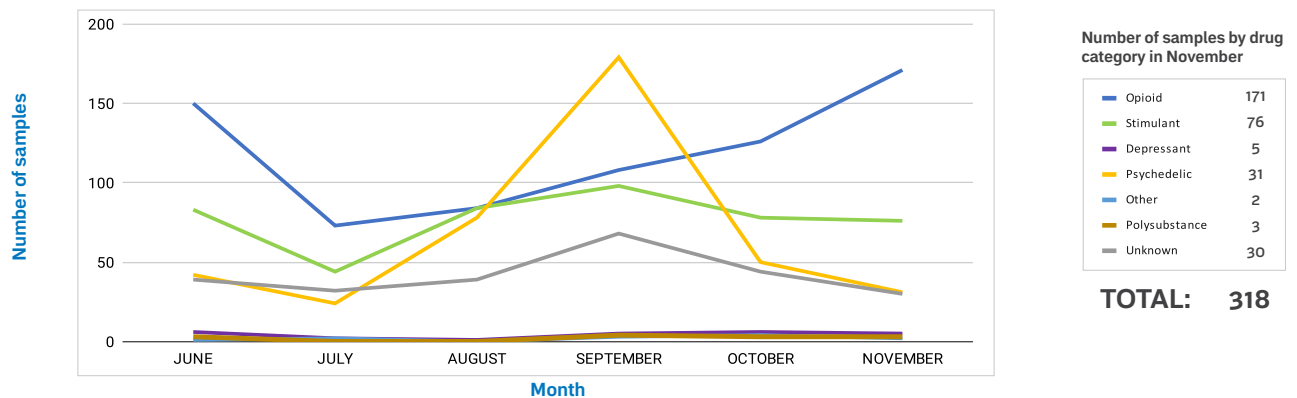


Key Findings

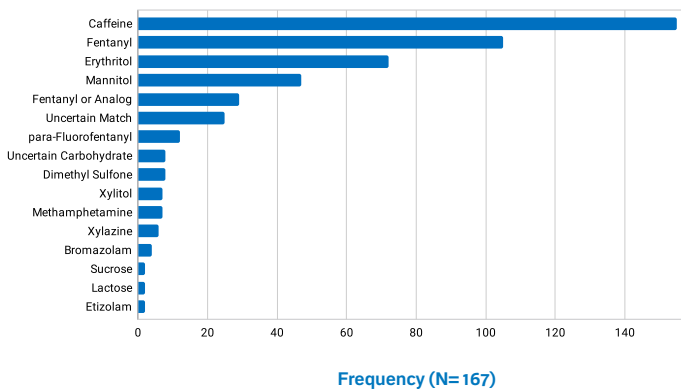
- In November, a total of 318 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region.
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region remained high at 65.5% (112 of 171 samples). Trends may be hard to infer due to the large geographic region, and the true rate may be higher than reported here because benzodiazepines, and benzodiazepine-like substances like etizolam, may be missed by drug checking technologies.
- Bromazolam was the most frequent benzodiazepine detected by FTIR, found present in 4 opioid samples.
- Drug checking is available in several communities across the Interior Health region. For updated times and locations, visit <https://drugchecking.ca/>

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

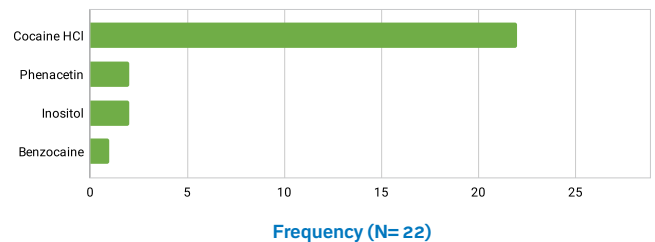


Components found in drug samples in November

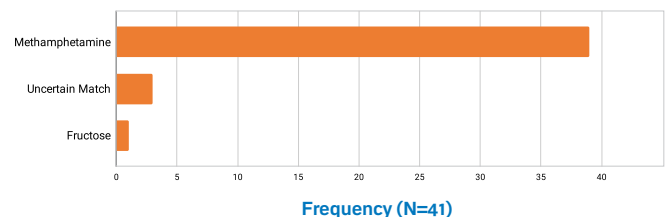
Components in opioids



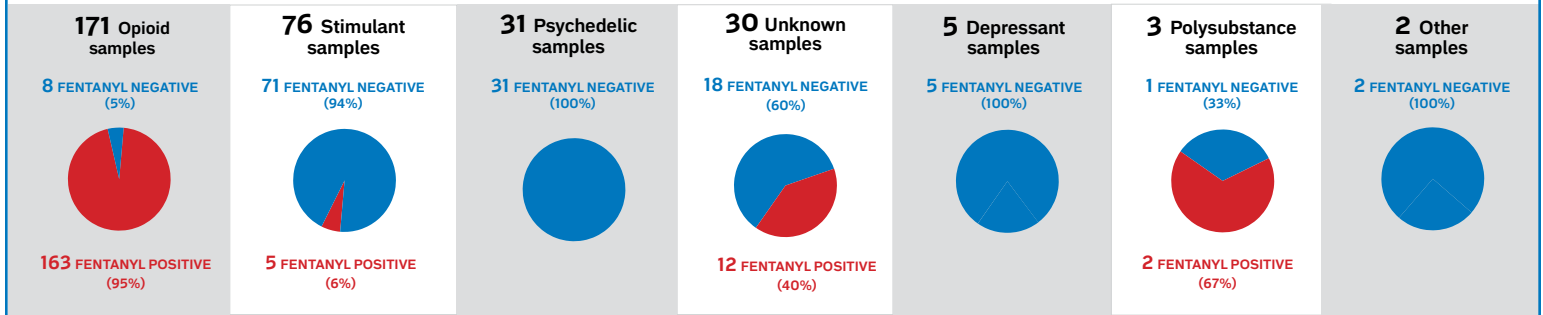
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



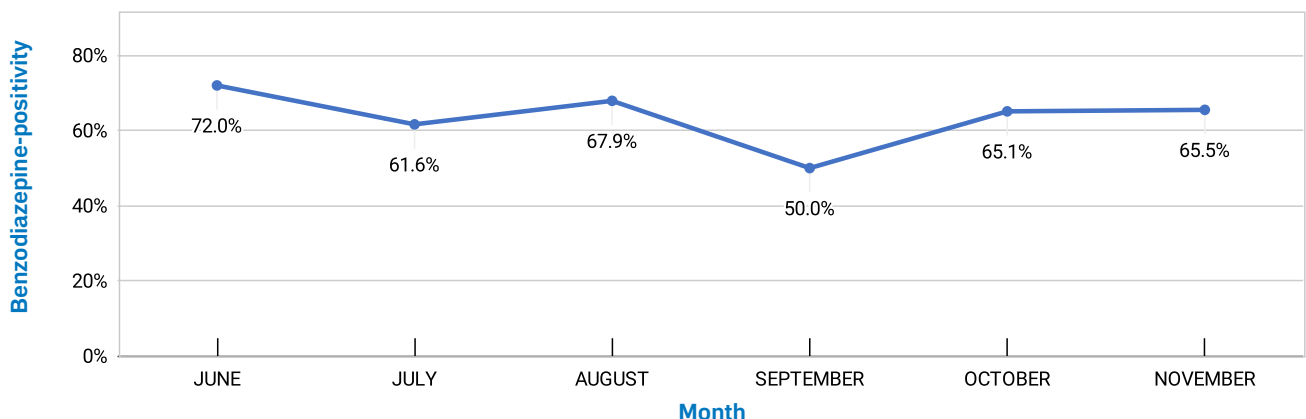
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
November 4, 2022 Kelowna	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Kelowna	Higher than average concentrations of both fentanyl and benzodiazepines poses high risk of overdose
November 30, 2022 Kelowna	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Kelowna	Higher than average concentration of fentanyl, and very high concentration of benzodiazepines poses high risk of overdose
November 30, 2022 Cranbrook	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl/fentanyl analogue	Positive	Positive	Cranbrook	Higher than average concentration of fentanyl and/or fentanyl analogue, as well as presence of benzodiazepines poses high 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/alerts>

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



During the month of November, **65.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**112 samples of 171 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

Location	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	86
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	15
ANKORS (Nelson)	29
ANKORS (Trail)	22
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	11
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	49
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	50
UBCO HaRT (Vernon)	56
Total	318

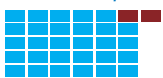
Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Psychedelic

31 Samples Tested



Matched: 29
Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Stimulant

76 Samples Tested



Matched: 72
Did not match: 4

EXPECTED DRUG:

Depressant

5 Samples Tested



Matched: 5

EXPECTED DRUG:

Unknown

30 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 30

EXPECTED DRUG:

Opioid

171 Samples Tested



Matched: 166
Did not match: 3
Match not determined: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Other

2 Samples Tested



Matched: 1
Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Polysubstance

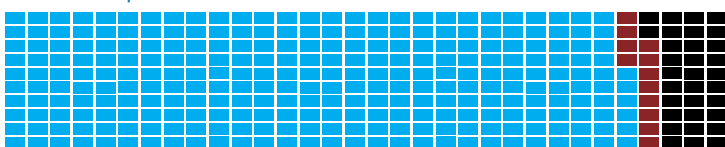
3 Samples Tested



Matched: 1
Did not match: 2

Total

318 Samples Tested



Matched: 274
Did not match: 12
Match not determined: 32

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents

Depressant include:
benzodiazepines, etizolam,
GHB, hypnotics

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

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures

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

Stimulant 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

69 Samples Tested



Matched: 68
Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

3 Samples Tested



Did not match: 1
Match not determined: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Other Opioid

1 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

95 Samples Tested



Matched: 94
Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Fentanyl and Heroin

2 Samples Tested



Matched: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Opium

1 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

Total

171 Samples Tested



Matched: 166
Did not match: 3
Match not determined: 2

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: