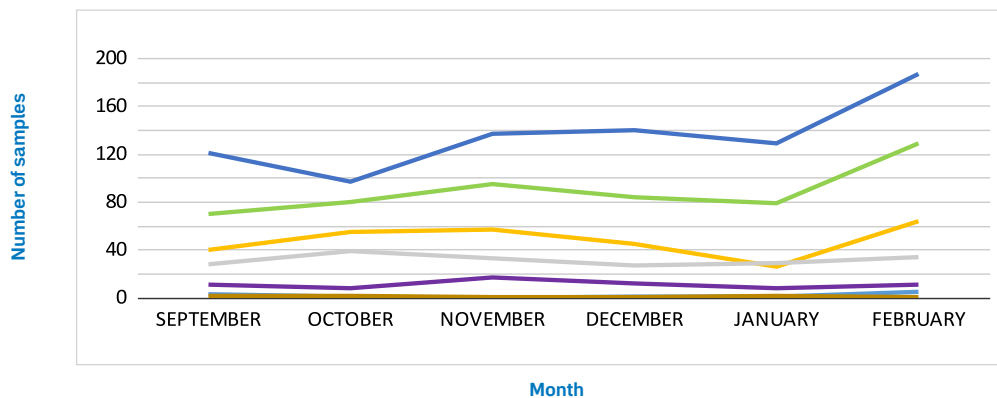


## Key Findings

- In February, a total of 430 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 decreased from 76.0% to 73.3% in February (137 of 187 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 29.3% of unregulated opioids (51 of 174 samples), with bromazolam most frequently detected (29 samples), followed by desalkylgidazepam (19 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected by FTIR in 41.4% of unregulated opioids (72 of 174 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 44.8% (78 samples).
- Xylazine detection by FTIR has been increasing in the region. Xylazine was found in 6.9% of unregulated opioid samples in February (12 of 174 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



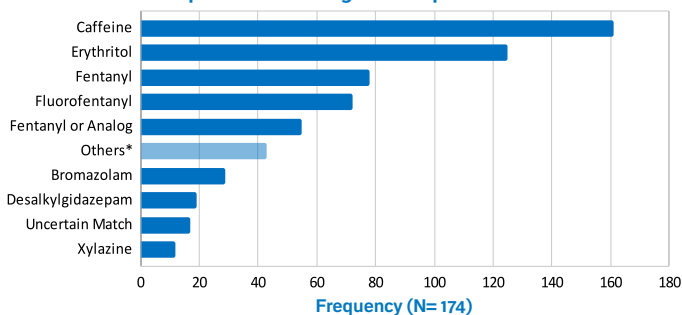
Number of samples by drug category in February

Opioid	187
Stimulant	129
Depressant	11
Psychedelic	64
Other	5
Polysubstance	0
Unknown	34

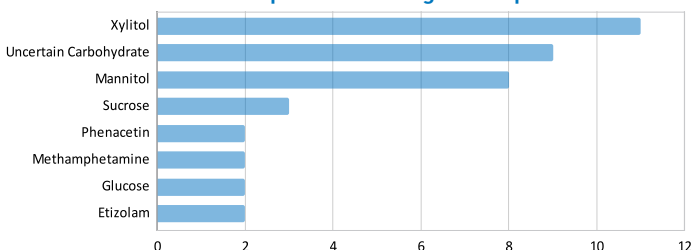
**TOTAL: 430**

## Components found in drug samples in February

### Components in unregulated opioids

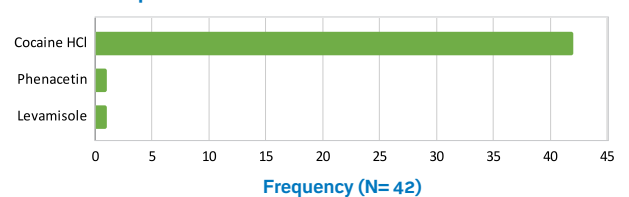


### \*Other components in unregulated opioids

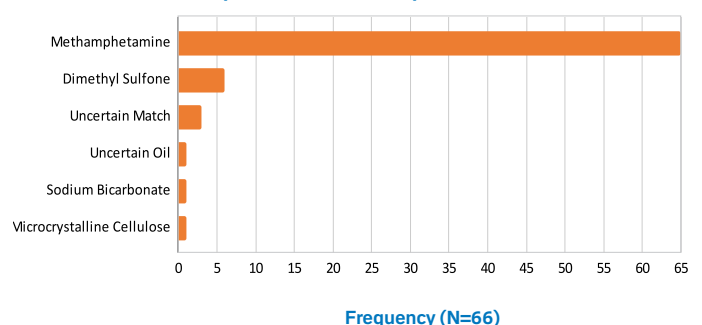


Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: carfentanil, cocaine base, dimethyl sulfone, flubromazepam, isotonitazene, polyethylene.

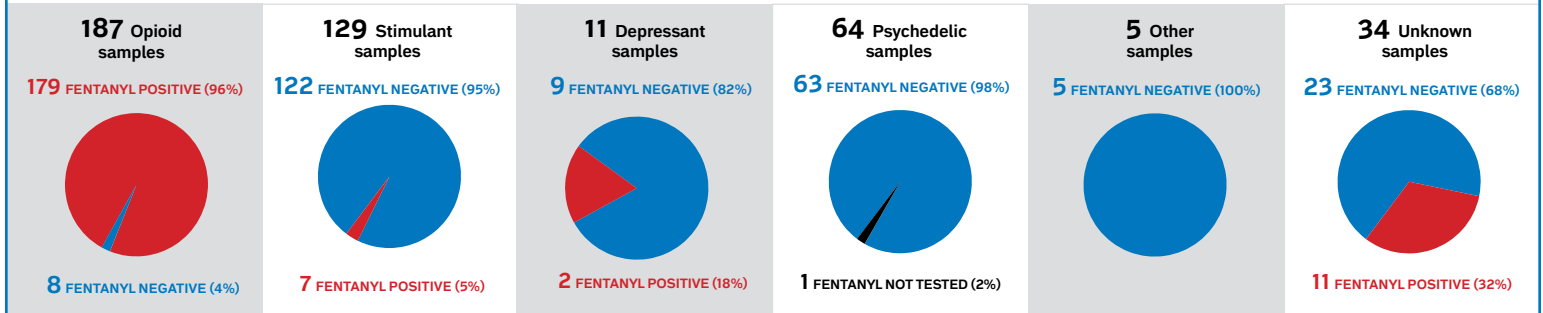
### Components in cocaine



### Components in methamphetamine



## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

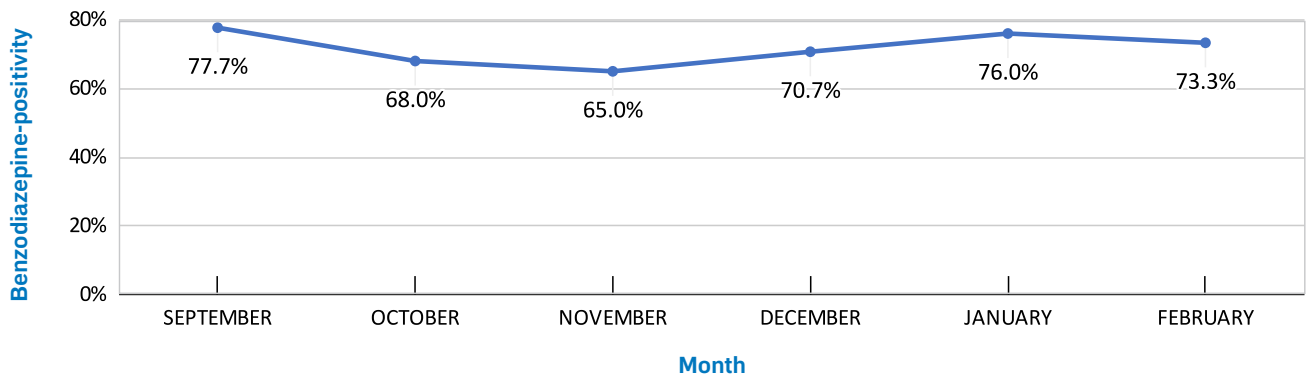
Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
February 14, 2024 Vernon	Down	Fentanyl	Positive	Negative	Substance that looks like meth is sold as down and contains undiluted fentanyl in Vernon.
February 16, 2024 Cranbrook	Down	Fentanyl, Caffeine, Bromazolam, Uncertain Carbohydrate	Positive	Positive	Pinkish-purple chunks sold as down tested positive for high concentrations fentanyl (14%), and bromazolam (10%) in Cranbrook.*

\*Quantitative results provided by complementary testing partner [Substance](#) using Paper Spray Mass Spectrometry, all other spectroscopy results are determined by FTIR.

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 February, **73.3%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**137 samples of 187 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)	66
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	24
ANKORS (Nelson)	79
ANKORS (Trail)	9
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	39
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	51
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	36
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	118
<b>Total</b>	<b>430</b>

Less than 5 samples were tested at each of the following locations, which are included in the total: ANKORS (Castlegar), ANKORS (Invermere), ASK Wellness (Merritt), 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	176	9	2	187
Stimulant	125	3	1	129
Depressant	10	1	0	11
Psychedelic	57	5	2	64
Other	3	2	0	5
Unknown	0	0	34	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>430</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 	57	0	0	57
Heroin 	0	2	0	2
Down 	115	0	0	115
Pharmaceutical 	4	7	2	13
<b>Total</b> 	176	9	2	187

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:

