psychedelic

31 Samples Tested



Matched: 27

Did not match: 2

Match not determined: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Stimulant

52 Samples Tested



Matched: 47

Did not match: 5

EXPECTED DRUG:

Depressant

27 Samples Tested



Matched: 17

Did not match: 10

EXPECTED DRUG:

Opioid

147 Samples Tested



Matched: 137

Did not match: 8

Match not determined: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Unknown

26 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 26

Total

283 Samples Tested



Matched: 228

Did not match: 25

Match not determined: 30

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents

Depressant may include:
benzodiazepines, etizolam,
GHB, hypnotics

Opioid may include:
"down," heroin, fentanyl,
pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures

Psychedelic may include:
MDMA and related,
2C-family, tryptamines,
ketamine, LSD

Stimulant may include:
methamphetamine,
"speed," cocaine and crack
cocaine, cathinones

Unknown includes:
samples where the individual
was unable to identify an
expected substance - this
includes found samples.

Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Fentanyl

119 Samples Tested



Matched: 114

Did not match: 5

EXPECTED DRUG:

Heroin

2 Samples Tested



Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Opium

1 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

21 Samples Tested



Matched: 21

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

4 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

Did not match: 1

Match not determined: 2

Total

147 Samples Tested



Matched: 137

Did not match: 8

Match not determined: 2

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents. 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Data represented here are collected from our partner sites across the province. Drug samples are tested using the Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometer in combination with fentanyl test strips and benzodiazepine test strips.

There is 5% fentanyl detection limit on the FTIR spectrometer (McCrae, 2019), and a drug check on any given sample consists of both the FTIR and BTNX fentanyl immunoassay test strip testing done in combination. When applicable, BTNX benzodiazepine immunoassay test strips are also used.

BCCSU gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following partners: