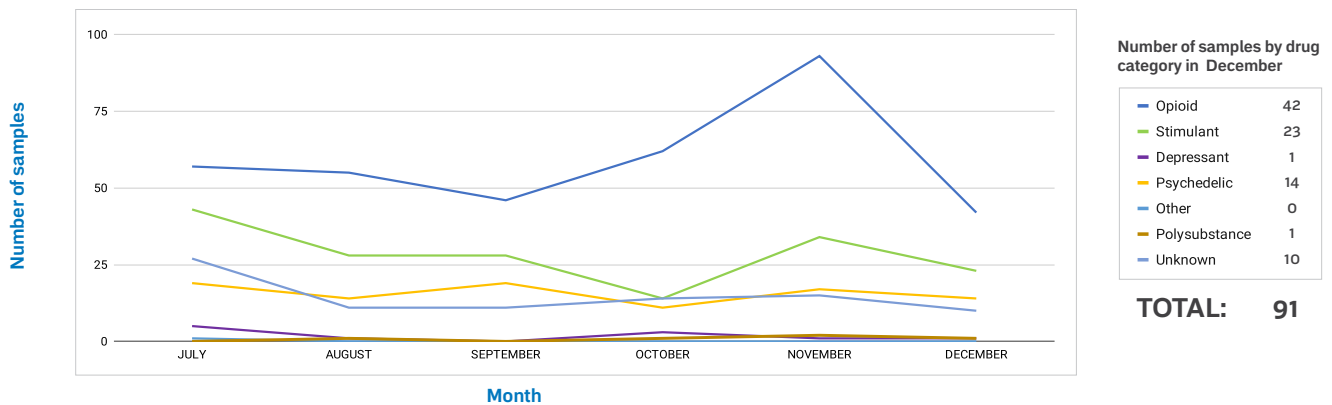


Key Findings

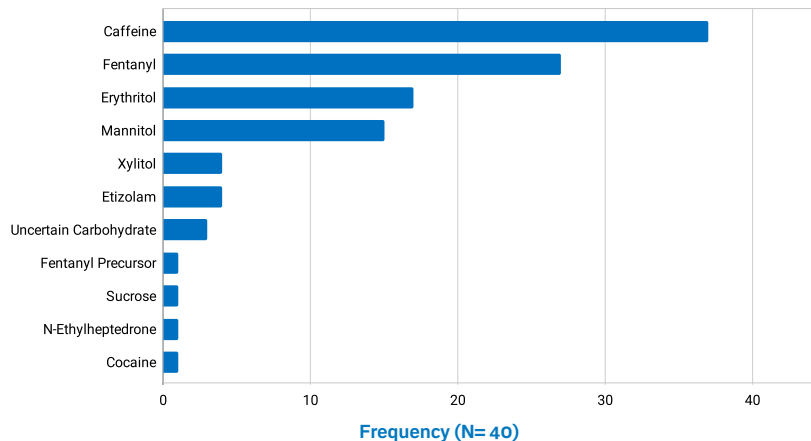
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region fell slightly (64%, 27 of 42 samples) from last month, but trends may be hard to infer due to the small number of samples over a large region. Etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies. This means that the true rate may be higher than reported here.
- 1 samples of cocaine tested positive for fentanyl and an alert was issued.
- Drug checking is available in many different communities in the Interior Health region. For updated times and locations, visit our [website](#).

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

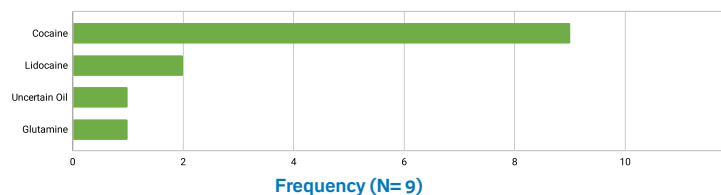


Components found in drug samples in December

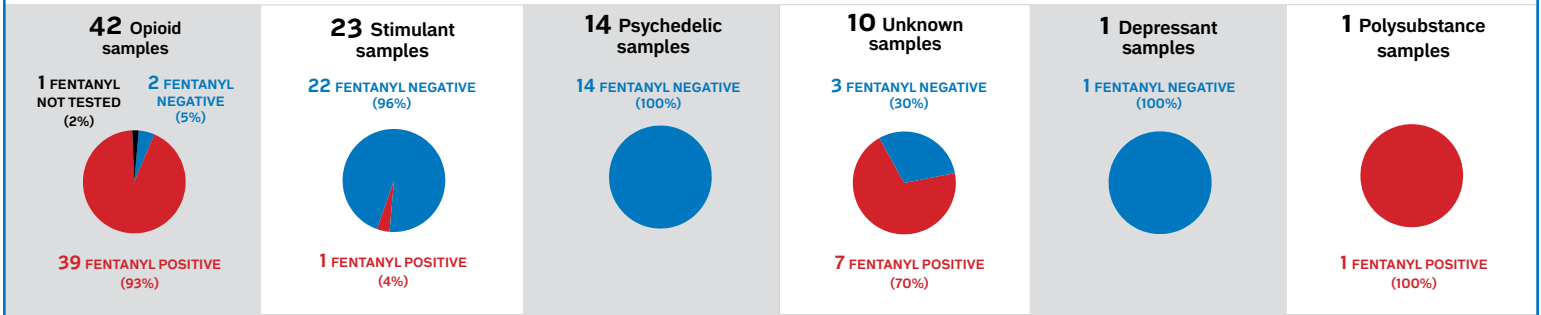
Components in opioids



Components in Cocaine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

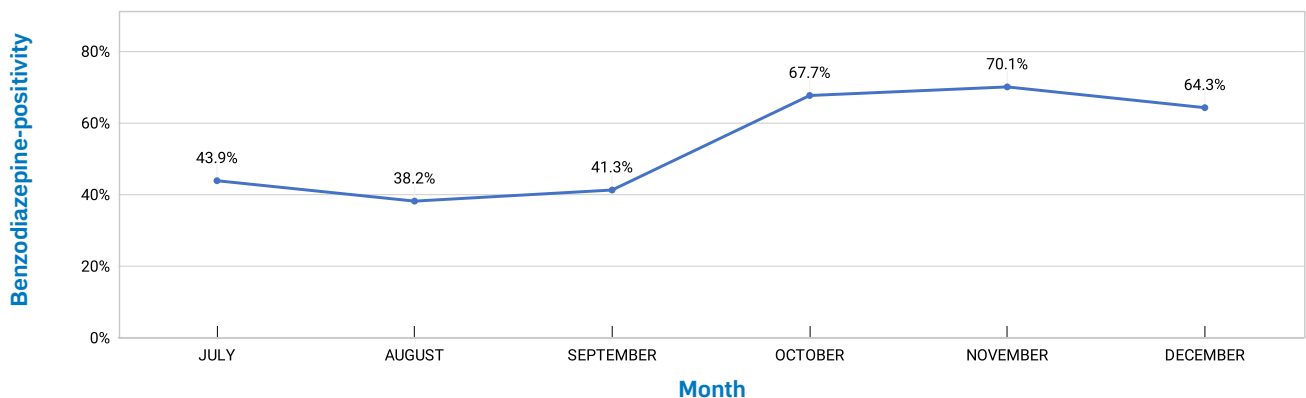


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
December 2, 2021 ANKORS West Kootenay	Fentanyl and down	Various components including carfentanil, flualprazolam	Positive	Positive	West Kootenays/ Kootenay Boundary	This general alert of describes a trend of toxic drugs associated with increased risk of overdose.
December 21, 2021 ANKORS West Kootenays	Fentanyl and down	Various components including carfentanil, flualprazolam	Positive	Positive	West Kootenays	Reissued: this general alert of describes a trend of toxic drugs associated with increased risk of overdose.
December 29, 2021 ANKORS Nelson	Cocaine	Cocaine HCl	Positive	Negative	Nelson	Overdose risk is very high when stimulants are contaminated with fentanyl.

For information about public health alerts in the Interior Health region, please visit:
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Leadership/MHQ/Pages/PHEmergency.aspx>

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










During the month of December, **64.3%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**27 samples of 42 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 at each site

Organization	City/Town	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS	Nelson	38
	Trail	3
	Cranbrook	5
ASK Wellness	Kamloops	11
	Penticton	20
UBC Okanagan	Kelowna	7
	Vernon	7
Total		91

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Psychedelic</p> <p>14 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 9 Did not match: 3 Match not determined: 2</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Stimulant</p> <p>23 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 21 Did not match: 2</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Polysubstance</p> <p>1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1</p>
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Opioid</p> <p>42 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 37 Did not match: 4 Match not determined: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Unknown</p> <p>10 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Match not determined: 10</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Depressant</p> <p>1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1</p>
<p>Total</p> <p>91 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 69 Did not match: 9 Match not determined: 13</p>		

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

6 Samples Tested



Matched: 5

Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Heroin

2 Samples Tested



Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

32 Samples Tested



Matched: 32

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

2 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

Did not match: 1

Total

42 Samples Tested



Matched: 38

Did not match: 4

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: