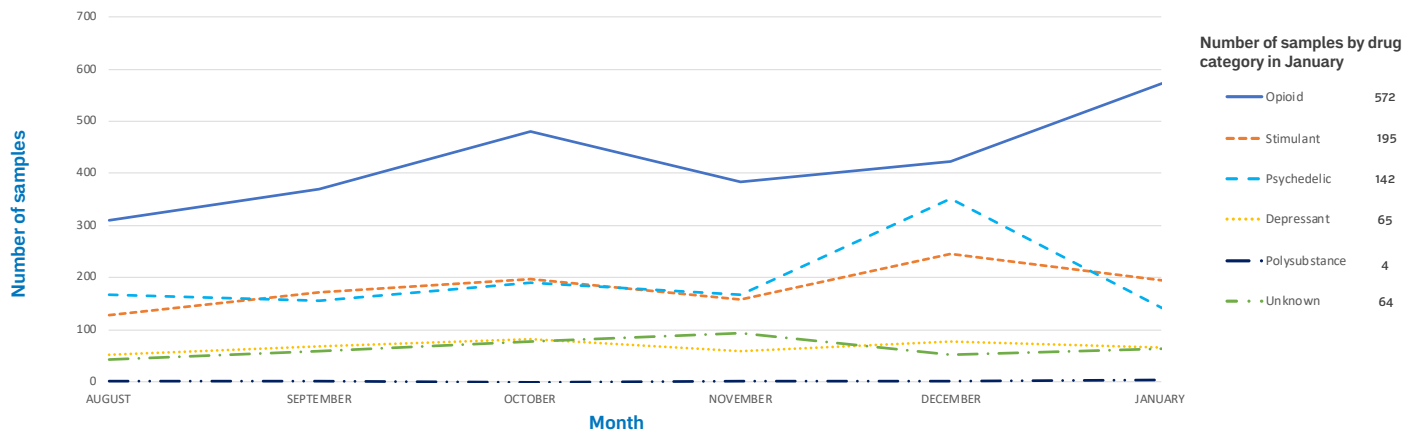


## Key Findings

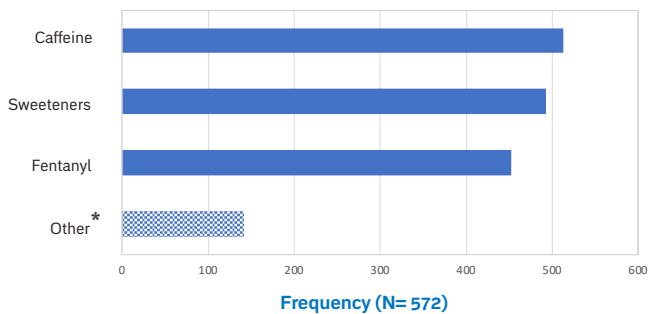
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines (20.2%) has continued on an upward trend since August.
- Several novel benzodiazepines have been identified in drug samples this month. Etizolam, bromazolam, flualprazolam, flubromazepam have been found in drugs expected to be opioids. These unregulated depressants can be significantly more potent than their regulated counterparts (e.g., diazepam (Valium), alprazolam (Xanax), clonazepam (Klonopin)).
- No stimulants or psychedelics tested positive for fentanyl this month.

## Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

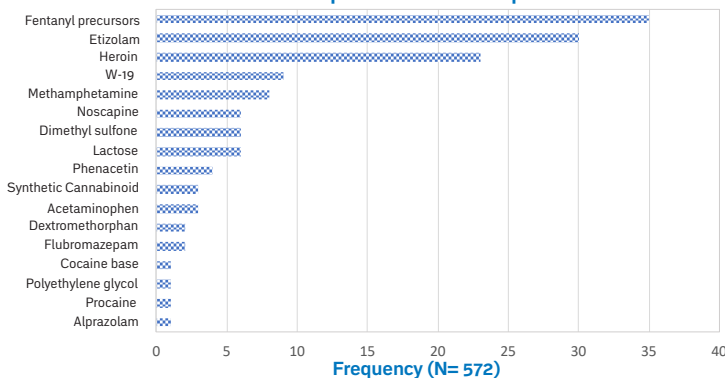


## Components found in drug samples in January

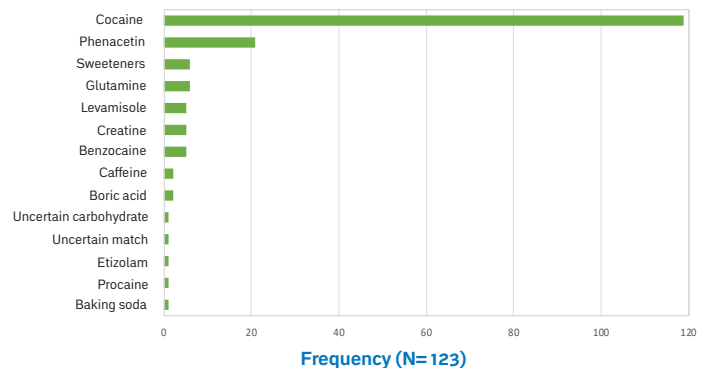
## Components in opioids



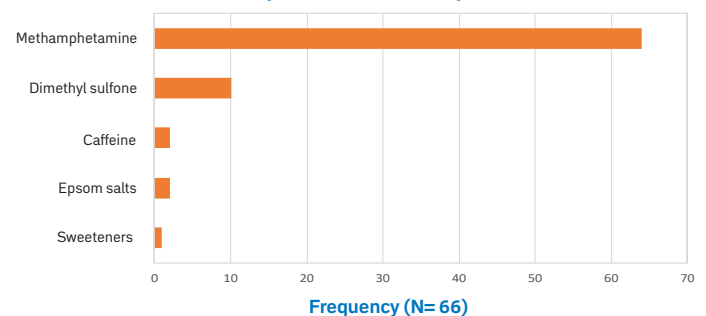
## \* Other components found in opioids

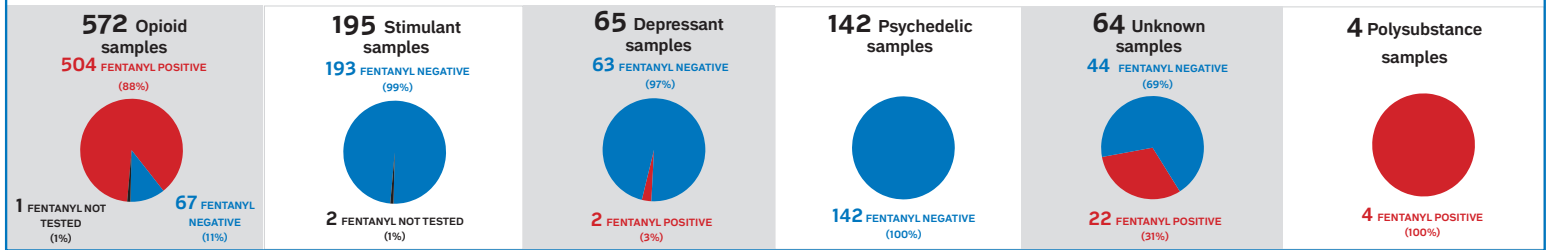


## Components in cocaine



## Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**

## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
28 January 2021- Get Your Drugs Tested, Vancouver	Hydromorphone	Microcrystalline cellulose, hydromorphone, uncertain match	Positive	Positive	DTES	Counterfeit hydromorphone pill containing very high levels of fentanyl and hydromorphone- Check your drugs!
21 January 2021- ASK Wellness, Kamloops	Down	Caffeine, mannitol, fentanyl, benzodiazepines	Positive	Positive	Kamloops	High risk of overdose with prolonged sedation. Check your drugs!
12 January 2021- Get Your Drugs Tested, Vancouver	Fentanyl	Caffeine, mannitol, fentanyl or analogue	Positive	N/A	DTES	Check your drugs for unexpected substances at any OPS!
11 January 2021- Get Your Drugs Tested, Vancouver	Fentanyl	Caffeine, W-19	Negative	Negative	Unknown	Check your drugs at any OPS and SCS for any unknown or unexpected substances!
11 January 2021- Get Your Drugs Tested, Vancouver	Fentanyl	W-19	Negative	Negative	Unknown	Effects of W-19 are unknown. Check your drugs at any OPS and SCS!
8 January 2021- ASK Wellness, Kamloops	Down	Fentanyl, AMB-FUBINACA, and may contain benzodiazepines	Positive	Positive	Kamloops	Benzos may have other side effects like hallucinations or agitation. Check your drugs!
8 January 2021- ASK Wellness, Kamloops	Down	Fentanyl and benzodiazepines	Positive	Positive	Kamloops	Check your drugs at any OPS and SCS for benzos!
8 January 2021- ASK Wellness, Kamloops	Down	Benzodiazepines, fentanyl and may contain AMB-FUBINACA	Positive	Positive	Kamloops	Check your drugs!
8 January 2021- ASK Wellness, Kamloops	Down	Etizolam, fentanyl and AMB- FUBINACA	Positive	Positive	Kamloops	High risk of overdose and AMB-FUBINACA (synthetic cannabinoid) may cause side effects such as hallucination, or agitation. May present as an atypical overdose.
8 January 2021- ASK Wellness, Vernon	Fentanyl	Caffeine, etizolam, and fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Vernon	High risk of overdose with prolonged sedation-Use at an OPS!
8 January 2021- ASK Wellness, Vernon	Fentanyl	Caffeine, mannitol, fentanyl, and AMB-FUBINACA	Positive	Positive	Vernon	Check for benzos in your drugs at any SCS or OPS!
7 January 2021- Overdose Prevention Society, Vancouver	Fentanyl	Etizolam	Negative	Positive	DTES	Benzos may cause prolonged drowsiness and decreased level of consciousness. Use at an OPS!
5 January 2021- Interior Health, Penticton	Fentanyl	Fentanyl and benzodiazepines	Positive	Positive	Penticton	High risk of overdose with prolonged sedation

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



During the month of January, **20.2%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites around BC (**99 samples of 490 tested**). Opioid samples are tested for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips. The results presented above are presumptive and tentative until confirmed by a laboratory.

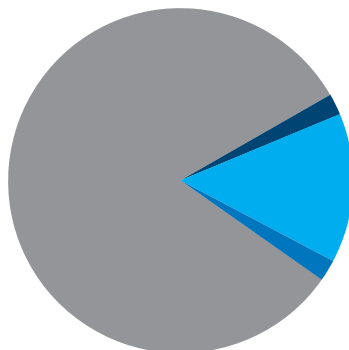
January  
2021

# Drug Checking in British Columbia

Number of samples tested by region:

Total #: 1052

860: Vancouver Coastal  
Health region (82%)



21: Fraser Health region (2%)

151: Interior Health region (14%)

20: Vancouver Island  
Health Region (2%)

## Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:  
**Depressant**

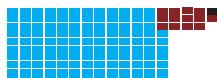
65 Samples Tested



Matched: 32  
Did not match: 33

EXPECTED DRUG:  
**Psychedelic**

142 Samples Tested



Matched: 127  
Did not match: 14  
Match not determined: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:  
**Stimulant**

195 Samples Tested



Matched: 186  
Did not match: 9

EXPECTED DRUG:  
**Polysubstance**

4 Samples Tested



Matched: 4

EXPECTED DRUG:  
**Unknown**

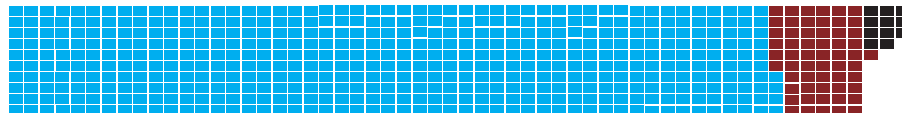
64 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 64

EXPECTED DRUG:  
**Opioid**

572 Samples Tested



Matched: 494  
Did not match: 67  
Match not determined: 11

**Total**

1052 Samples Tested



Matched: 848  
Did not match: 125  
Match not determined: 79

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







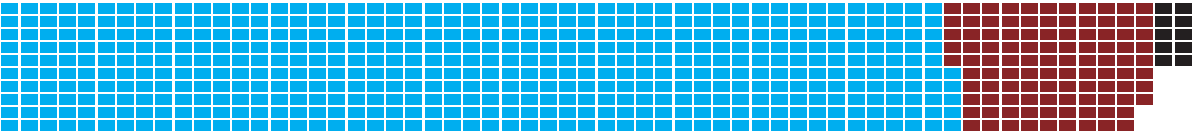
**Psychedelic may include:**  
MDMA and related,  
2C-family, tryptamines,  
ketamine, LSD

**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

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Fentanyl</b> 434 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 378 Did not match: 56</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Heroin</b> 43 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 16 Did not match: 27</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Fentanyl and Heroin</b> 5 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 2 Did not match: 3</p>
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Down</b> 91 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 85 Did not match: 6</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Pharmaceutical</b> 27 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 12 Did not match: 5 Match not determined: 10</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Opium</b> 2 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 2</p>
<p><b>Total</b> 602 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 495 Did not match: 97 Match not determined: 10</p>		

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:

