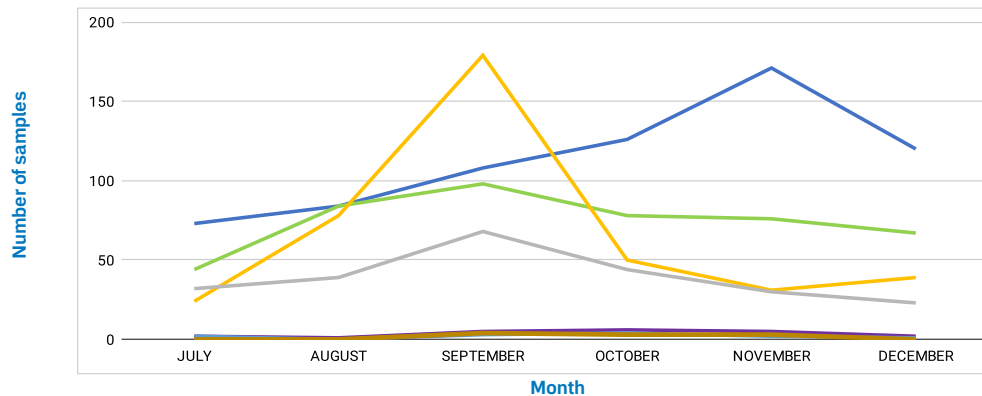


## Key Findings

- In December, a total of 252 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 increased from 65.5% to 82.5% in December (99 of 120 samples), the highest level recorded in the region to date. Trends may be hard to infer due to the large geographic region.
- Bromazolam was the most frequent benzodiazepine identified in opioid samples this month, indicating concentrations high enough to be detectable by FTIR. Bromazolam was 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



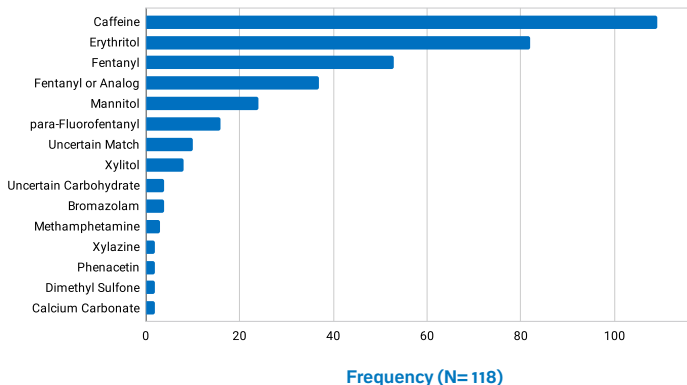
## Number of samples by drug category in December

Opioid	120
Stimulant	67
Depressant	2
Psychedelic	39
Other	1
Polysubstance	0
Unknown	23

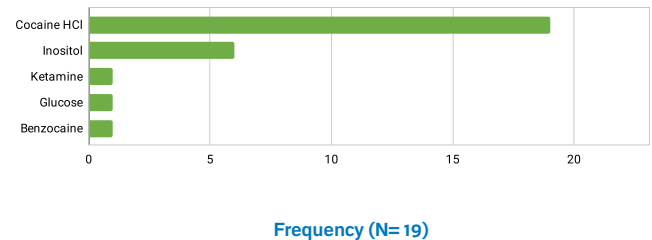
**TOTAL: 252**

## Components found in drug samples in December

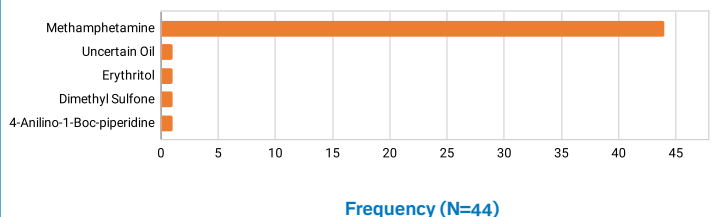
### Components in opioids



### Components in cocaine



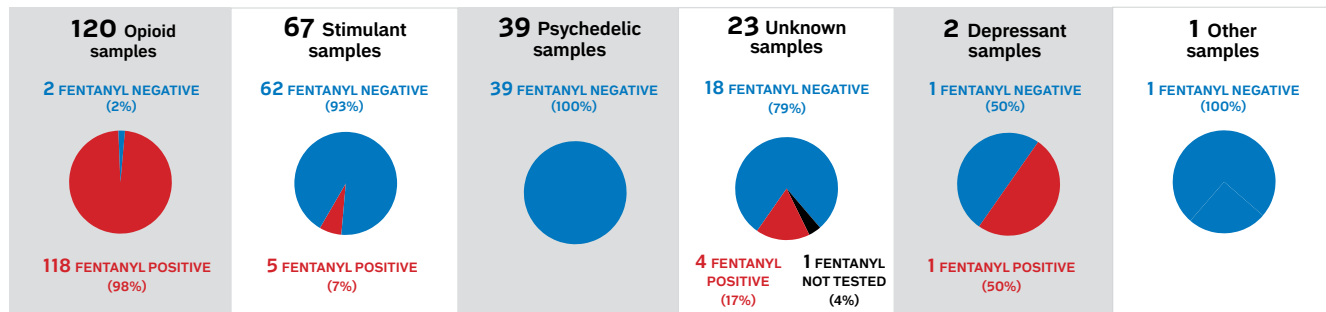
### Components in methamphetamine



December  
2022

# Drug Checking in Interior Health

## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



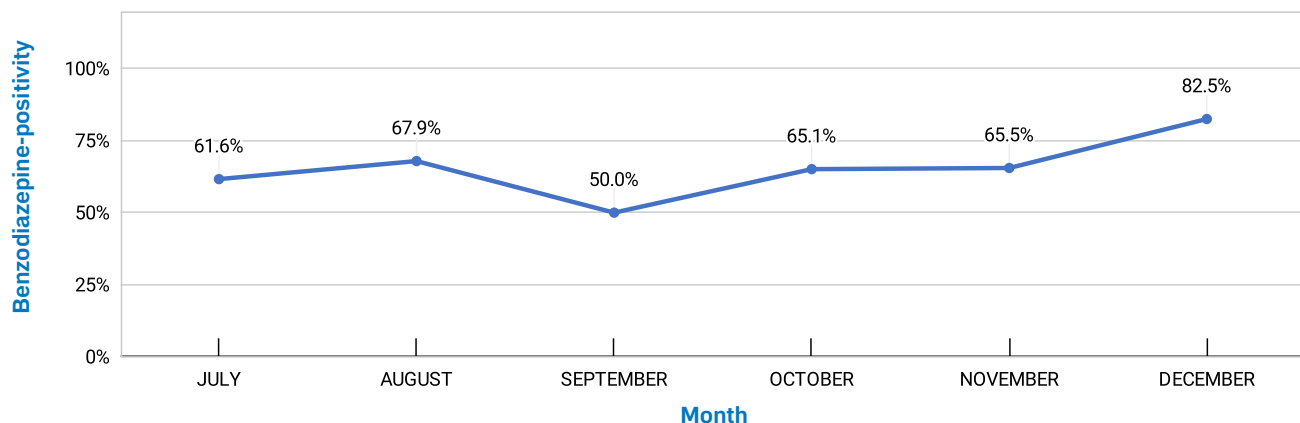
## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
December 20, 2022 Nelson and Castlegar	Down/Fentanyl	Fentanyl or Analogue	Positive	Positive	Nelson and Castlegar	High concentration of fentanyl and presence of benzodiazepines poses high risk of overdose. Sample has been associated with cases of amnesia following use.

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 December, **82.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**99 samples of 120 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)	65
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	8
ANKORS (Kimberley)	3
ANKORS (Nelson)	36
ANKORS (Trail)	12
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	19
ASK Wellness (Meritt)	3

Location	# of Drugs Checked
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	57
ASK Wellness (Princeton)	2
ASK Wellness (Williams Lake)	1
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	37
UBCO HaRT (Vernon)	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>

## Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

### EXPECTED DRUG: Psychedelic

39 Samples Tested



Matched: 36  
Did not match: 3

### EXPECTED DRUG: Stimulant

67 Samples Tested



Matched: 67

### EXPECTED DRUG: Depressant

2 Samples Tested



Matched: 2

### EXPECTED DRUG: Unknown

23 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 23

### EXPECTED DRUG: Opioid

120 Samples Tested



Matched: 114  
Did not match: 6

### EXPECTED DRUG: Other

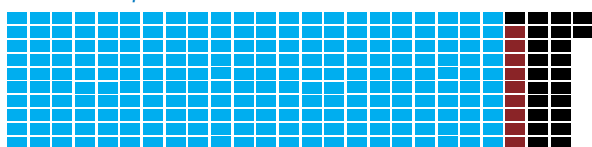
1 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

### Total

252 Samples Tested



Matched: 220  
Did not match: 9  
Match not determined: 23

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.

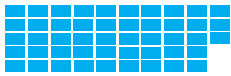
## Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Fentanyl**

48 Samples Tested



Matched: 48

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Pharmaceutical**

2 Samples Tested



Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Other Opioid**

2 Samples Tested



Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Down**

67 Samples Tested



Matched: 66

Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

**Heroin**

1 Samples Tested



Did not match: 1

**Total**

120 Samples Tested



Matched: 114

Did not match: 6

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: