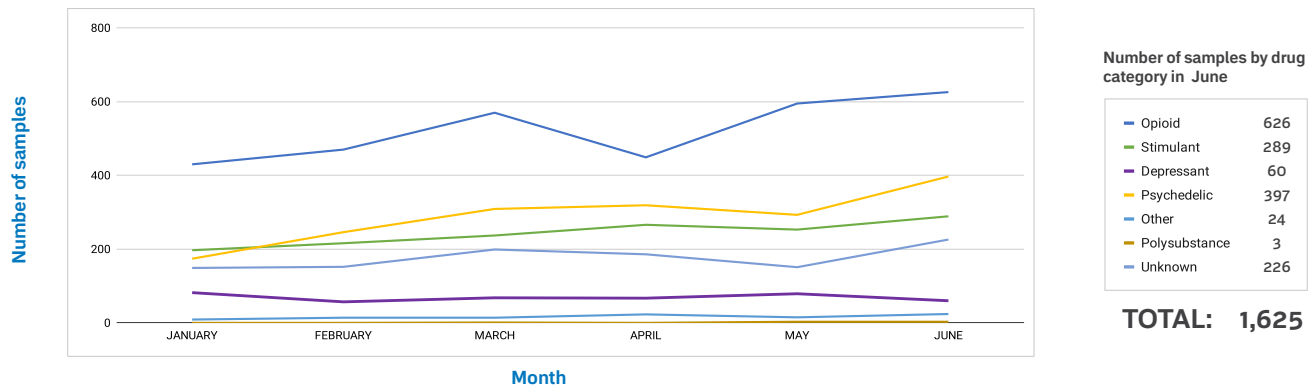


Key Findings

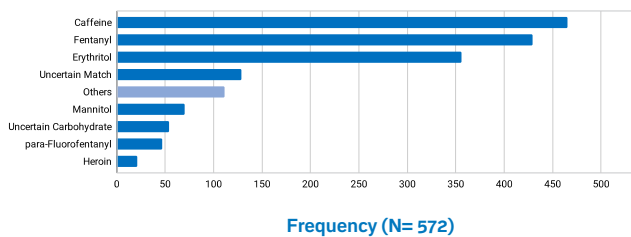
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines was 28.0% (175 of 626 samples), the highest proportion ever detected in this region. The true rate may still be higher than reported here because etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies.
- There may be an ongoing shift from benzodiazepine-adulteration of opioids with etizolam to other benzodiazepines such as flualprazolam, flubromazolam, and flubromazepam, which are better detected with benzodiazepine test strips and cause the overall detection numbers to increase. These drugs are potent sedatives which can cause blackouts, memory loss, and make it difficult to tell when someone is experiencing opioid toxicity.
- 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.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

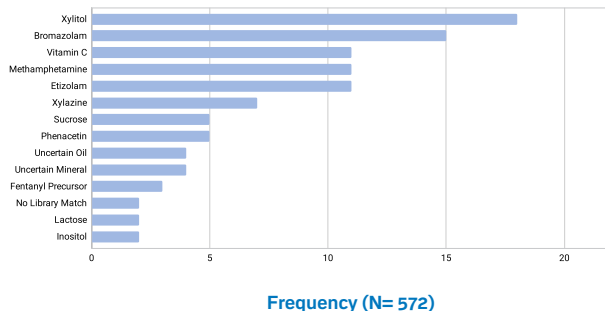


Components found in drug samples in June

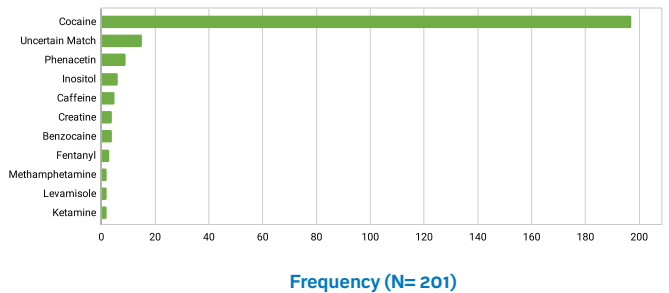
Components in opioids



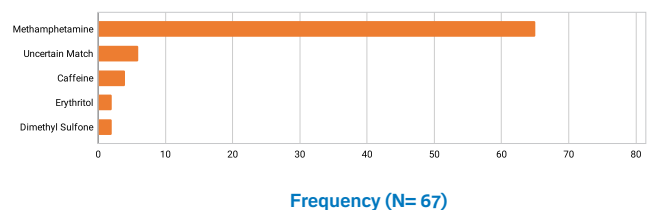
Other components found in opioids



Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine

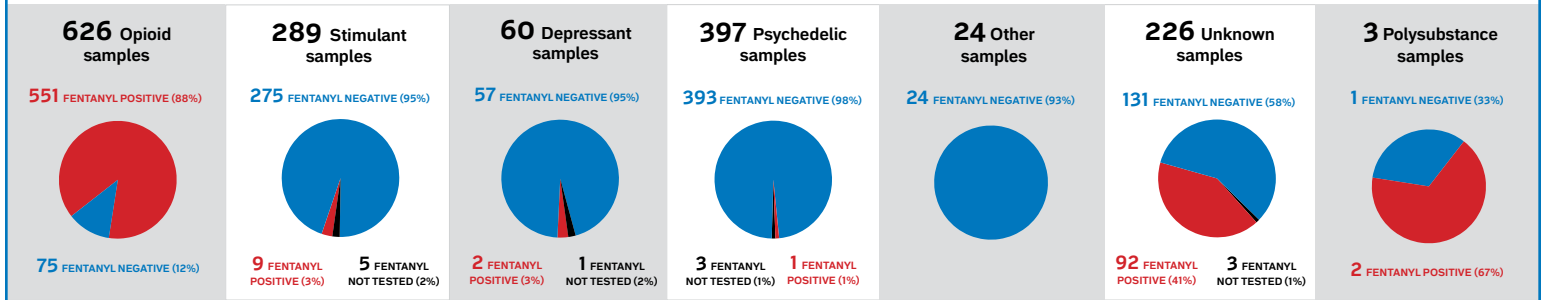


There were additional compounds detected a single time each. To save space, they have been omitted from these charts. For the full list of compounds detected, visit our data dashboard at www.drugcheckingbc.ca/dashboard/

June
2022

Drug Checking in Vancouver Coastal

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

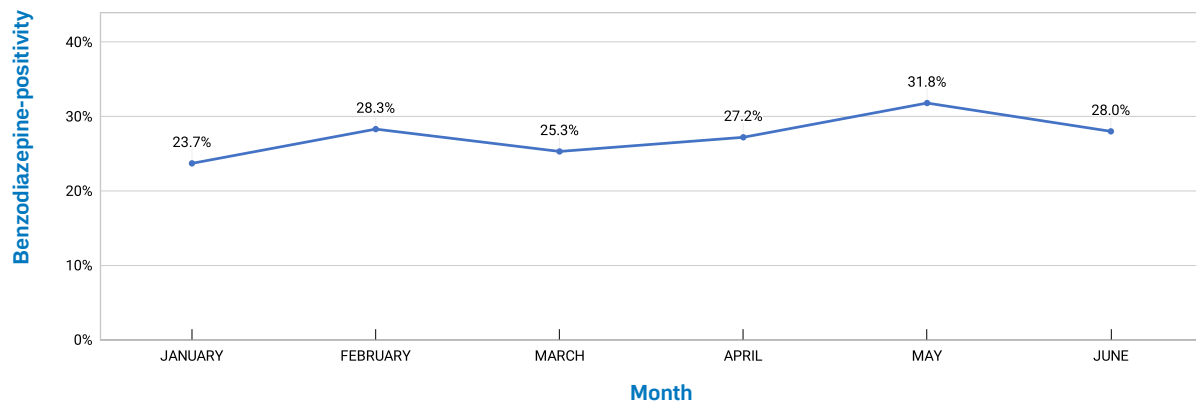


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
June 12 2022 Get Your Drugs Tested Sample mailed from BC	4-MMC	3-MMC, Uncertain Match	Positive	Negative	Somewhere in BC	Fentanyl contamination of stimulants poses a risk of opioid toxicity. 4-MMC and 3-MMC may have different subjective effects.
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.						

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

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



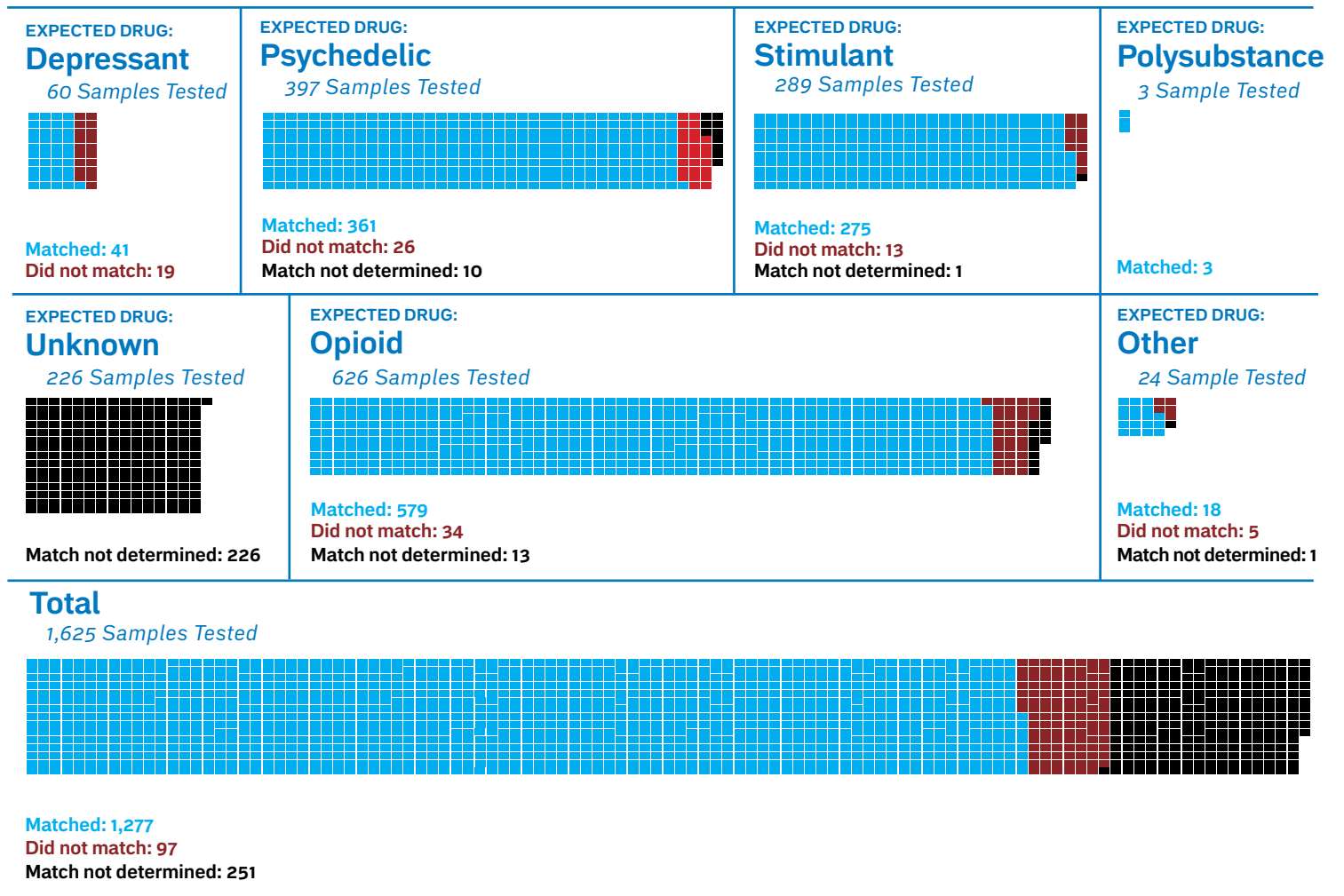
During the month of June, **28.0%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**175 samples of 626 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. 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	1,332
Insite	262
Bud Osborn Shelter	30
Molson OPS	1
Total	1,625

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.

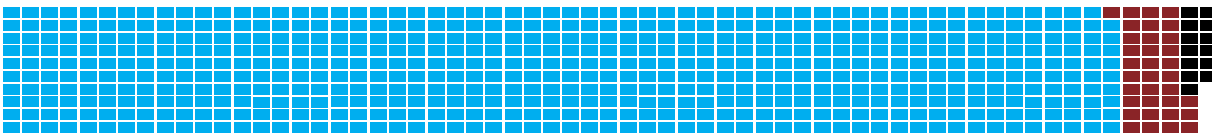
Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Fentanyl 215 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 212 Did not match: 2 Match not determined: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Heroin 21 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 16 Did not match: 5</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Fentanyl and Heroin 1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Did not match: 1</p>	
<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Down 335 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 323 Did not match: 12</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Pharmaceutical 50 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 27 Did not match: 13 Match not determined: 10</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Other Opioid 1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Match not determined: 1</p>	<p>EXPECTED DRUG: Opium 3 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1 Did not match: 1 Match not determined: 1</p>

Total

626 Samples Tested



Matched: 579
Did not match: 34
Match not determined: 13

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:

