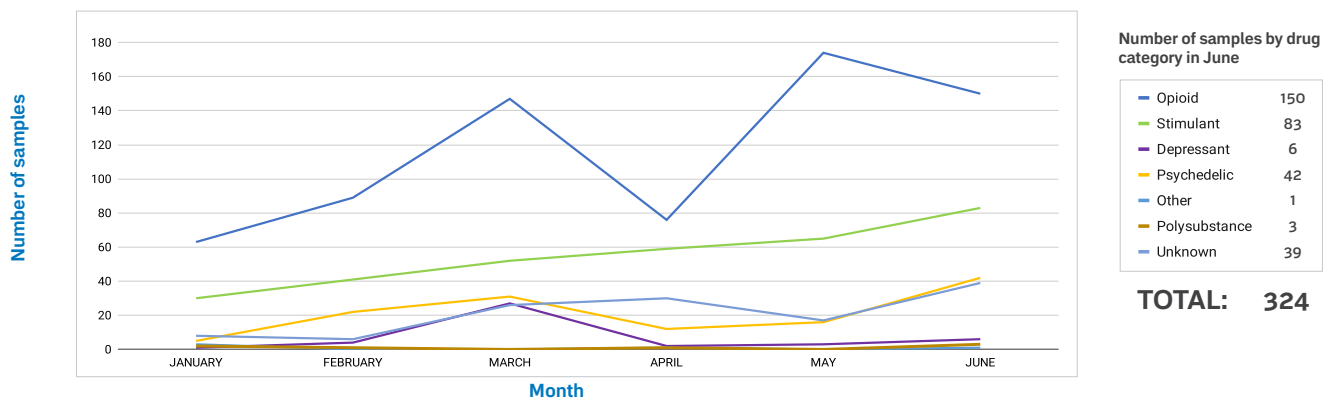


Key Findings

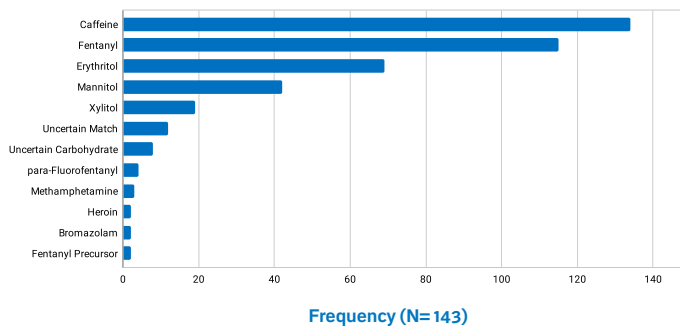
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region remained high (72.0%, 108 of 150 samples), but trends may be hard to infer due the large geographic region. Etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies. This means 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

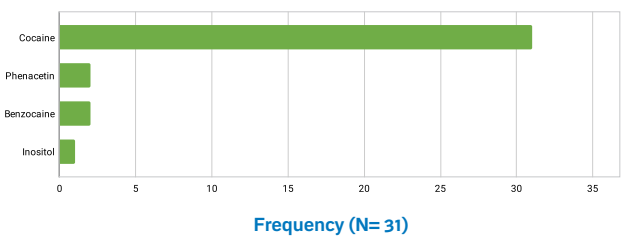


Components found in drug samples in June

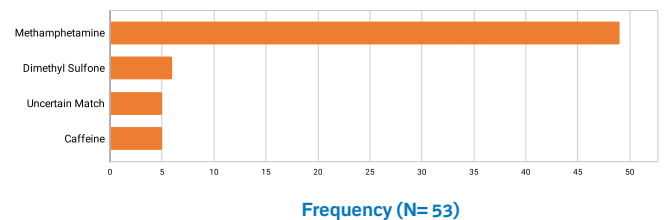
Components in opioids



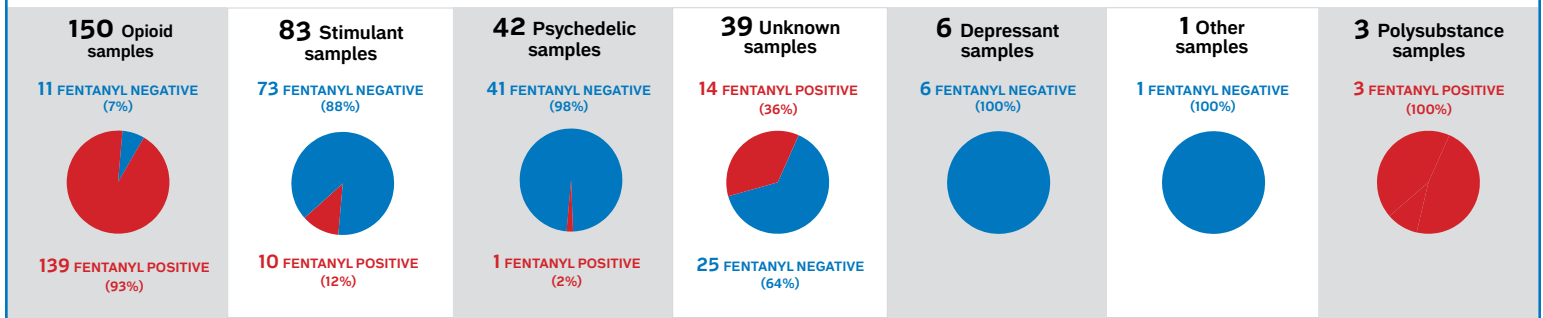
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



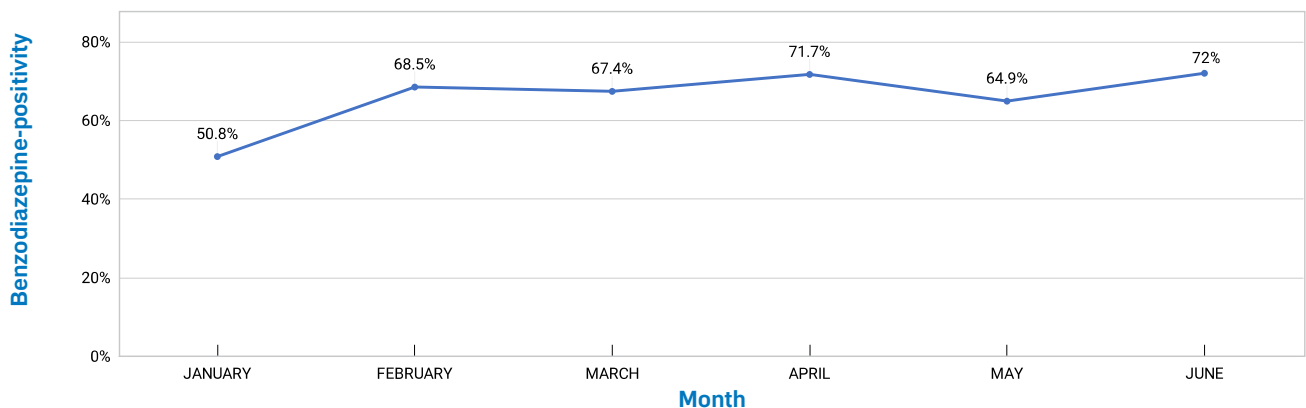
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
June 1 2022 Kelowna	Down/Fentanyl	Caffeine, Fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Kelowna	There is a high risk of overdose when down contains a high concentration of fentanyl and benzodiazepines.
June 3 2022 Vernon & Kelowna	Methamphetamine	Methamphetamine	Negative	Positive	Various communities	Multiple samples of methamphetamine tested positive for benzodiazepines with test strips. More information is needed as to why this is occurring.
June 10 2022 Penticton	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl	Positive	Negative	Penticton	Extremely high concentration of fentanyl in samples sold as down pose an increased risk of overdose.

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



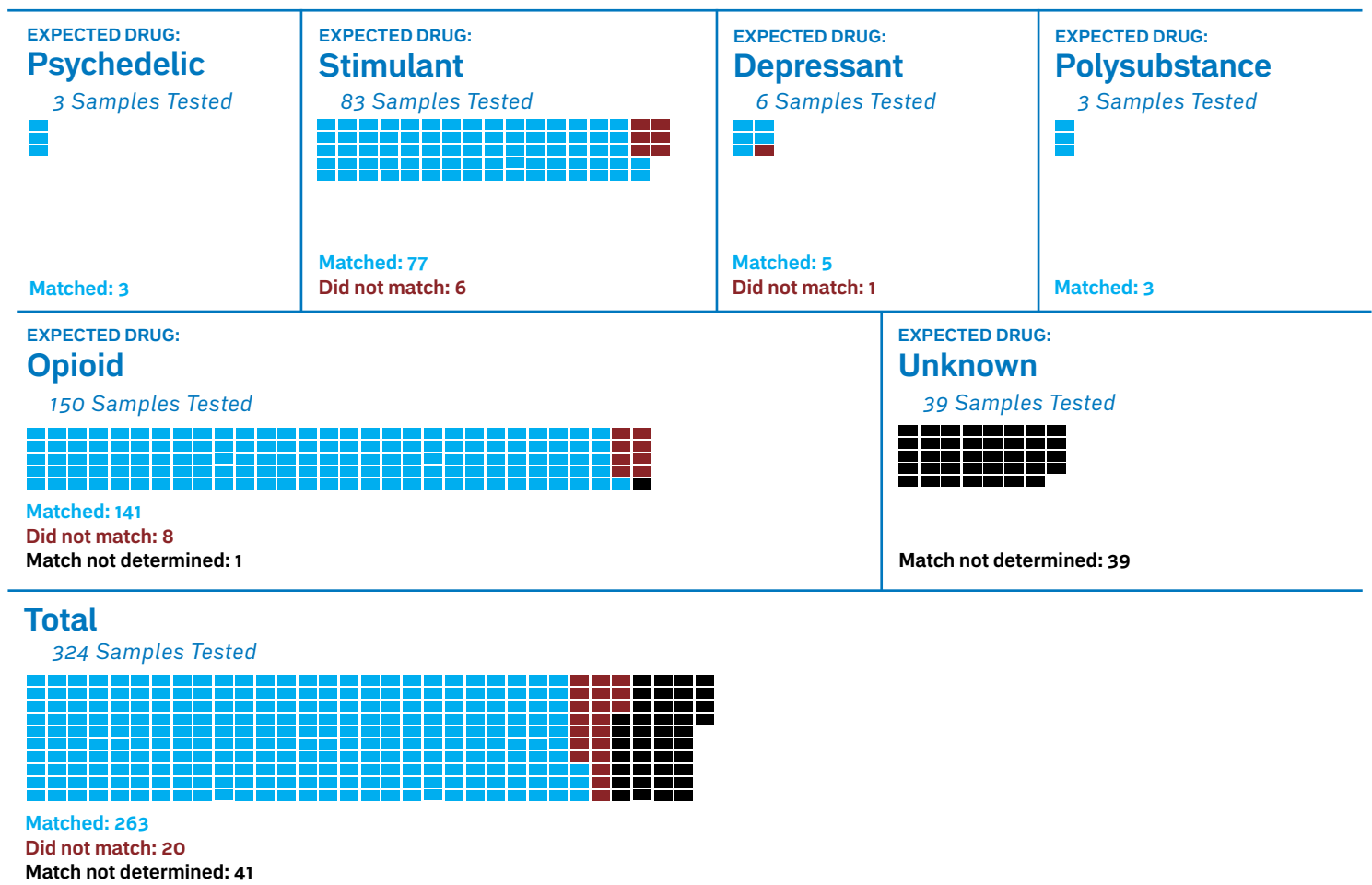
During the month of June, **72.0%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**108 samples of 150 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The 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	64
	Castlegar	2
	Trail	10
	Grand Forks	38
	Cranbrook	46
ASK Wellness	Kamloops	42
	Penticton	26
	Merritt	6
UBCO Hart	Kelowna	53
	Vernon	37
Total		324

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 June include:
benzodiazepines, etizolam,
GHB, hypnotics

Opioid June include:
"down," heroin, fentanyl,
pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures

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

Stimulant June 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

119 Samples Tested



Matched: 115

Did not match: 4

EXPECTED DRUG:

Heroin

2 Samples Tested



Matched: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

22 Samples Tested



Matched: 20

Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Other Opioid

4 Samples Tested



Matched: 2

Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

3 Samples Tested



Matched: 2

Match not determined: 1

Total

150 Samples Tested



Matched: 141

Did not match: 8

Match not determined: 1

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: