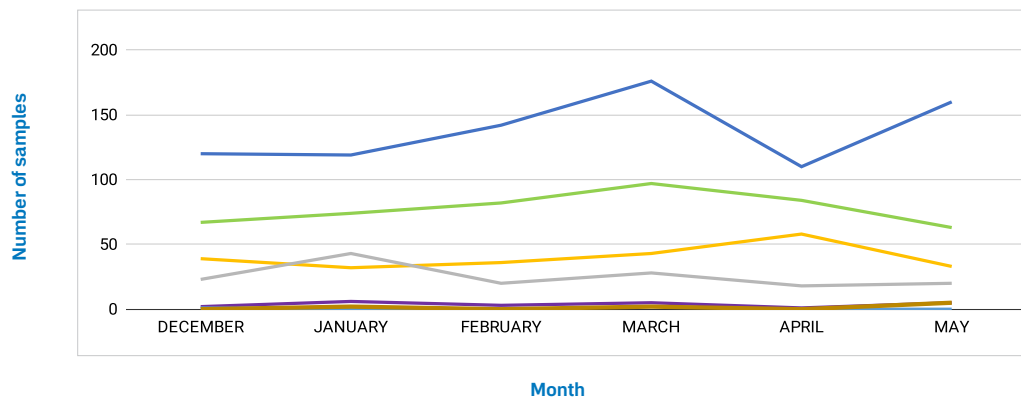


Key Findings

- In May, a total of 286 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region.
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines increased from 73.6% to 88.8% in May (142 of 160 samples). Trends may be hard to infer due to the large geographic region.
- Four drug alerts were issued by Interior Health, three pertaining to down samples that contained high concentrations of fentanyl and bromazolam. One alert concerned a methamphetamine sample that instead tested as fentanyl.
- 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



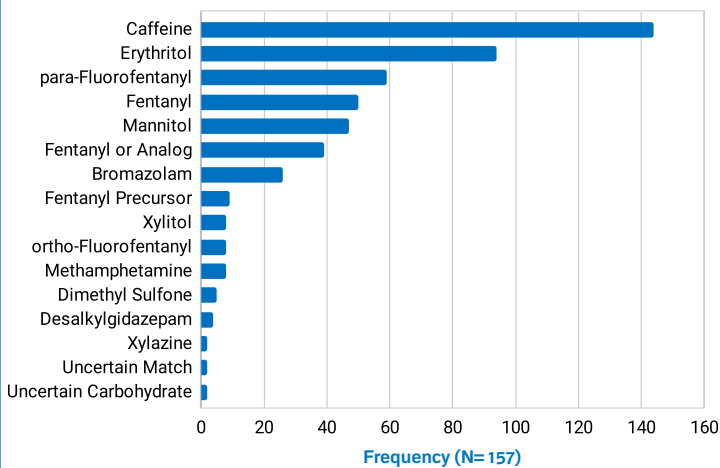
Number of samples by drug category in May

Opioid	160
Stimulant	63
Depressant	5
Psychedelic	33
Other	0
Polysubstance	5
Unknown	20

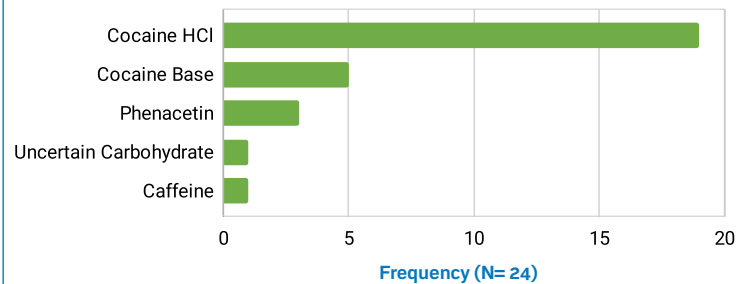
TOTAL: 286

Components found in drug samples in May

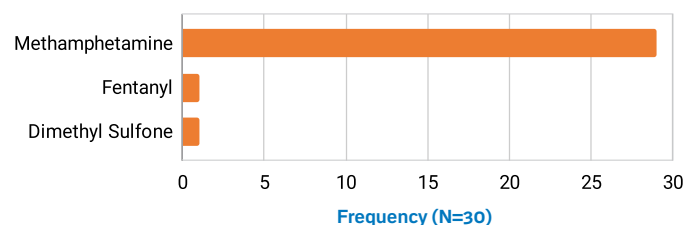
Components in opioids



Components in cocaine

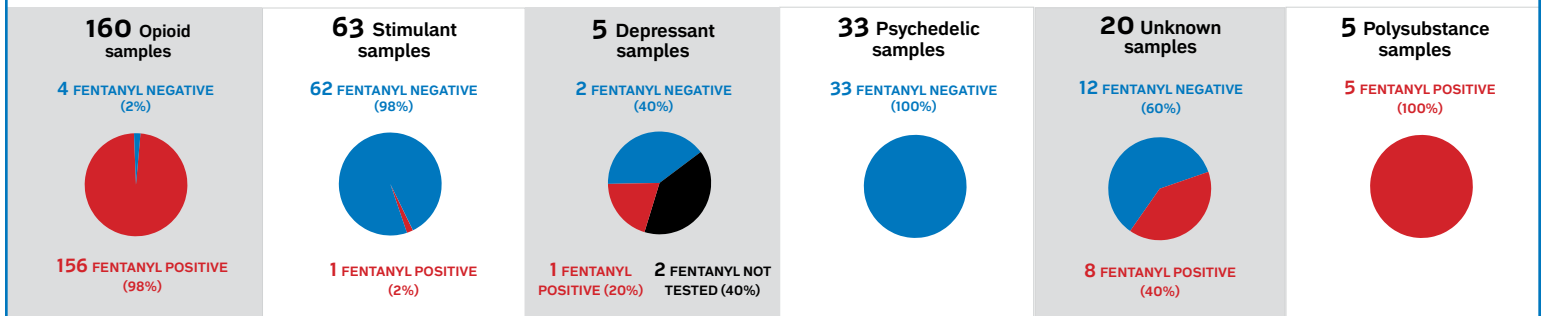


Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: cocaine base, fentanyl base, glucose, lactose, MDMA, phenacetin, plaster, sucrose, uncertain oil.

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



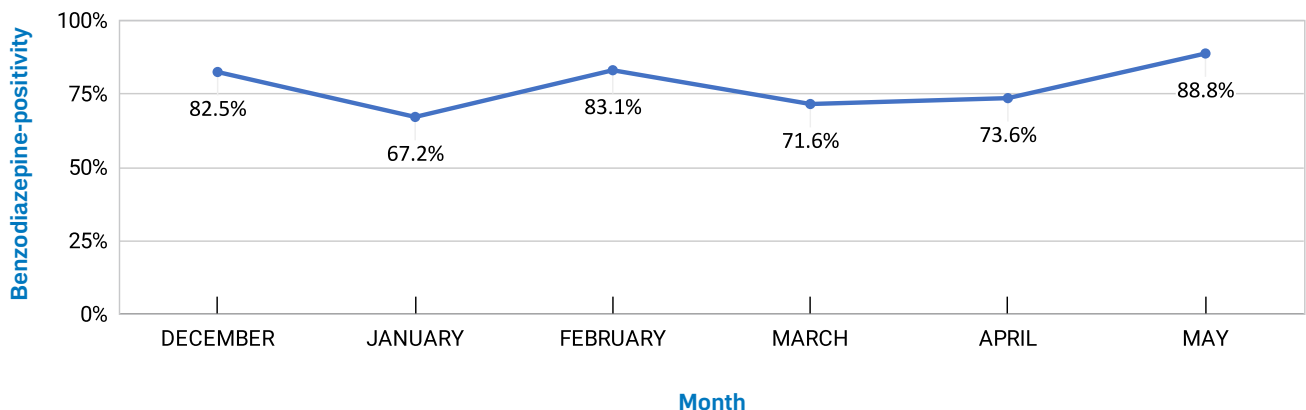
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
May 4, 2023 Crankbrook	Down	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Crankbrook	A substance sold as down tested positive for fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, and bromazolam in Crankbrook.
May 12, 2023 Penticton	Down	Fentanyl, Bromazolam, Caffeine	Positive	Positive	Penticton	Light blue chunks sold as down tested positive for fentanyl and bromazolam in Penticton.
May 25, 2023 Kelowna	Down	Caffeine, Fentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Kelowna	Black chunks sold as down tested positive for fentanyl and bromazolam in Kelowna.
May 29, 2023 Penticton	Methamphetamine	Fentanyl	Positive	Negative	Penticton	White crystals and powder sold as methamphetamine tested positive for fentanyl in Penticton.

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 May, **88.8%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**142 samples of 160 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)	70
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	25
ANKORS (Nelson)	30
ANKORS (Trail)	21
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	12
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	74
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	50
Total	286

Less than 5 samples were tested at the following location, which is included in the total: ANKORS (Kimberley).

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid 	155	5		160
Stimulant 	61	2		63
Depressant 	5			5
Psychedelic 	31	2		33
Polysubstance 	5			5
Unknown 			20	20
Total 	257	9	20	286

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	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Fentanyl	52	1		53
Other Opioid		1		1
Down	103	1		104
Pharmaceutical		2		2
Total	155	5		160

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: