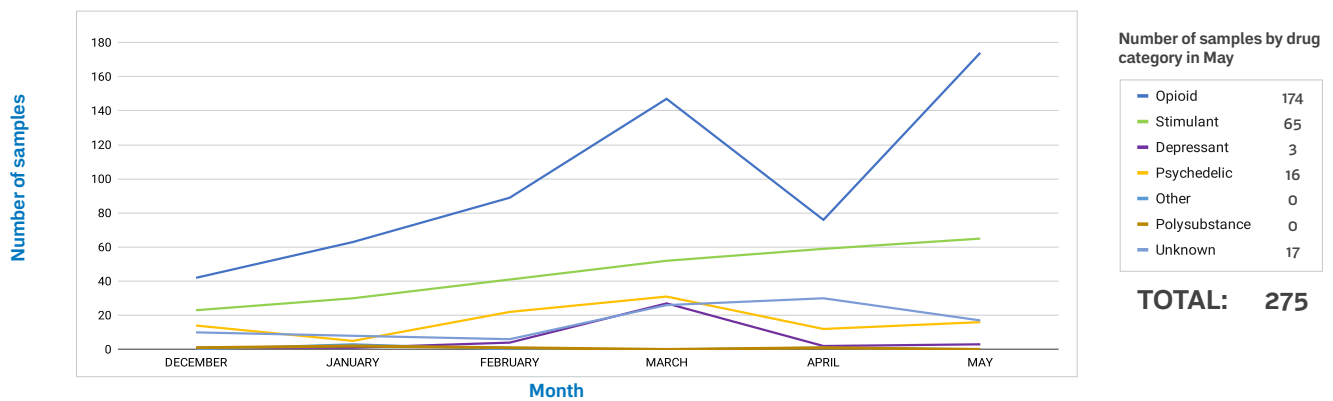


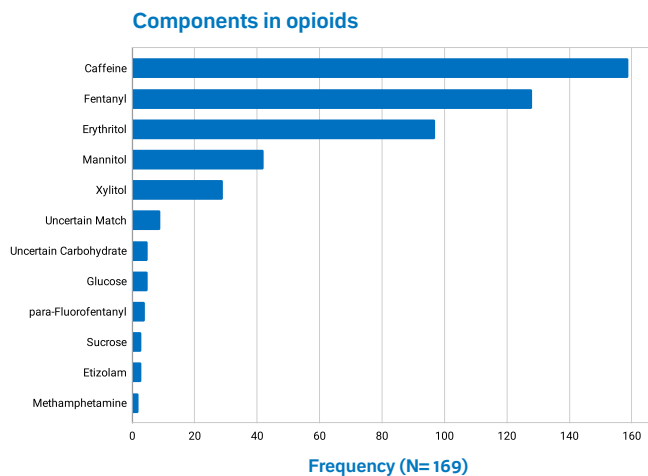
Key Findings

- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region remained high (64.9%, 113 of 174 samples), but trends may be hard to infer due to the large geographic 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.
- The fentanyl analogue para-fluorofentanyl is appearing in down more frequently. Para-fluorofentanyl is believed to be less potent than fentanyl and is accurately detected with fentanyl test strips.
- Drug checking is available in many different communities in the Interior Health region. For updated times and locations, visit our [Interior Health's drug checking website](#).

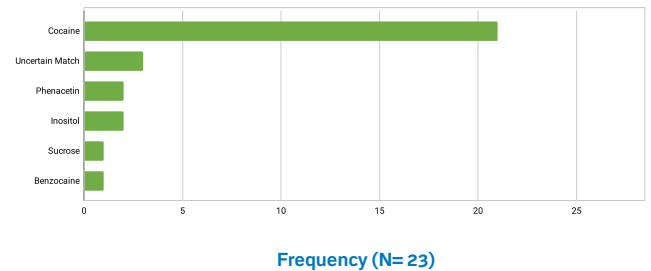
Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



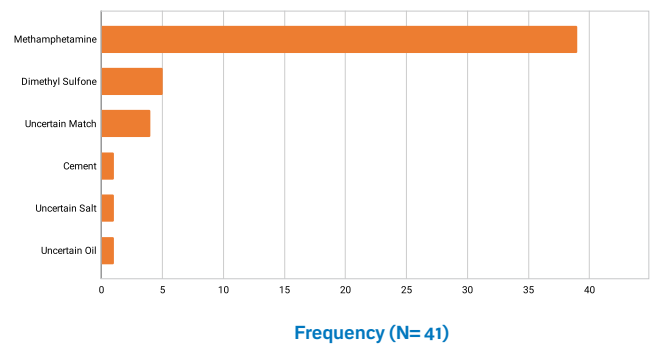
Components found in drug samples in May



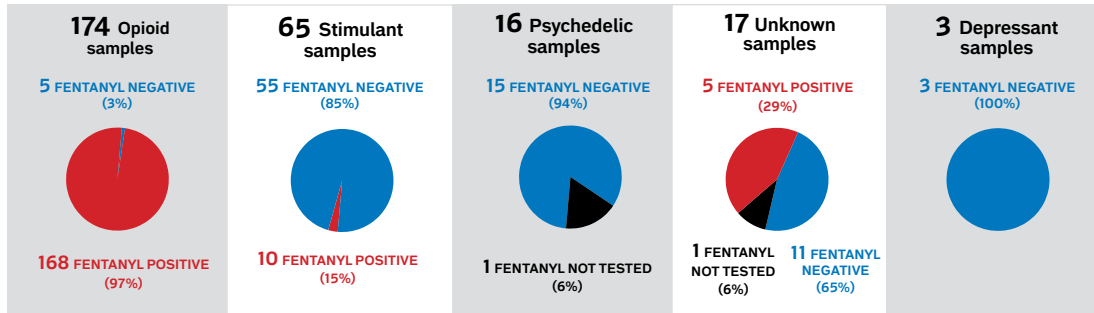
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



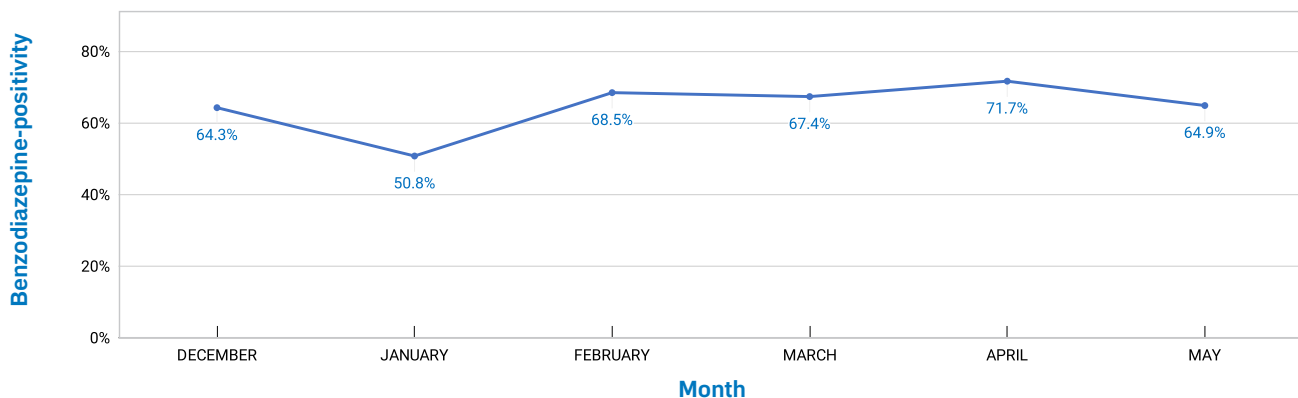
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
May 5 2022 ASK Wellness Merritt	Down/Fentanyl	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Merritt	There is a high risk of overdose when down contains a high concentration of fentanyl and benzodiazepines.
May 25 2022 ANKORS Merritt	Down/Fentanyl	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl, Flualprazolam, Carfentanil	Positive	Positive	Nelson	These results are from a partnered laboratory. There is a high risk of overdose when carfentanil is consumed.

Health authorities and community organizations issue further toxic drug alerts from sources other than drug checking. See their respective websites or social media accounts for more alerts.

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 May, **64.9%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**113 samples of 174 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	46
	Castlegar	2
	Trail	14
	Grand Forks	28
	Cranbrook	29
ASK Wellness	Kamloops	29
	Penticton	54
	Merritt	10
UBCO Hart	Kelowna	42
	Vernon	21
Total		275

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Psychedelic

16 Samples Tested



Matched: 13

Did not match: 2

Match not determined: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Stimulant

65 Samples Tested



Matched: 60

Did not match: 5

EXPECTED DRUG:

Depressant

3 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Opioid

174 Samples Tested



Matched: 165

Did not match: 5

Match not determined: 4

EXPECTED DRUG:

Unknown

17 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 17

Total

275 Samples Tested



Matched: 239

Did not match: 14

Match not determined: 22

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

113 Samples Tested



Matched: 112
Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Heroin

3 Samples Tested



Matched: 1
Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

53 Samples Tested



Matched: 52
Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Other Opioid

1 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

4 Samples Tested



Did not match: 1
Match not determined: 3

Total

174 Samples Tested



Matched: 165
Did not match: 5
Match not determined: 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: