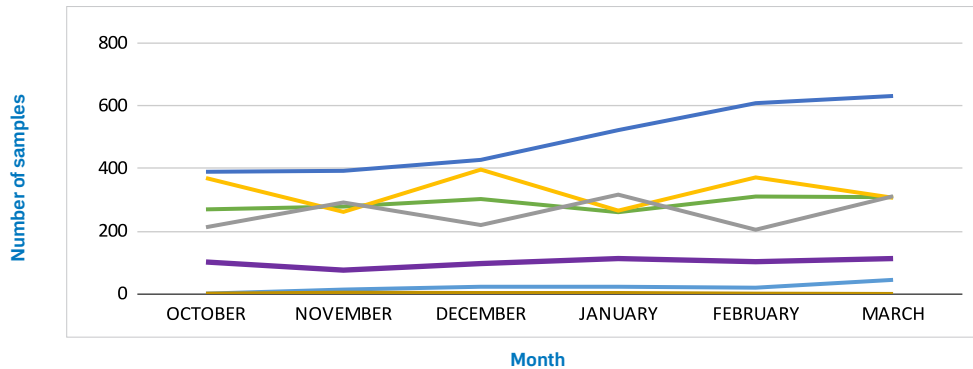


Key Findings

- In March, a total of 1,718 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 32.8% to 27.8% in March (176 of 632 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 8.2% of unregulated opioids (45 of 549 samples), with bromazolam most frequently identified (41 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 14.8% of unregulated opioids (81 of 549 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 55.9% (307 samples).
- Ortho-Methylfentanyl has recently emerged in the drug supply, and was found in 8.2% of unregulated opioids (45 of 549 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 1.1% of unregulated opioids (6 of 549 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



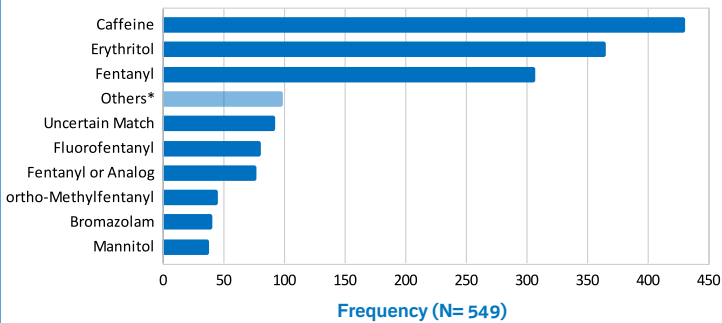
Number of samples by drug category in March

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

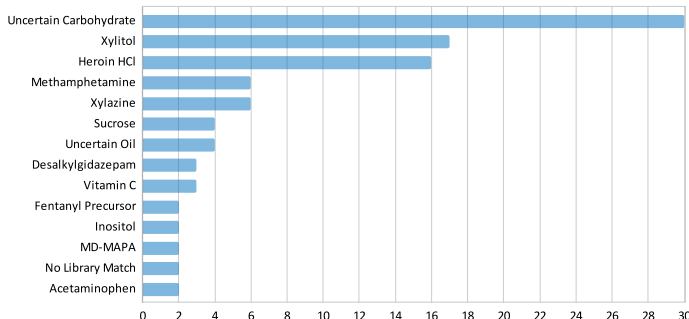
TOTAL: 1,718

Components found in drug samples in March

Components in unregulated opioids

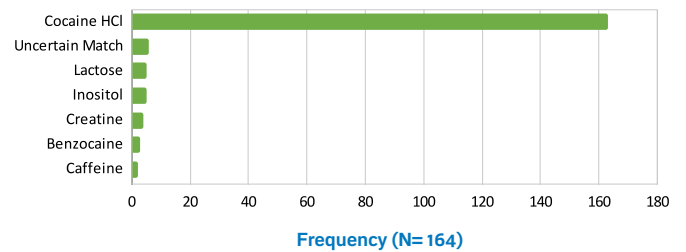


Other components in unregulated opioids



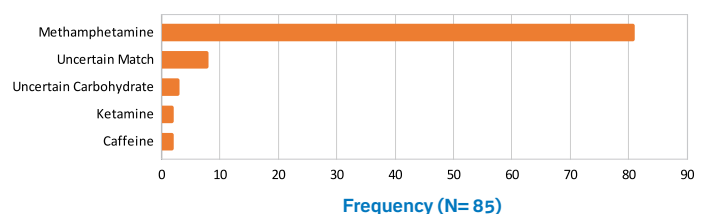
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: lactose, opium, phenacetin, etizolam, dimethyl sulfone, uncertain mineral, DMT, cocaine HCl, cocaine base, 6-MAM.

Components in cocaine



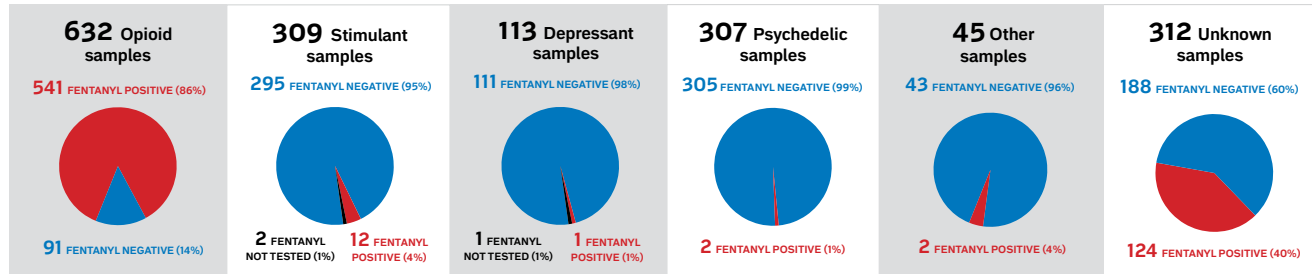
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: boric acid, glutamine, ketamine, lidocaine, procaine, uncertain carbohydrate, xylitol.

Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: dimethyl sulfone, erythritol, fentanyl or analog, mannitol, microcrystalline cellulose, uncertain mineral.

Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



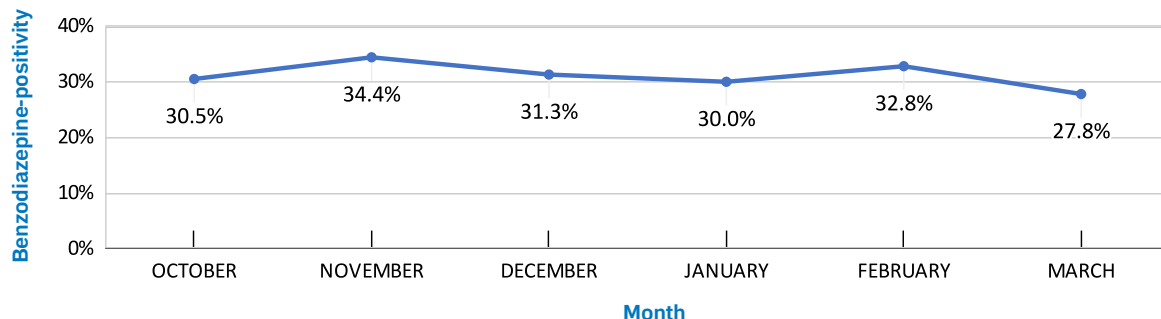
PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
March 4, 2024 Vancouver	Crack Cocaine	Cocaine Base	Negative	Positive	White pebbles sold as crack cocaine in the DTES of Vancouver tested positive for cocaine and benzodiazepines
March 11, 2024 Vancouver	Ketamine	No Library Match	Negative	Positive	White powder expected to be ketamine in Vancouver tested positive for benzodiazepines and negative for ketamine
March 26, 2024 Vancouver	Tucibi	Ketamine, MDMA, Caffeine, Mannitol, Uncertain Match	Negative	Positive	Pink powder sold in Vancouver as “tuci” or “tusi”, which typically is expected to contain ketamine, MDMA and/or stimulants, tested positive for ketamine, MDMA, and benzos

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 March, **27.8%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**176 samples of 632 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)	1399
Insite (Vancouver)	252
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	54
WCSS (Whistler)	13
Total:	1718

Number of samples with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	588	30	14	632
Stimulant	295	12	2	309
Depressant	81	31	1	113
Psychedelic	269	18	20	307
Other	21	5	19	45
Unknown	0	0	312	312
Total	1254	96	368	1718

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 with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG		Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Fentanyl		124	2	0	126
Heroin		12	8	0	20
Down		401	2	0	403
Pharmaceutical		41	17	13	71
Opium		10	1	1	12
Total		588	30	14	632

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:

