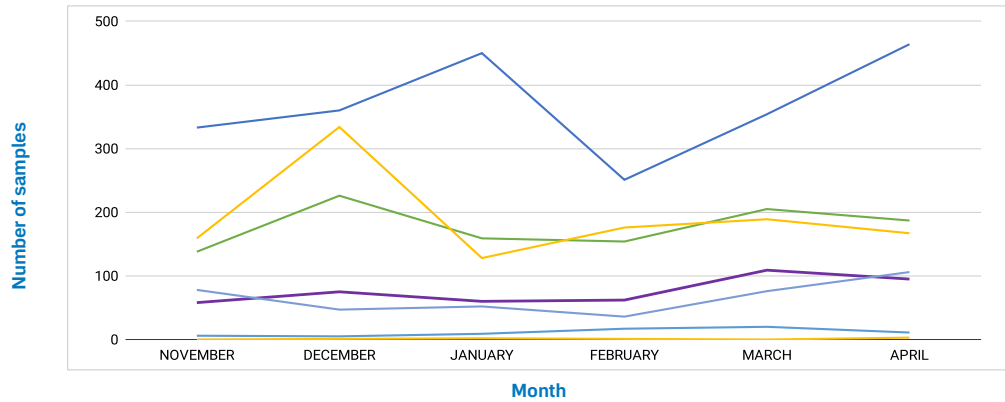


## Key Findings

- Benzodiazepine-positivity of opioids has increased to 18% from 14% in November 2020. 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. Always complement drug checking with other harm reduction measures like using at an OPS/SCS or with a buddy, doing a tester shot, and having and knowing how to use naloxone.
- Xylazine was detected in five samples of expected *down* in Vancouver. Xylazine is a veterinary sedative that may cause skin lesions when injected.
- New opioids have been detected in samples sold as fentanyl: carfentanil, para-fluorofentanyl, and isotonitazene. While carfentanil is known to be highly potent, not much information is available about the other two opioids.
- One methamphetamine sample, one cocaine sample, and one alprazolam sample tested positive for fentanyl this month. All were *down* samples misrepresented as each respective drug.

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



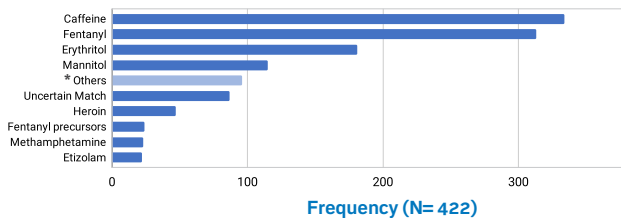
Number of samples by drug category in April

Opioid	464
Stimulant	187
Depressant	95
Psychedelic	167
Polysubstance	11
Other	3
Unknown	106

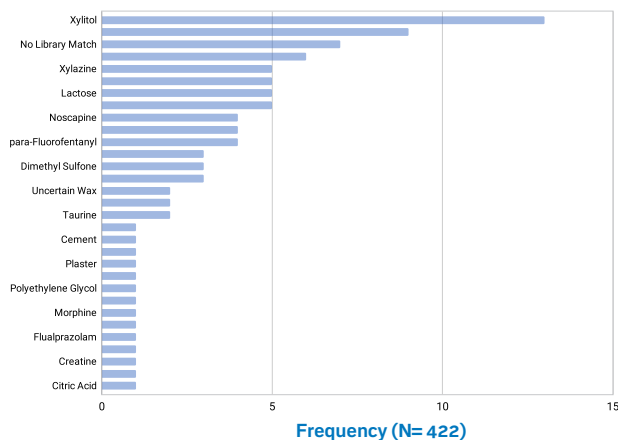
**TOTAL: 1033**

## Components found in drug samples in April

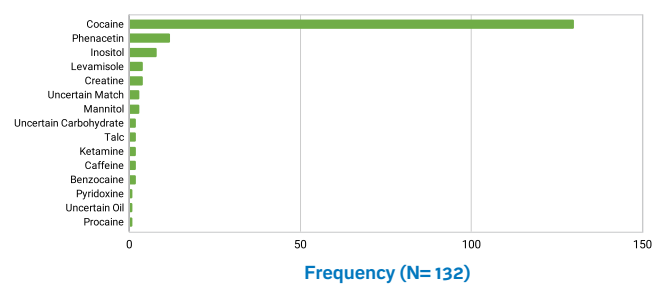
### Components in opioids



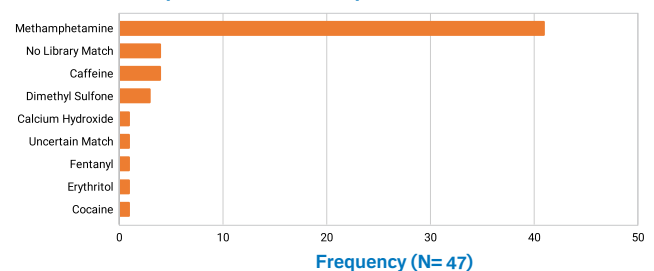
### \* Other components found in opioids



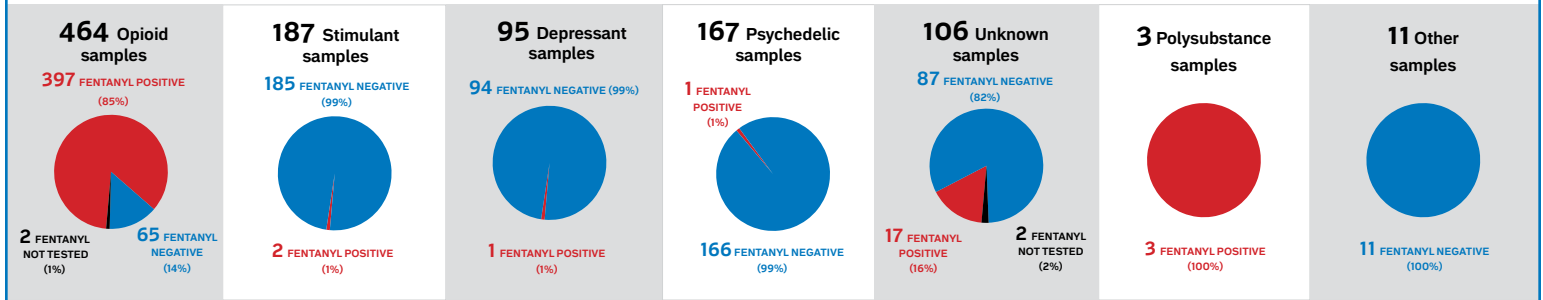
### Components in cocaine



### Components in methamphetamine



## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

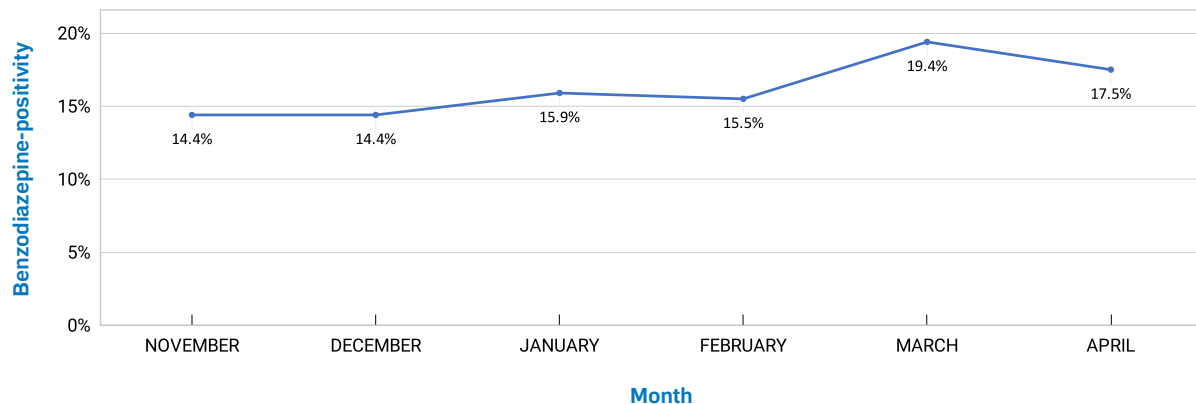


## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
12 April 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested, Vancouver	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl, Etizolam, Xylazine	Positive	Positive	Unknown	Xylazine is a veterinary tranquilizer that may complicate overdoses and is linked to skin lesions and ulcers after injecting. Ingesting multiple depressants further increases the risk of overdose.
8 April 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested, Vancouver	Crack cocaine	Fentanyl	Positive	N/A	Unknown	This substance was found and based on appearance was thought to be crack. Only after drug checking was it found to contain fentanyl with no cuts or buffs. Many drugs look alike, so get them checked to make sure!

To receive drug contamination alerts, text "alert" to (236) 999-DOPE (3673)

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



During the month of April, **17.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (**74 samples of 422 tested**).

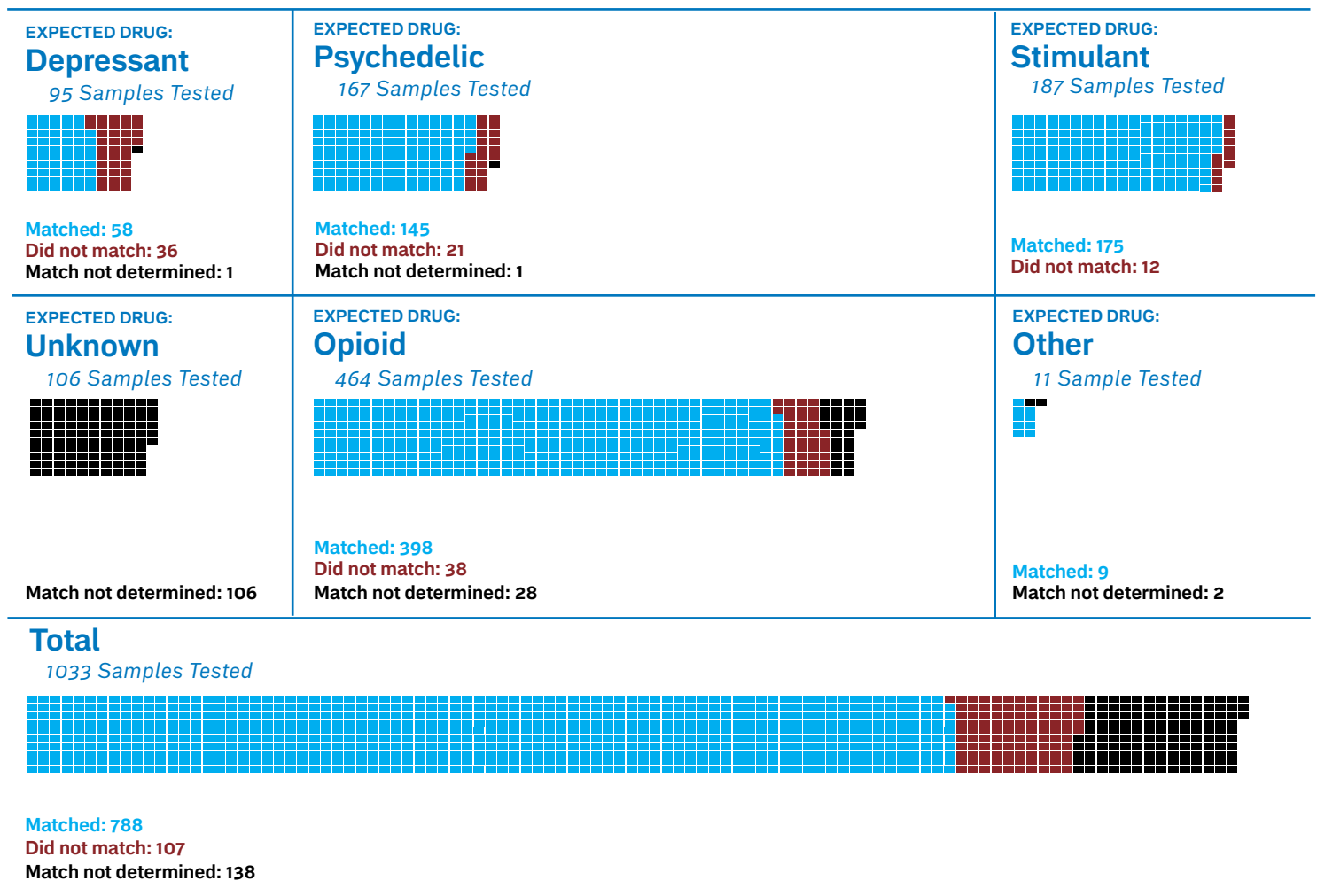
Opioid samples are tested for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips. The results presented above are presumptive and tentative until confirmed by a laboratory.

## Number of drugs checks and hours at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Get Your Drugs Tested	919
Insite	28
Overdose Prevention Society OPS	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>1033</b>

## Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking



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.

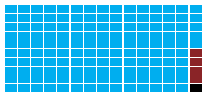
## Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Fentanyl**

150 Samples Tested



Matched: 145

Did not match: 4

Match not determined: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Heroin**

48 Samples Tested



Matched: 28

Did not match: 20

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Pharmaceutical**

42 Samples Tested



Matched: 11

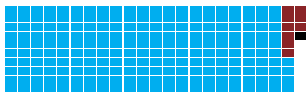
Did not match: 5

Match not determined: 26

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Down**

224 Samples Tested



Matched: 214

Did not match: 9

Match not determined: 1

**Total**

464 Samples Tested



Matched: 398

Did not match: 38

Match not determined: 28

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:

