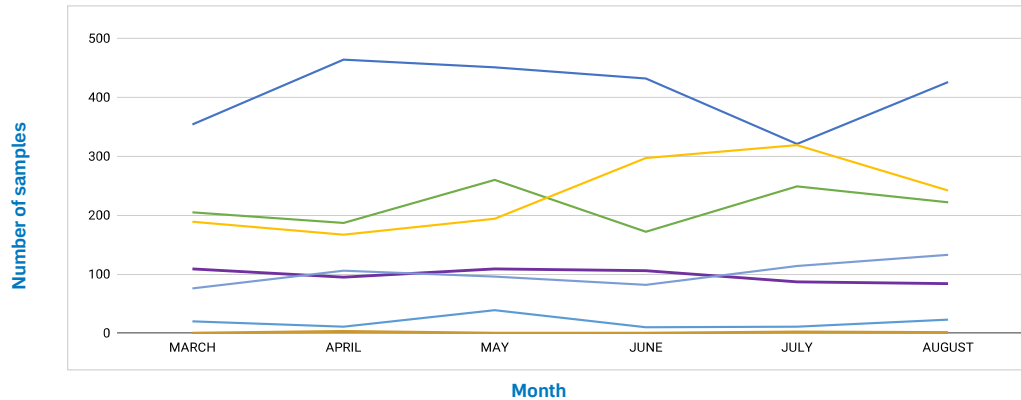


## Key Findings

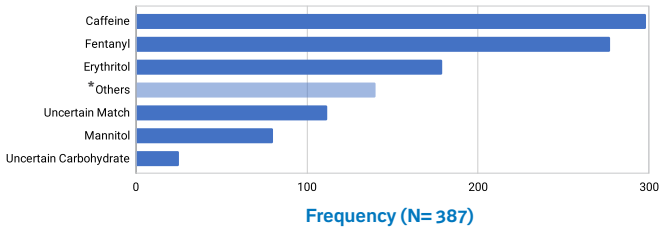
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines (21%, 88 of 426 samples) increased to its highest point since the start of this project. Etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies. This means that the true rate may be higher than reported here.
- Two alerts were issued about drugs being sold as something else (etizolam sold as cocaine and 3-MeO-PCP sold as 2C-B). 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

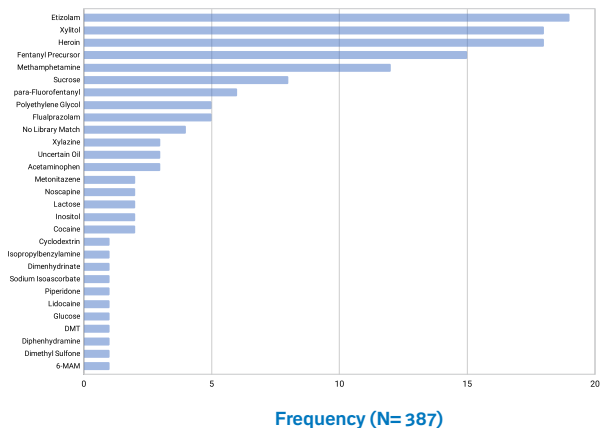


## Components found in drug samples in August

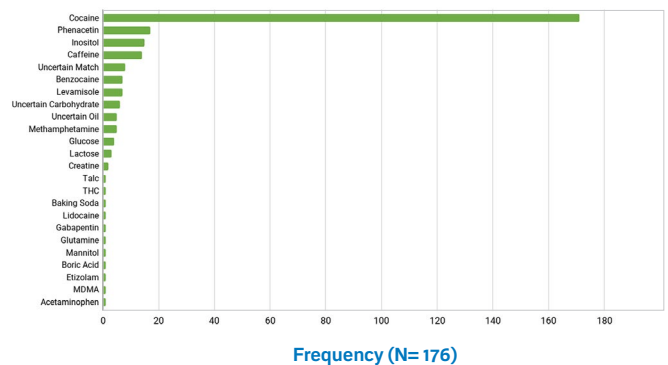
### Components in opioids



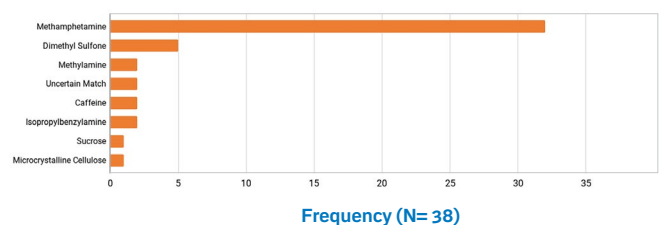
### \* Other components found in opioids



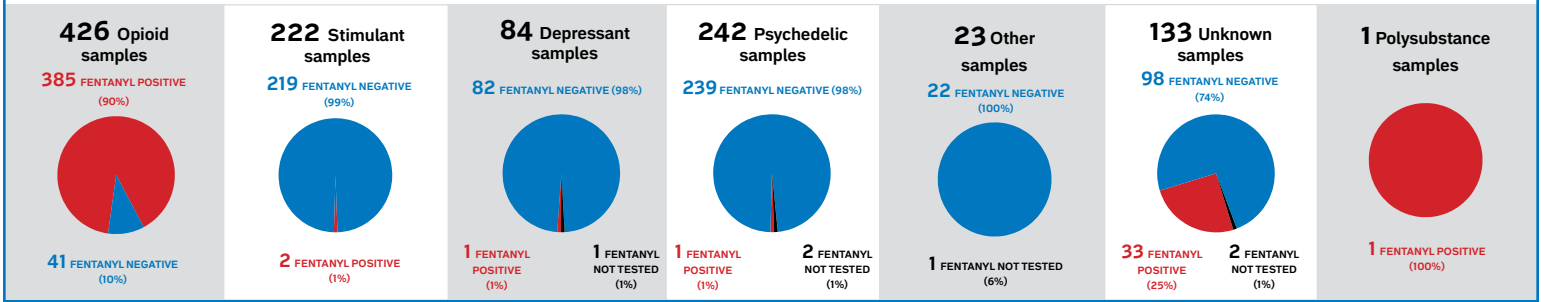
### Components in cocaine



### Components in methamphetamine



## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

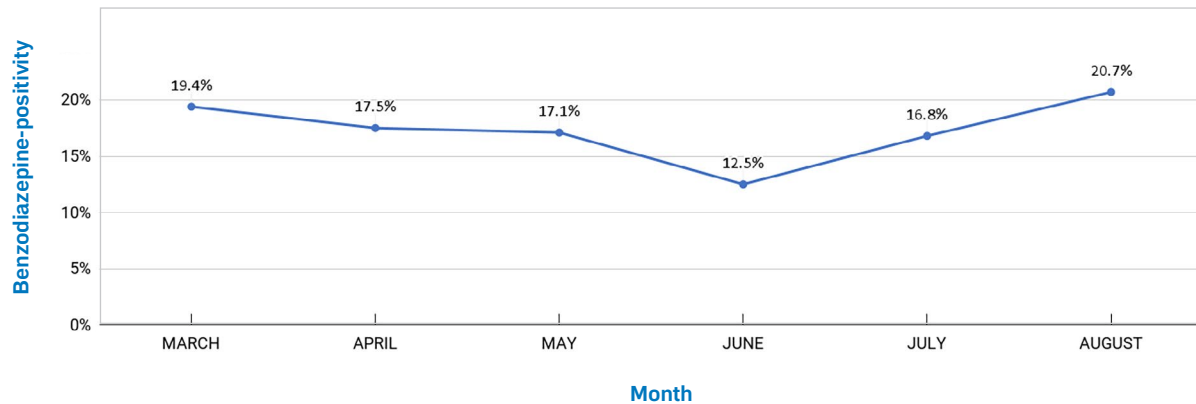


## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
August 30, 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested Vancouver	2C-B	Dimethyl Sulfone, 3-MeO-PCP, MDMA, Uncertain match	Positive	Negative	Vancouver	3-MeO-PCP can cause psychosis in high doses and fentanyl can cause opioid toxicity especially for opioid-naïve individuals.
August 24, 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested Vancouver	Down (Unknown Opioid)	Flualprazolam, Fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Flualprazolam is a potent benzodiazepine that may cause drowsiness, especially when consumed unintentionally.
August 11, 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested Vancouver	Cocaine	Etizolam	Negative	Positive	Vancouver	Etizolam is a benzodiazepine derivative that may cause drowsiness, especially when consumed unintentionally.

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

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



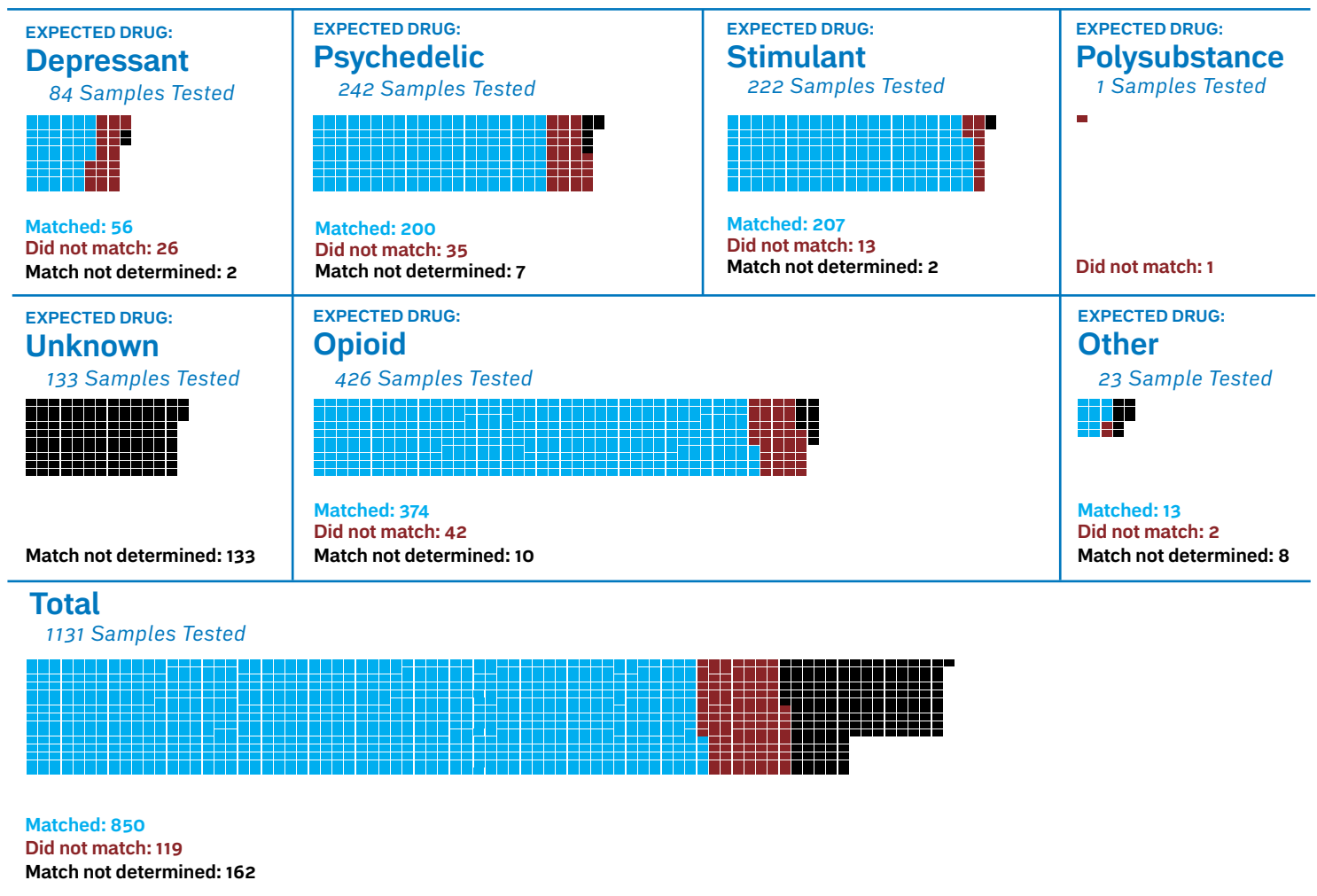
During the month of August, **20.7%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**88 samples of 426 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. 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	972
Insite	24
Overdose Prevention Society OPS	111
Molson OPS	19
Overdose Awareness Day	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1131</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

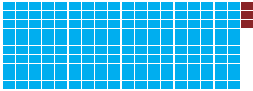





**Psychedelic may include:**  
MDMA and related,  
2C-family, tryptamines,  
ketamine, LSD

**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.

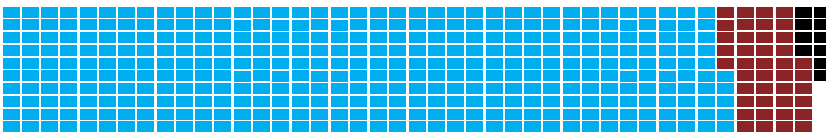
## Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Fentanyl</b> 183 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 180 Did not match: 3</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Heroin</b> 30 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 14 Did not match: 16</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Pharmaceutical</b> 37 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 15 Did not match: 13 Match not determined: 9</p>
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Down</b> 172 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 164 Did not match: 7 Match not determined: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Other Opioid</b> 1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Match not determined: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Opium</b> 1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1</p>

### Total

426 Samples Tested



Matched: 375  
Did not match: 41  
Match not determined: 10

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:

