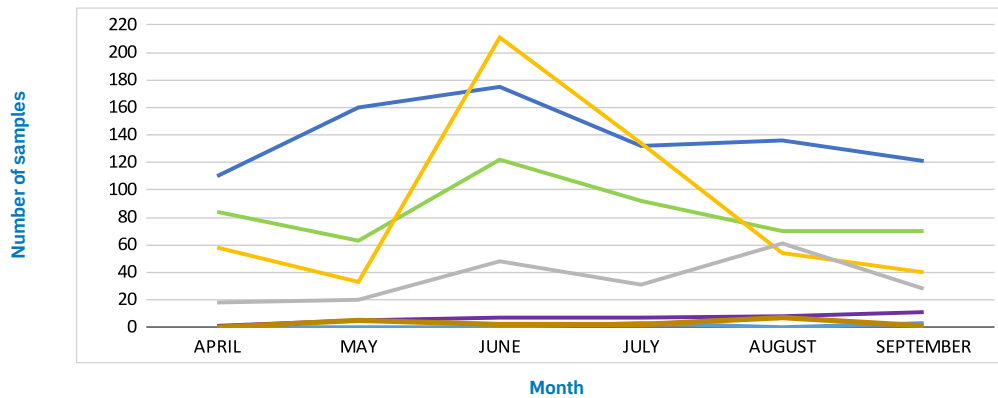


## Key Findings

- In September, a total of 274 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and test strip increased from 72.8% to 77.7% in September (94 of 121 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 23.3% of unregulated opioid samples checked (28 of 120 samples), with bromazolam most frequently detected (23 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 24.2% of unregulated samples (29 of 120 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 28.3% (34 samples).
- Xylazine was detected in 5.0% of unregulated opioid samples (6 of 120 samples).
- Drug checking is available in several communities across the Interior Health region. The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy offers drug checking services in Vernon at #100-3605 31st Street. For updated times and locations in Interior Health, visit <https://drugchecking.ca/>

## Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



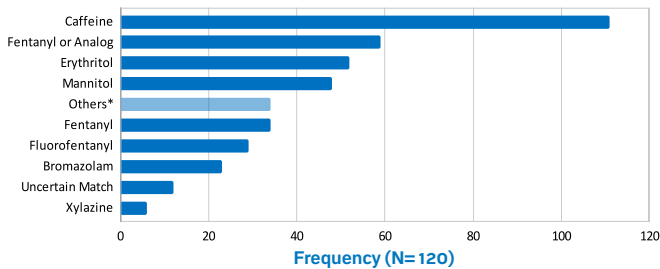
## Number of samples by drug category in September

Opioid	121
Stimulant	70
Depressant	11
Psychedelic	40
Other	3
Polysubstance	1
Unknown	28

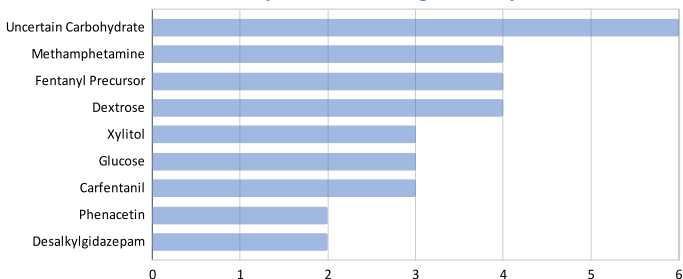
**TOTAL: 274**

## Components found in drug samples in September

### Components in unregulated opioids

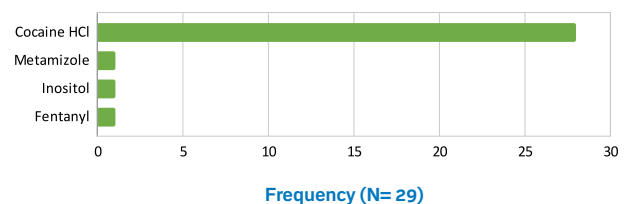


### \*Other components in unregulated opioids

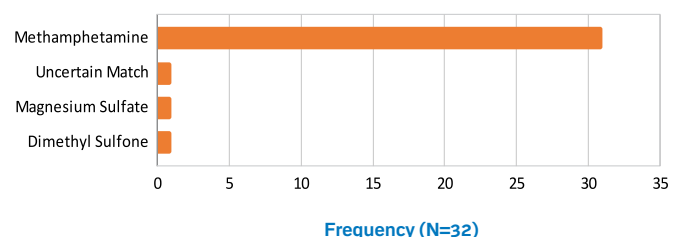


Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: acetaminophen, calcium carbonate, dimethyl sulfone, etizolam, flualprazolam, heroin, lorazepam.

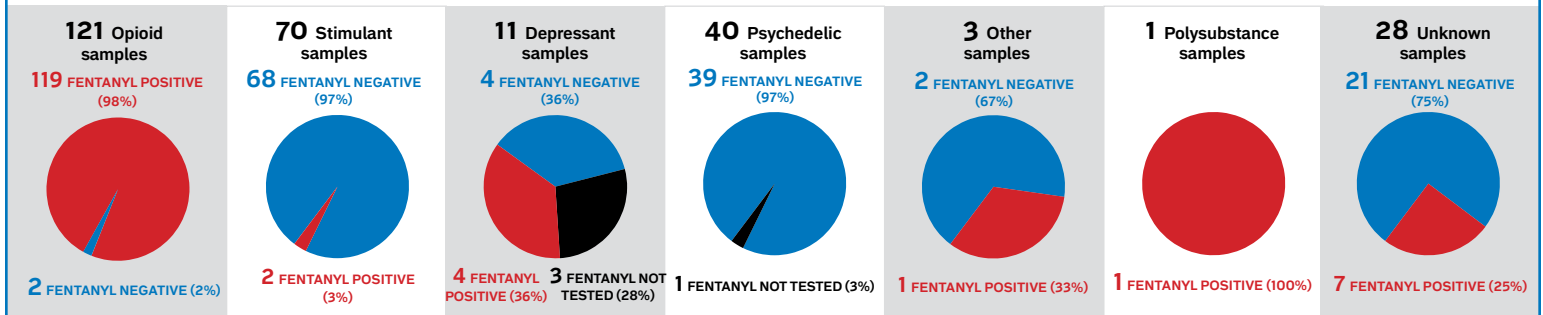
### Components in cocaine



### Components in methamphetamine



## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

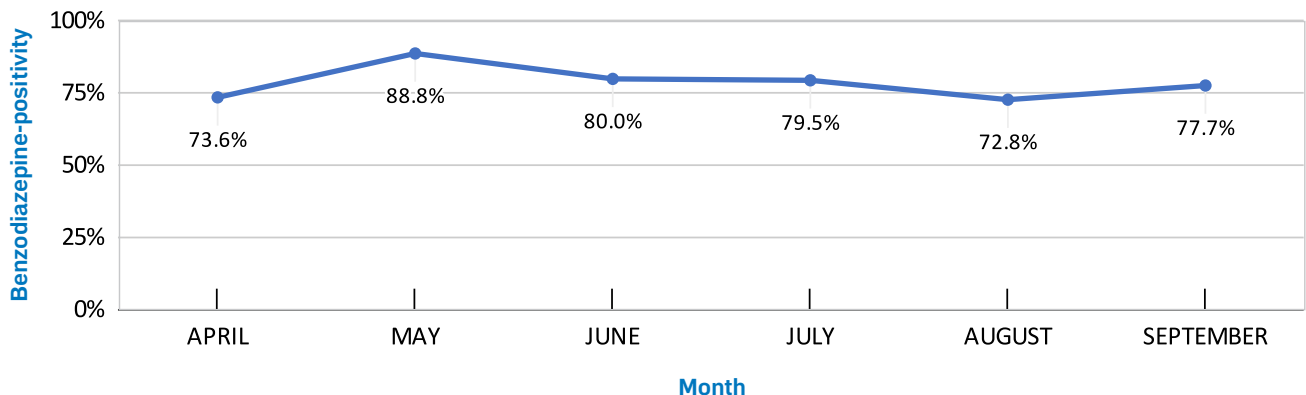


## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
September 8, 2023 Cranbrook	Down	Bromazolam, para-Fluorofentanyl	Positive	Positive	Cranbrook	Blue pebbles sold as down contain high concentrations of bromazolam and p-fluorofentanyl (fentanyl analogue) in Cranbrook.
<p>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.</p>						

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 September, **77.7%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**94 samples of 121 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 (Nelson)	37
ANKORS (Castlegar)	9
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	65
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	20
ANKORS (Trail)	11
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	19
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	33
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	31
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	49
<b>Total:</b>	<b>274</b>

## Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	116	3	2	121
Stimulant	66	4	0	70
Depressant	7	4	0	11
Psychedelic	36	4	0	40
Other	2	0	1	3
Polysubstance	1	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	28	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>274</b>

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	46	1	0	47
Heroin	1	2	0	3
Down	69	0	1	70
Pharmaceutical	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>121</b>

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:

