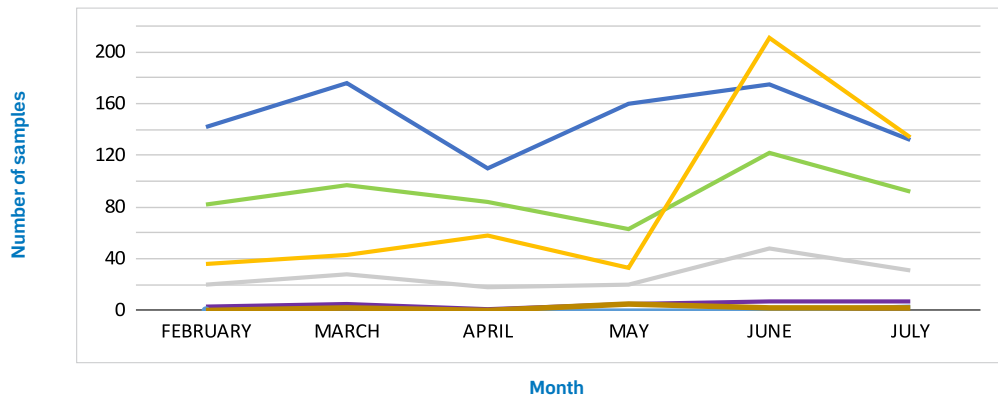


Key Findings

- In July, a total of 401 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region. The number of psychedelic samples checked remained high, typical of the summer months.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and test strip was 79.5% in July (105 of 132 samples), about the same rate as the previous month.
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 22.9% of unregulated opioid samples checked (30 of 131 samples), with bromazolam most frequently detected (29 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 30.5% of unregulated samples (40 of 131 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 37.4% (49 samples).
- Drug checking is available in several communities across the Interior Health region. The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy has commenced services in Vernon at #100-3605 31st Street. For updated times and locations, visit <https://drugchecking.ca/>

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



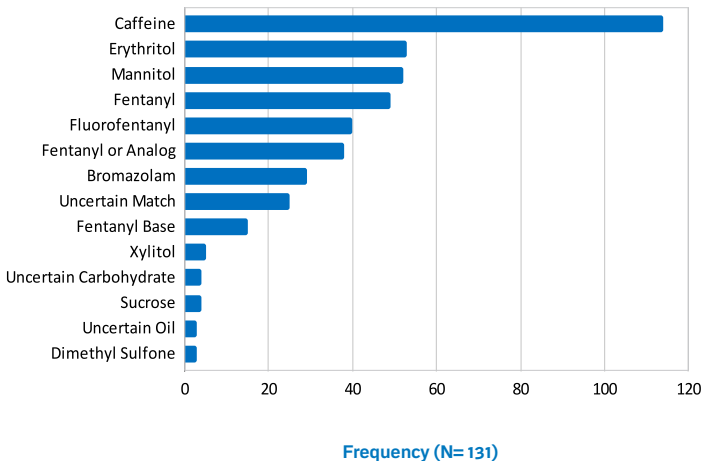
Number of samples by drug category in July

Opioid	132
Stimulant	92
Depressant	7
Psychedelic	134
Other	3
Polysubstance	2
Unknown	31

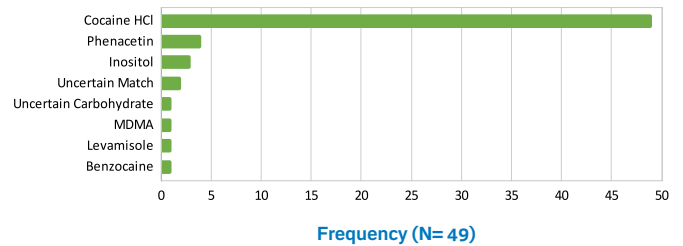
TOTAL: 401

Components found in drug samples in July

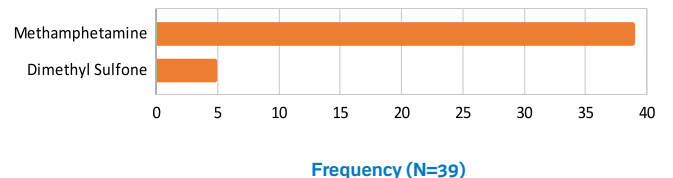
Components in unregulated opioids



Components in cocaine

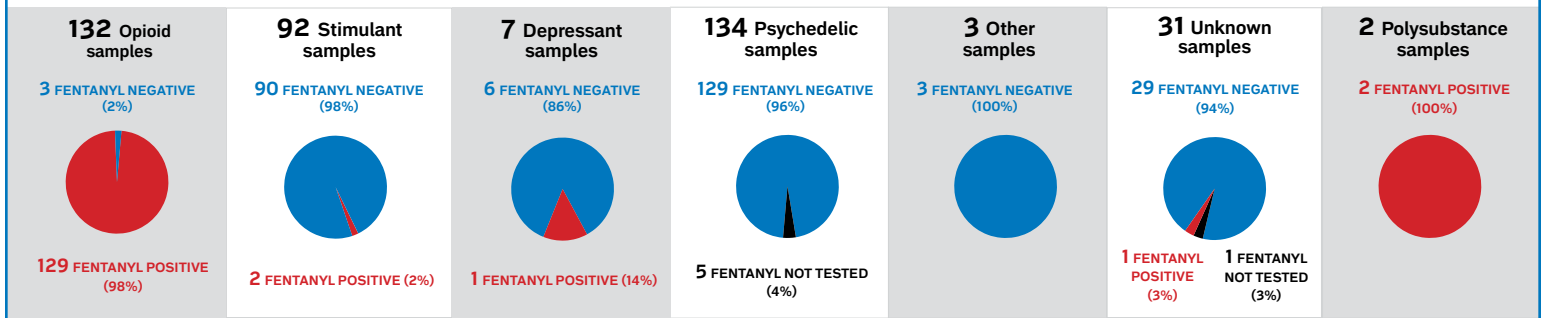


Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: desalkylgidazepam, fentanyl precursor, MDMA, no library match, plaster, vitamin C, xylazine.

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

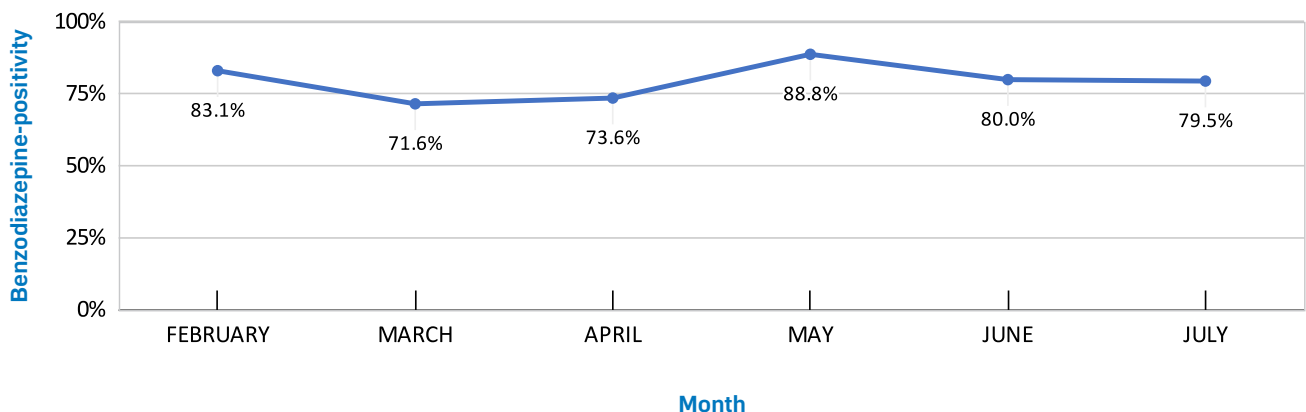
Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
July 7, 2023 Vernon	Down	Caffeine, Fentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Vernon	Multple light purple and pink substatnces sold as Down tested positive for high concentrations of fentanyl and benzodiazepines in Vernon.
July 12, 2023 Penticton	Down	Fentanyl, Bromazolam	Positive	Positive	Penticton	Light green chunky powder sample sold as Down tested positive for high concentrations of fentanyl and benzodiazepines in Penticton.
July 31, 2023 Penticton	Down	No library match (Nitazene-analogue)	Negative	Negative	Penticton	White chunky, flaky substance sold as Down tested positive for Nitazene (a strong synthetic opioid) in Penticton – Fentanyl was not present despite this being the expected substance.

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 July, **79.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**105 samples of 132 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)	57
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	19
ANKORS (Nelson)	137
ANKORS (Trail)	18
ASK Wellness (Burn in the Forest Music Festival)	40
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	6
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	26
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	31
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	64
Total:	401

Less than 5 samples were tested at each of the following locations, which are included in the total: ANKORS (Castlegar), ASK Wellness (Williams Lake)

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	129	2	1	132
Stimulant	91	1	0	92
Depressant	5	2	0	7
Psychedelic	125	8	1	134
Other	2	1	0	3
Polysubstance	1	1	0	2
Unknown	0	0	31	31
Total	353	15	33	401

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
(unregulated opioids), and
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 	58	1	0	59
Down 	71	1	0	72
Pharmaceutical 	0	0	1	1
Total 	129	2	1	132

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: