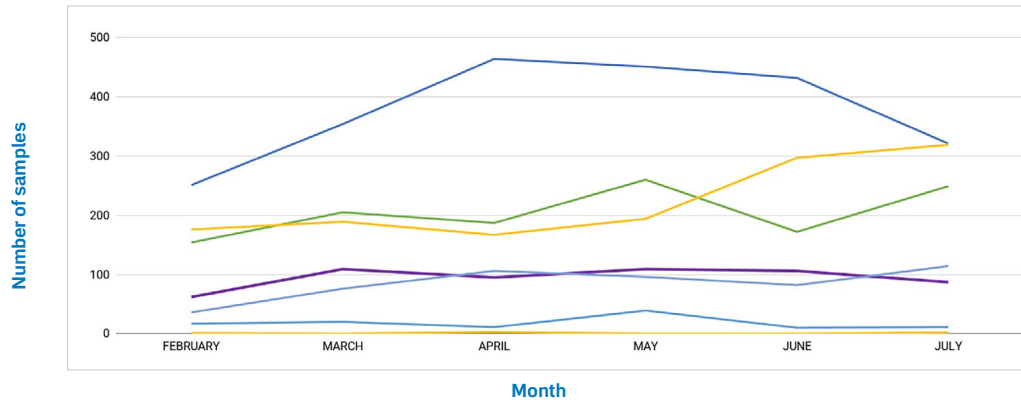


## Key Findings

- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines (17%) has increased after decreasing for the past three months. 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.
- Two alerts were issued about drugs being sold as something else (flualprazolam sold as cocaine and xylazine sold as MDMA). Many drugs look alike—drug checking can help you confirm what you think you have.
- Carfentanil is increasingly being detected by point-of-care and confirmatory drug checking in Vancouver Coastal Health. When carfentanil is detected, fentanyl is detected alongside it over half of the time. Fentanyl test strips may detect carfentanil if the concentration is high enough, but cannot differentiate it from regular fentanyl.

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



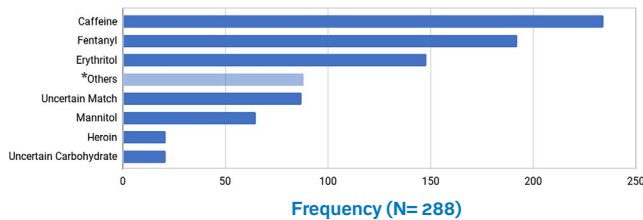
Number of samples by drug category in July

Opioid	321
Stimulant	249
Depressant	87
Psychedelic	319
Polysubstance	2
Other	11
Unknown	114

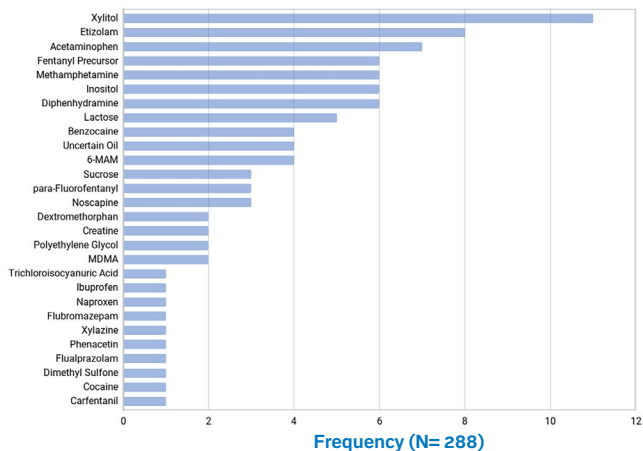
**TOTAL: 1103**

## Components found in drug samples in July

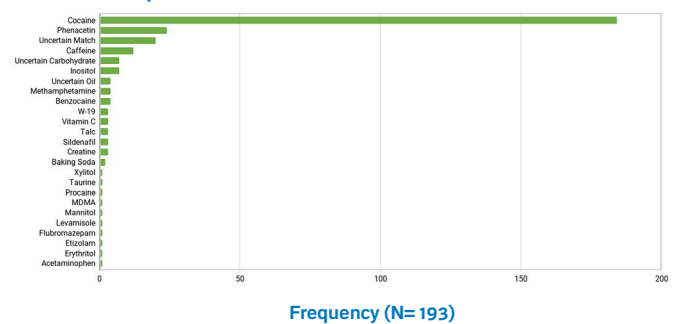
### Components in opioids



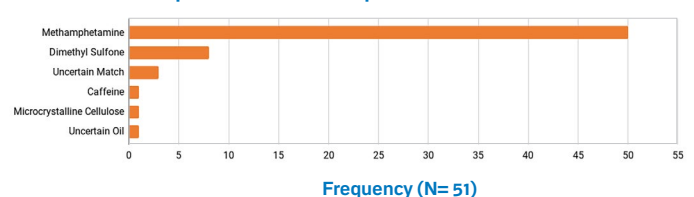
### \* Other components found in opioids



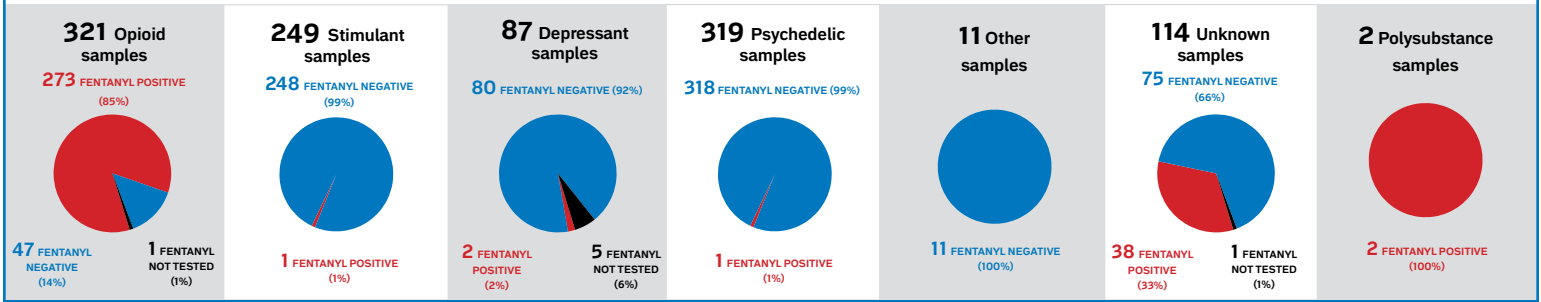
### Components in cocaine



### Components in methamphetamine



## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

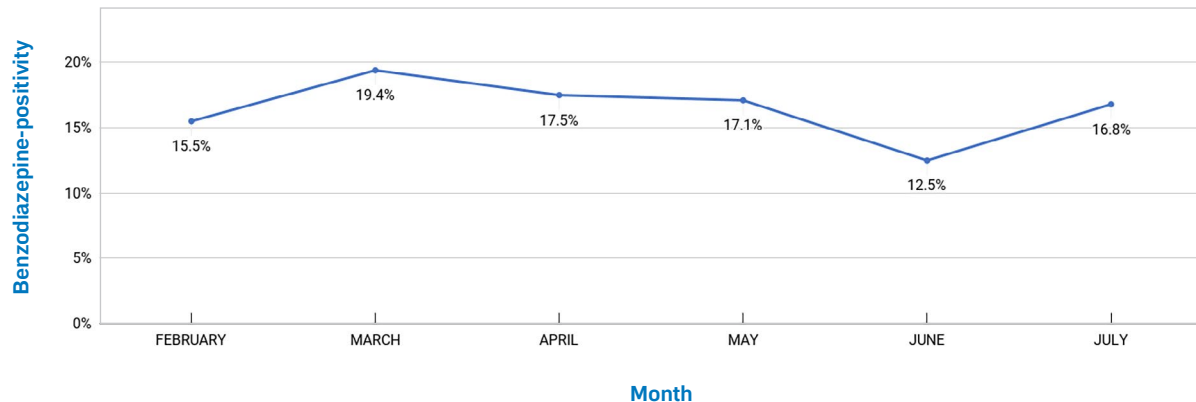


## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
July 23 2021 Insite Vancouver	Xanax (Alprazolam)	Microcrystalline cellulose	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Counterfeit Xanax may contain a variety of different drugs other than the expected alprazolam. Drug checking Xanax can help you avoid ingesting unexpected adulterants.
July 21 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested Vancouver	Cocaine	Flubromazepam	Negative	Positive	Vancouver	Benzodiazepines can cause intense drowsiness. Many drugs are white powders, so always get your drugs checked to confirm what you think you have.
July 19 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested Vancouver	MDMA	Xylazine	Negative	N/A	Unknown	Checking your drugs before you use them can remove your risk of exposure to harmful adulterants. Not much is known about the effect of xylazine in humans since it is only used in veterinary medicine.

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 July, **16.8%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (**54 samples of 321 checked**).

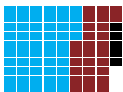
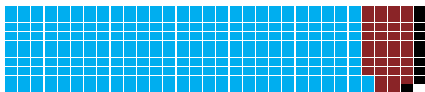
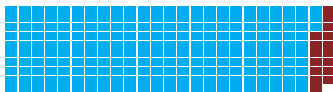

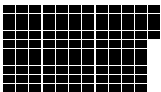
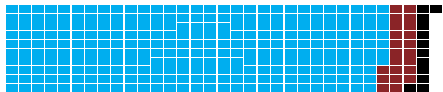

Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are derived from both of these technologies and are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

## Number of drugs checks and hours at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Get Your Drugs Tested	930
Insite	19
Overdose Prevention Society OPS	137
Molson OPS	7
DULF Event	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>1103</b>

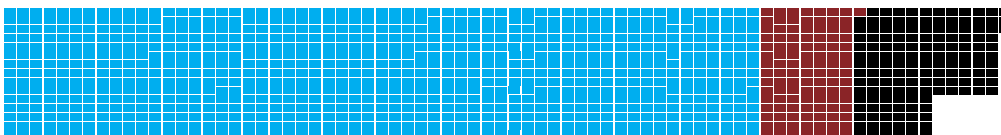
## Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Depressant</b> 87 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 54 Did not match: 28 Match not determined: 5</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Psychedelic</b> 319 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 272 Did not match: 37 Match not determined: 10</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Stimulant</b> 249 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 233 Did not match: 16</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Polysubstance</b> 2 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 2</p>
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Unknown</b> 114 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Match not determined: 114</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Opioid</b> 321 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 287 Did not match: 22 Match not determined: 12</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Other</b> 11 Sample Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 7 Did not match: 3 Match not determined: 1</p>	

### Total

1103 Samples Tested



Matched: 855  
Did not match: 106  
Match not determined: 142

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




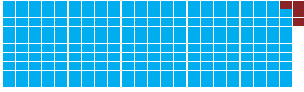


**Psychedelic may include:**  
MDMA and related,  
2C-family, tryptamines,  
ketamine, LSD

**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.

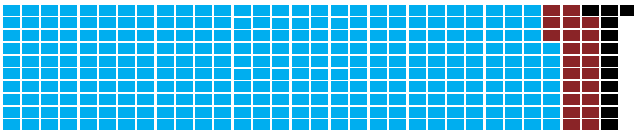
## Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Fentanyl</b> 140 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 134 Did not match: 4 Match not determined: 2</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Heroin</b> 25 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 15 Did not match: 2 Match not determined: 8</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Pharmaceutical</b> 30 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 18 Did not match: 3 Match not determined: 9</p>
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Down</b> 123 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 119 Did not match: 4 Match not determined: 0</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Other Opioid</b> 2 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1 Did not match: 1 Match not determined: 0</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Opium</b> 1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1 Did not match: 0 Match not determined: 0</p>

### Total

321 Samples Tested



Matched: 287  
Did not match: 22  
Match not determined: 12

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:

