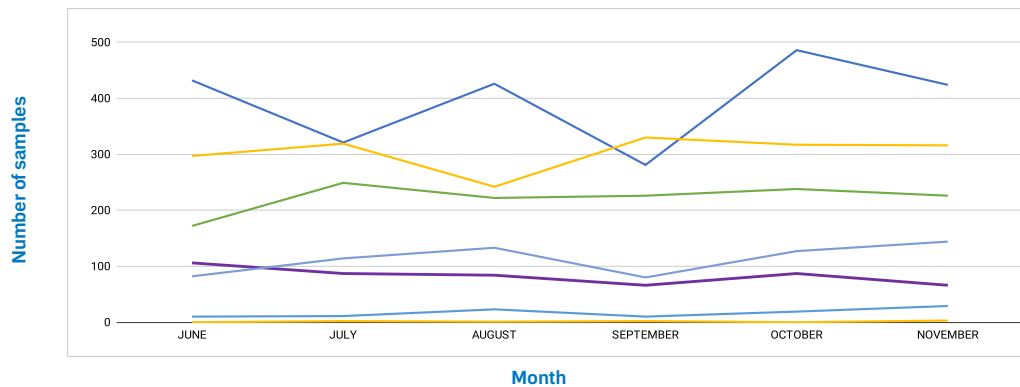


## Key Findings

- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines (23%, 99 of 424 samples) fell slightly from last month to the second highest level since the start of the 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.
- 4 depressant samples (2 flualprazolam, 1 alprazolam/Xanax, 1 lorazepam/Ativan) and 2 stimulant samples (1 cocaine & 1 methamphetamine) tested positive for fentanyl this month.
- Benzodiazepines confirmed in expected opioid samples in the last 3 months included etizolam, flualprazolam, flubromazolam, norfludiazepam, and clonazolam. These are all potent unregulated benzodiazepines.
- Novel opioids detected by confirmatory testing in November include para-fluorofentanyl, para-bromofentanyl, carfentanil, and metonitazene.

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



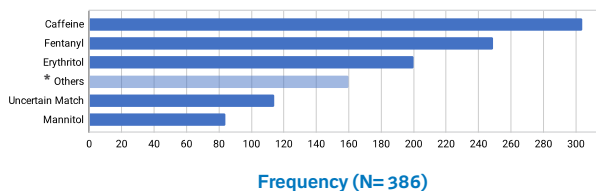
Number of samples by drug category in November

Opioid	424
Stimulant	226
Depressant	66
Psychedelic	316
Other	29
Polysubstance	3
Unknown	144

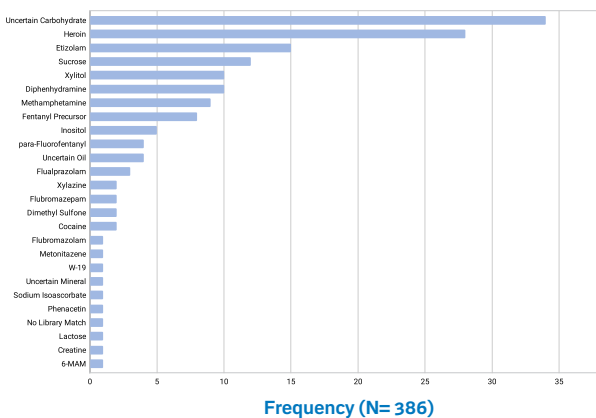
**TOTAL: 1208**

## Components found in drug samples in November

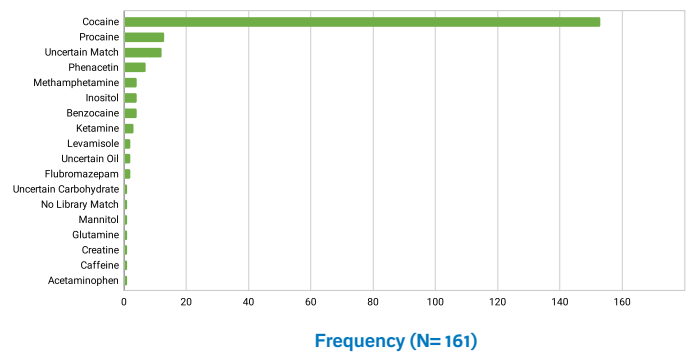
### Components in opioids



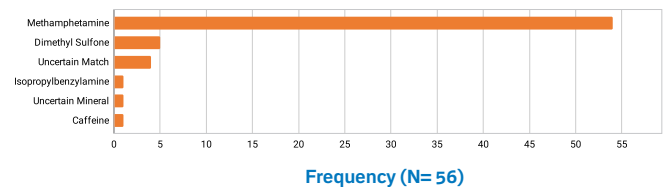
### \* Other components found in opioids



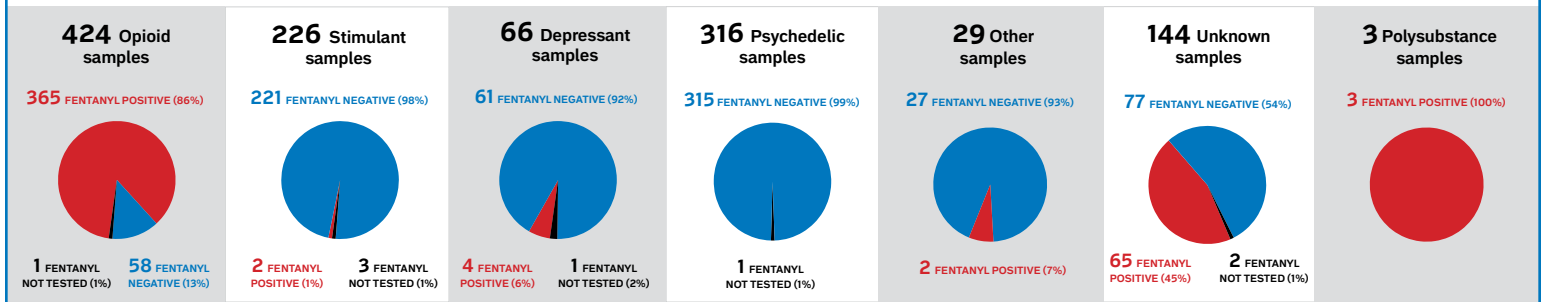
### Components in cocaine



### Components in methamphetamine



## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

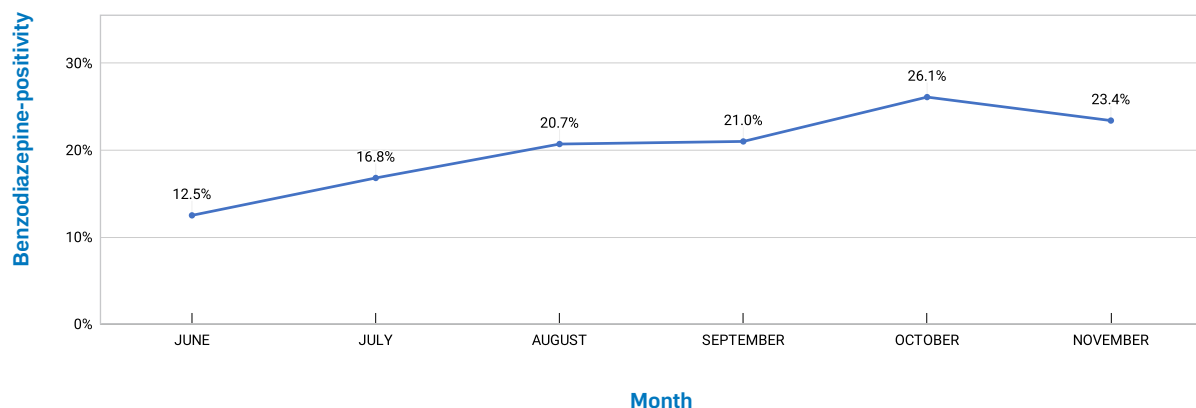


## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
November 2, 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested Vancouver	Cocaine	Flubromazepam	Negative	Positive	Vancouver	Flubromazepam is a new benzodiazepine with limited information on its toxicity and effects.
November 16, 2021 Overdose Prevention Society, Vancouver	Down or fentanyl	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl, Flualprazolam	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Flualprazolam is a potent benzodiazepine that can cause blackouts and when combined with opioids, increases the risk of overdose.
November 23, 2021 Overdose Prevention Society, Vancouver	Down or fentanyl	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Combining depressants such as opioids and benzodiazepines greatly increases your risk of overdose.
November 25, 2021 Get Your Drugs Tested Vancouver	Ketamine	Xylazine	Negative	Negative	Vancouver	Xylazine is an animal tranquilizer with sedative effects and is linked to soft tissue injury.

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

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




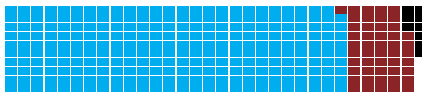

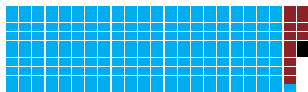
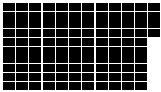


During the month of November, **23%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**99 samples of 424 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. 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	996
Insite	61
Overdose Prevention Society	144
Molson OPS	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,208</b>

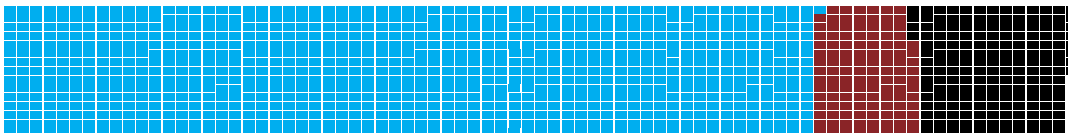
## Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Depressant</b> 66 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 43 Did not match: 21 Match not determined: 2</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Psychedelic</b> 316 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 259 Did not match: 48 Match not determined: 9</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Polysubstance</b> 3 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 2 Did not match: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Stimulant</b> 226 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 211 Did not match: 13 Match not determined: 2</p>
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Unknown</b> 144 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Match not determined: 144</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Opioid</b> 424 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 379 Did not match: 33 Match not determined: 12</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Other</b> 29 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 12 Did not match: 9 Match not determined: 8</p>	

### Total

1,208 Samples Tested



Matched: 906  
Did not match: 125  
Match not determined: 177

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

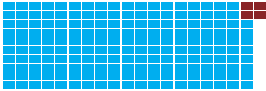


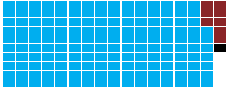



**Psychedelic may include:**  
MDMA and related,  
2C-family, tryptamines,  
ketamine, LSD

**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.

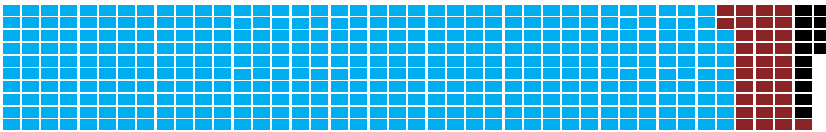
## Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Fentanyl</b> 192 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 188 Did not match: 4</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Heroin</b> 25 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 17 Did not match: 8</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Fentanyl and Heroin</b> 3 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 2 Did not match: 1</p>	
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Down</b> 166 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 157 Did not match: 8 Match not determined: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Other Opioid</b> 2 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Did not match: 1 Match not determined: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Pharmaceutical</b> 31 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 9 Did not match: 11 Match not determined: 11</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: <b>Opium</b> 5 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 5</p>

### Total

424 Samples Tested



Matched: 379  
Did not match: 33  
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:

