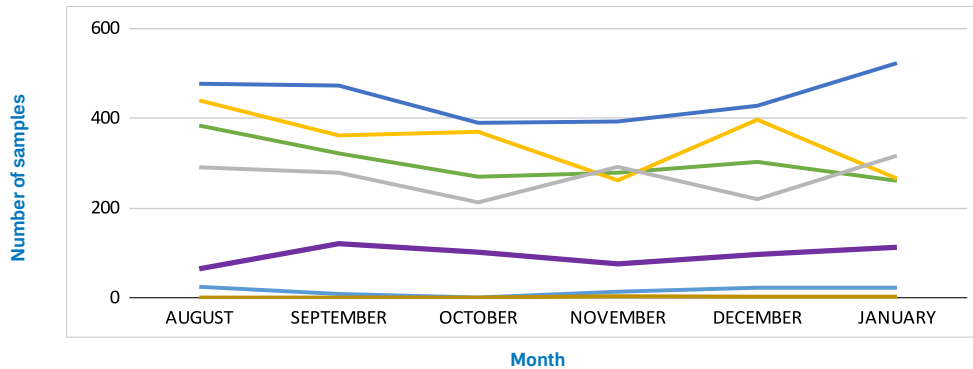


Key Findings

- In January, a total of 1,506 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Vancouver Coastal region.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and test strip decreased from 31.3% to 30.0% in January (157 of 523 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 10.8% of unregulated opioids checked (51 of 474 samples), with bromazolam most frequently detected (33 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 16.7% of unregulated opioids (79 of 474 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 46.4% (220 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 0.8% of unregulated opioids (4 of 474 samples).
- Drug checking services are now available at Whistler Community Services Society (8000 Nesters Rd, Whistler), LIFT Community Services (4752 Joyce Ave, Powell River), and at the Tla'amin Health Centre (5160 Highway 101, Powell River).

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



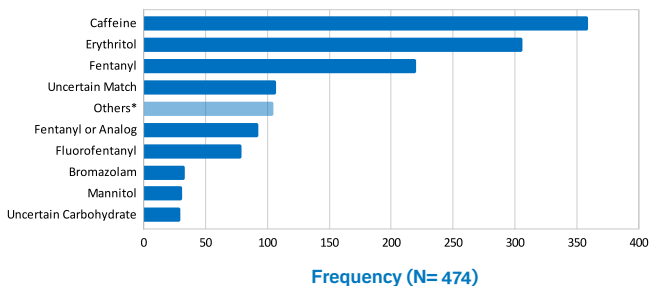
Number of samples by drug category in January

Opioid	523
Stimulant	261
Depressant	113
Psychedelic	266
Other	23
Polysubstance	3
Unknown	317

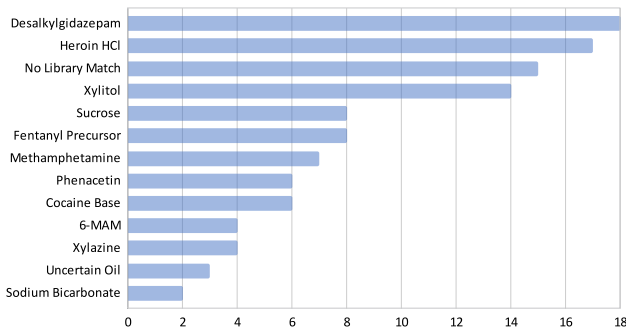
TOTAL: 1,506

Components found in drug samples in January

Components in unregulated opioids

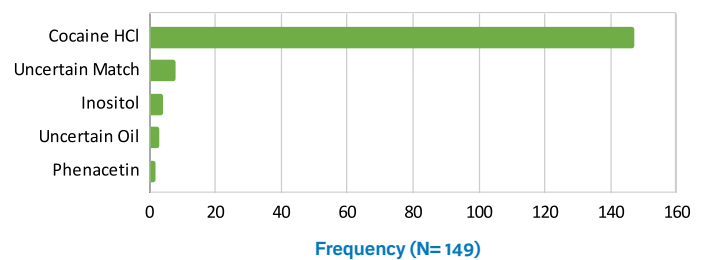


Other components in unregulated opioids



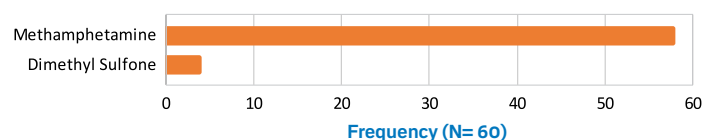
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: fentanyl base, microcrystalline cellulose, polypropylene, uncertain mineral.

Components in cocaine



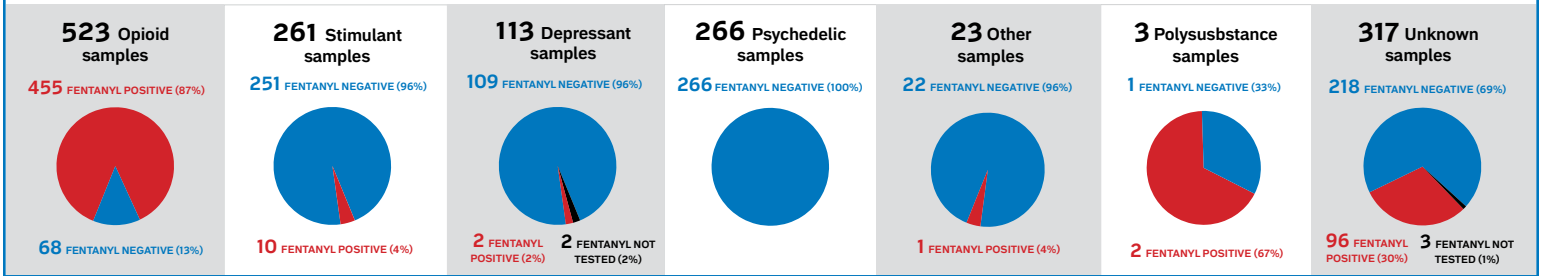
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: caffeine, creatine, fentanyl, no library match, procaine, uncertain carbohydrate.

Components in methamphetamine



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

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

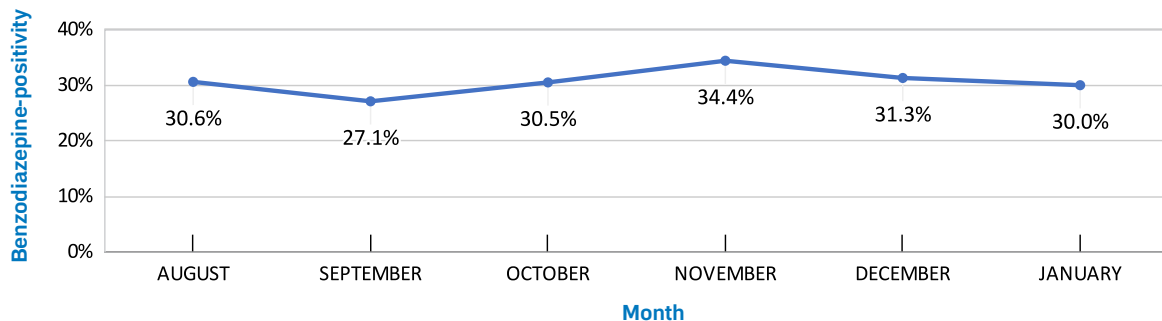


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	FTIR Spectroscopy Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
January 17, 2024 Vancouver	GHB	Aniline	Negative	N/A	Brown liquid sold as GHB in Vancouver tested positive for aniline and negative for GHB. Aniline is an irritant that can be toxic if ingested.
<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>					

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 January, **30%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**157 samples of 523 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
Get Your Drugs Tested (Vancouver)	1234
Insite (Vancouver)	225
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	38
WCSS (Whistler)	7
Total:	1506

Less than 5 samples were tested at the following location, which is included in the total: Tla'amin Nation (Powell River).

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Matched	Did Not Match	Match Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	474	41	8	523
Stimulant	251	10	0	261
Depressant	82	28	3	113
Psychedelic	236	20	10	266
Other	10	3	10	23
Polysubstance	3	0	0	3
Unknown	0	0	317	317
Total	1056	102	348	1506

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	99	4	0	103
Heroin	14	7	1	22
Down	339	10	0	349
Pharmaceutical	16	20	7	43
Opium	6	0	0	6
Total	474	41	8	523

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:

