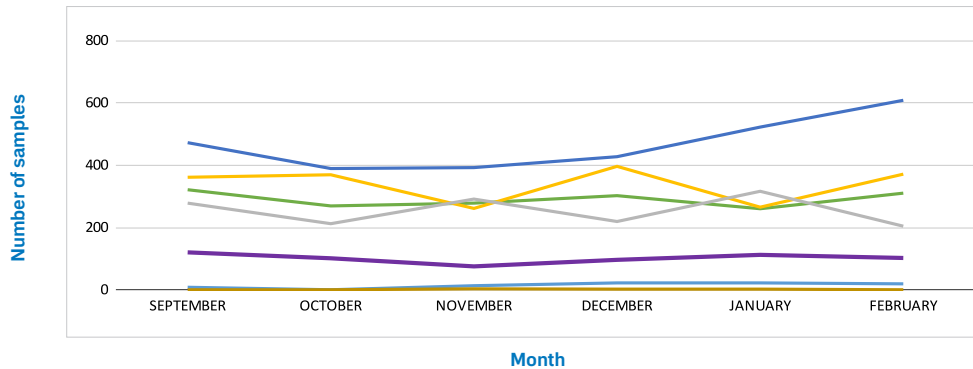


Key Findings

- In February, a total of 1,621 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 increased from 30.0% to 32.8 in February (200 of 609 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 11.1% of unregulated opioids (59 of 533 samples), with bromazolam most frequently identified (45 samples), followed by desalkylgidazepam (13 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 14.6% of unregulated opioids (78 of 533 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 42.2% (225 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 0.2% of unregulated opioids (1 of 533 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



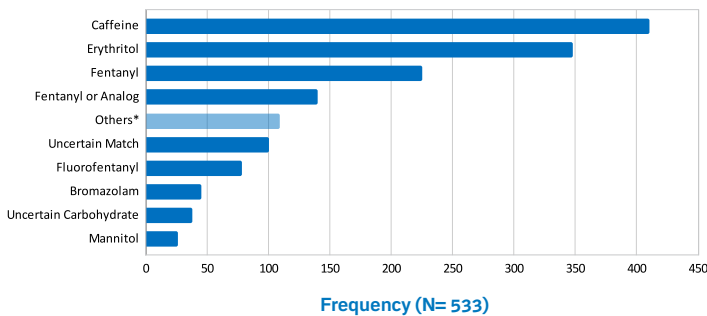
Number of samples by drug category in February

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Opioid | 609 |
| Stimulant | 311 |
| Depressant | 103 |
| Psychedelic | 372 |
| Other | 20 |
| Polysubstance | 1 |
| Unknown | 205 |

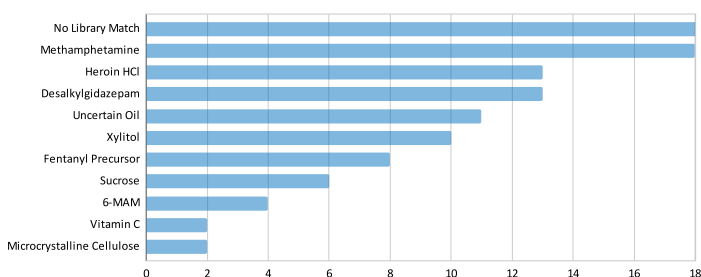
TOTAL: 1,621

Components found in drug samples in February

Components in unregulated opioids

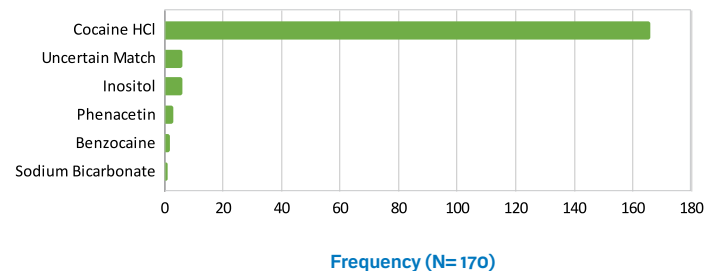


Other components in unregulated opioids



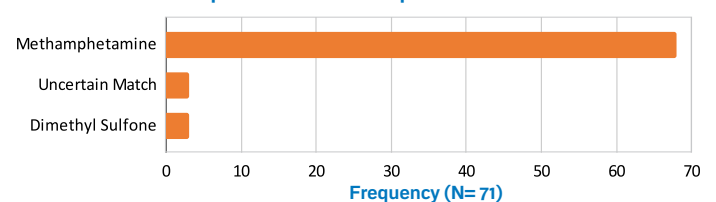
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: lactose, caffeine citrate, inositol, flualprazolam, fentanyl base, uncertain mineral, dimethyl sulfone, xylazine, MDP2P.

Components in cocaine



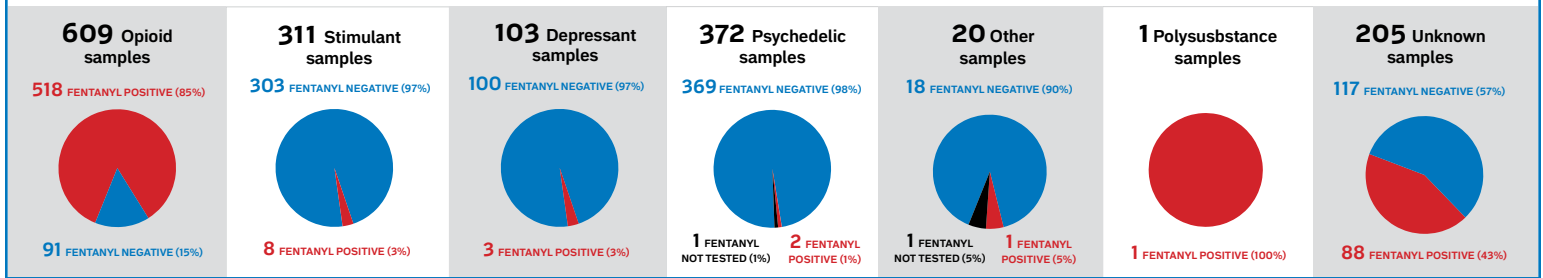
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: acetaminophen, cocaine base, glucose, ketamine, lactose, mannitol, sodium bicarbonate.

Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: ketamine, uncertain oil, uncertain match, uncertain salt, no library match.

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



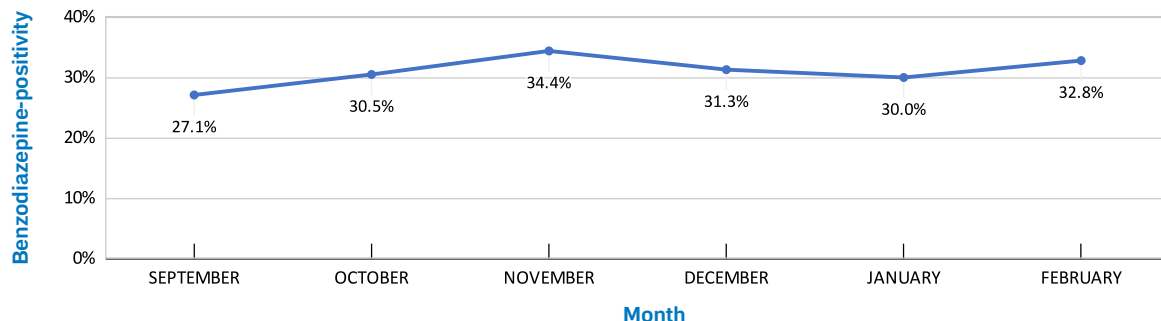
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

| Date & Location | Expected Drug | Drugs Detected | Fentanyl Strip | Benzo Strip | Alert Message |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|--|
| February 14, 2024 Vancouver | Crack Cocaine | Fentanyl Base | Positive | Negative | White pebbles sold as crack cocaine in the DTES of Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and negative for cocaine. Substance has caused OD. |
| February 28, 2024 Vancouver | Methamphetamine | Ketamine | Negative | Negative | Clear crystals sold as methamphetamine in Vancouver tested positive for ketamine and negative for methamphetamine. |

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 February, **32.8%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**200 samples of 609 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) | 1285 |
| Insite (Vancouver) | 250 |
| LIFT Community Services (Powell River) | 53 |
| WCSS (Whistler) | 33 |
| Total: | 1621 |

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

| EXPECTED DRUG | Matched | Did Not Match | Match Not Determined | Samples Tested |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Opioid | 564 | 31 | 14 | 609 |
| Stimulant | 289 | 20 | 2 | 311 |
| Depressant | 79 | 24 | 0 | 103 |
| Psychedelic | 333 | 18 | 21 | 372 |
| Other | 13 | 3 | 4 | 20 |
| Polysubstance | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Unknown | 0 | 0 | 205 | 205 |
| Total | 1278 | 97 | 246 | 1621 |

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 | 101 | 6 | 0 | 107 |
| Heroin | 8 | 4 | 0 | 12 |
| Fentanyl and Heroin | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Down | 408 | 5 | 0 | 413 |
| Pharmaceutical | 30 | 14 | 14 | 58 |
| Opium | 17 | 1 | 0 | 18 |
| Total | 564 | 31 | 14 | 609 |

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:

