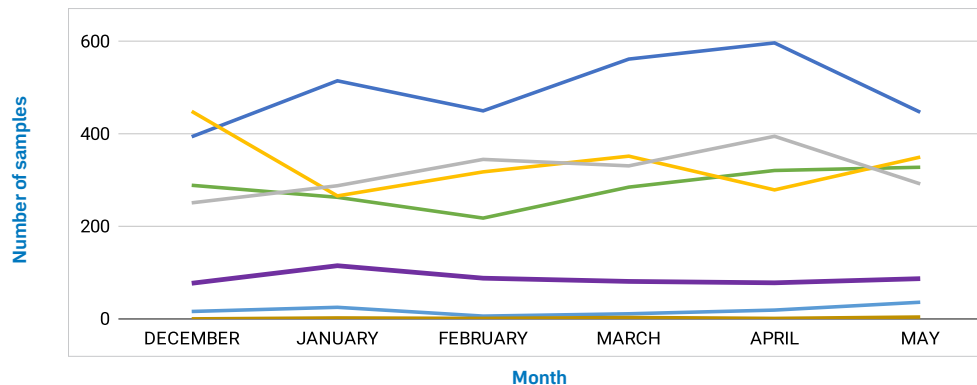


Key Findings

- In May, a total of 1,544 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Vancouver Coastal region.
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased from 31.7% to 25.1% in May (112 of 447 samples).
- Vancouver Coastal issued five drug alerts. Four pertained to down/fentanyl samples in which high concentrations of fentanyl and benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR, or high concentrations of para-fluorofentanyl were detected by FTIR with benzos detected by test strip.
- Drug checking services in Vancouver Coastal Health are expanding! Services are now available in the qathet Regional District at Tla'amin Health: 5160 Highway 101, Powell River.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



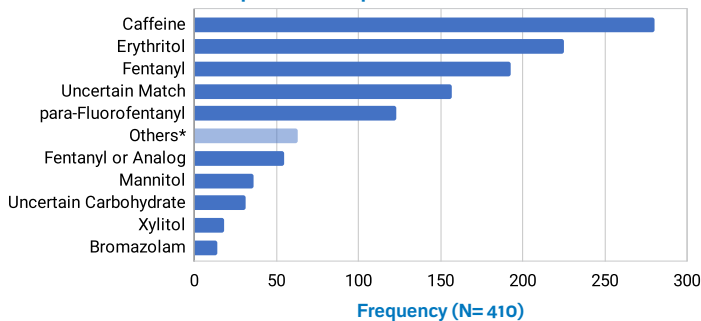
Number of samples by drug category in May

Opioid	447
Stimulant	328
Depressant	87
Psychedelic	350
Other	36
Polysubstance	4
Unknown	292

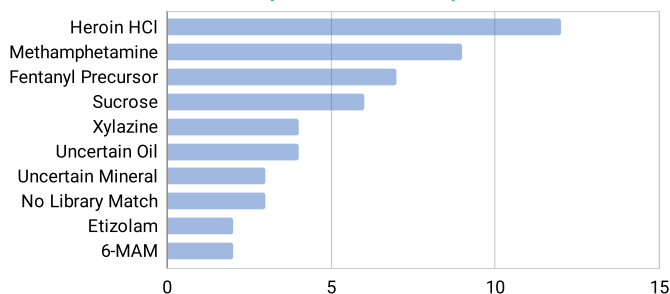
TOTAL: 1,544

Components found in drug samples in May

Components in opioids

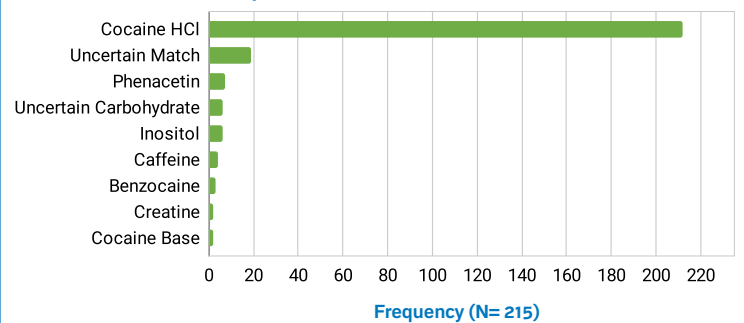


Other components found in opioids



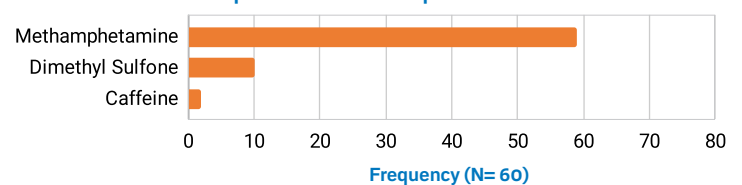
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: 6-MAM, acetaminophen, diphenhydramine, ephedrine, glucose, heroin base, lactose, microcrystalline cellulose, noscapine, opium, phenacetin.

Components in cocaine



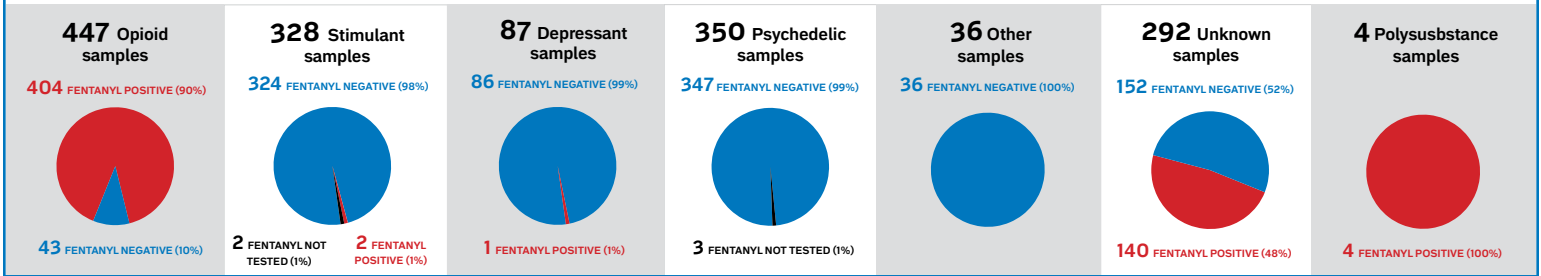
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: cocaine base, creatine, glutamine, mannitol, procaine, sucrose, thiamine, uncertain carbohydrate, uncertain mineral.

Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: caffeine, uncertain carbohydrate.

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



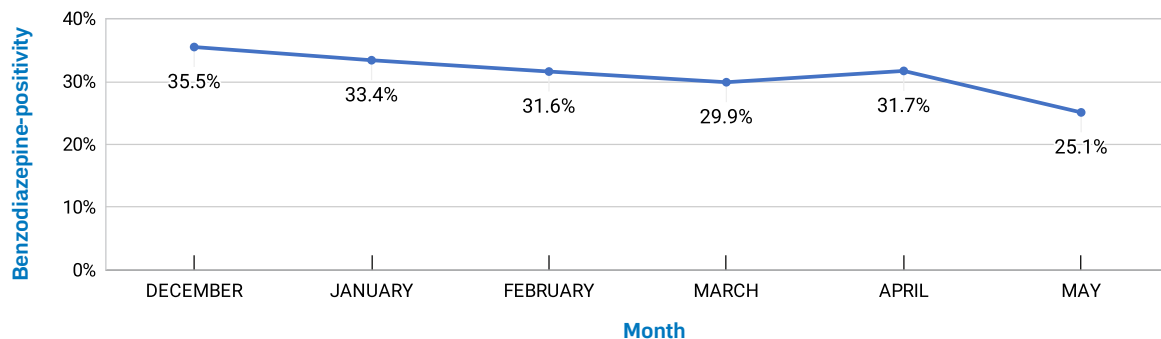
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
May 1, 2023 Vancouver	Down	Fentanyl, Caffeine, Diclazepam	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Pink granules sold as down tested positive for fentanyl and diclazepam, a benzo analogue.
May 1, 2023 Vancouver	Down	Para-Fluorofentanyl, Caffeine	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Blue granules sold as down in Vancouver tested positive for para-fluorofentanyl and benzos. Substance has caused OD.
May 1, 2023 Vancouver	Down	Para-fluorofentanyl, Caffeine, Methamphetamine	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Red/orange granules sold as down in Vancouver tested positive for para-fluorofentanyl, methamphetamine, and benzos.
May 5, 2023 Vancouver	Fentanyl	Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl, Desalkylgizazepam	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Lime green pebbles sold as fentanyl tested positive for fentanyl and desalkylgizazepam, a benzo analogue. Substance has caused OD.
May 11, 2023 Vancouver	Unknown	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Fentanyl	Positive	Negative	Vancouver	Light blue tablet with imprint "30" sold in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl.

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 May, **25.1%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**112 samples of 447 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	1,407
Insite	98
Tla'amin Nation	39
Total	1,544

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	417	21	9	447
Stimulant	318	9	1	328
Depressant	68	17	2	87
Psychedelic	324	25	1	350
Other	24	2	10	36
Polysubstance	4			4
Unknown			292	292
Total	1155	74	315	1,544

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	171	2		173
Heroin	9	3		12
Other Opioid	1	3		4
Down	219	6		225
Pharmaceutical	10	7	9	26
Opium	7			7
Total	417	21	9	447

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:

