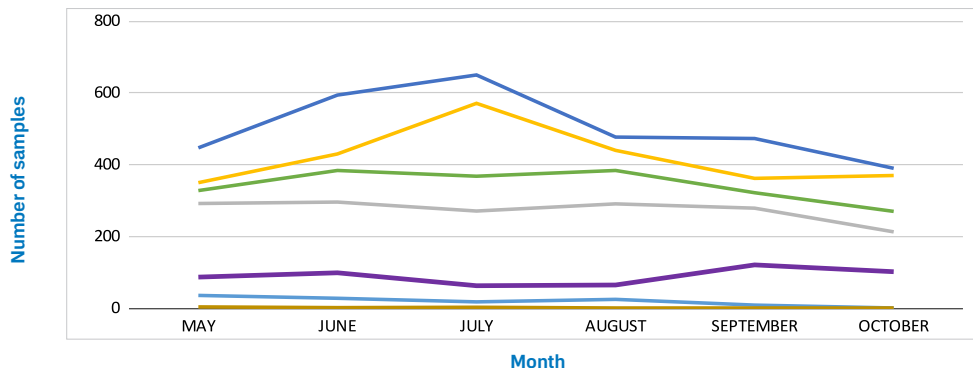


## Key Findings

- In October, a total of 1,347 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 27.1% to 30.5% in October (119 of 390 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 4.2% of unregulated opioid samples checked (15 of 356 samples), with bromazolam most frequently detected (14 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 14.3% of unregulated opioid samples (51 of 356 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 50.8% (181 samples).
- Xylazine was detected in 1.4% of unregulated opioid samples (5 of 356 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



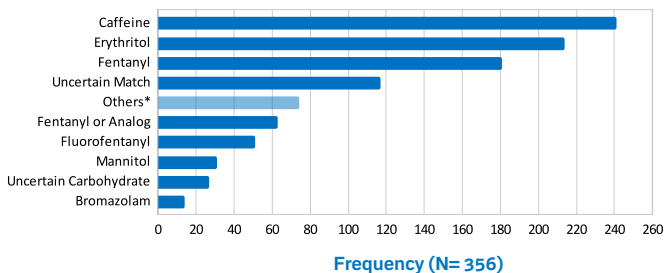
### Number of samples by drug category in October

Opioid	390
Stimulant	270
Depressant	102
Psychedelic	370
Other	1
Polysubstance	1
Unknown	213

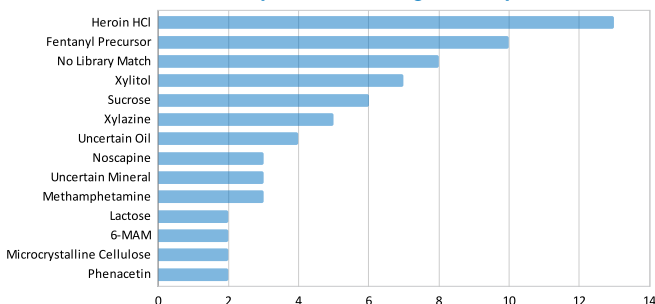
**TOTAL: 1,347**

## Components found in drug samples in October

### Components in unregulated opioids

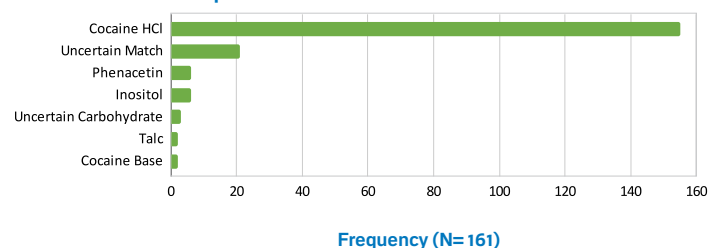


### Other components in unregulated opioids



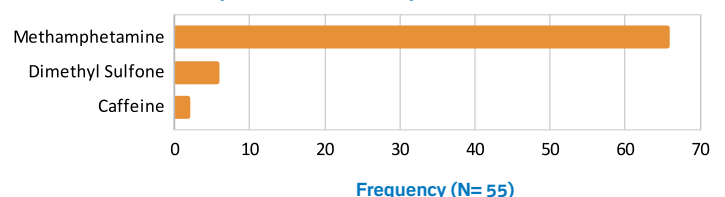
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: cocaine base, MDMA, inositol, glucose, flualprazolam, fentanyl citrate, fentanyl base, propylene glycol, stearic acid, etomidate, dimethyl sulfone, dextrose, cocaine hcl.

### Components in cocaine



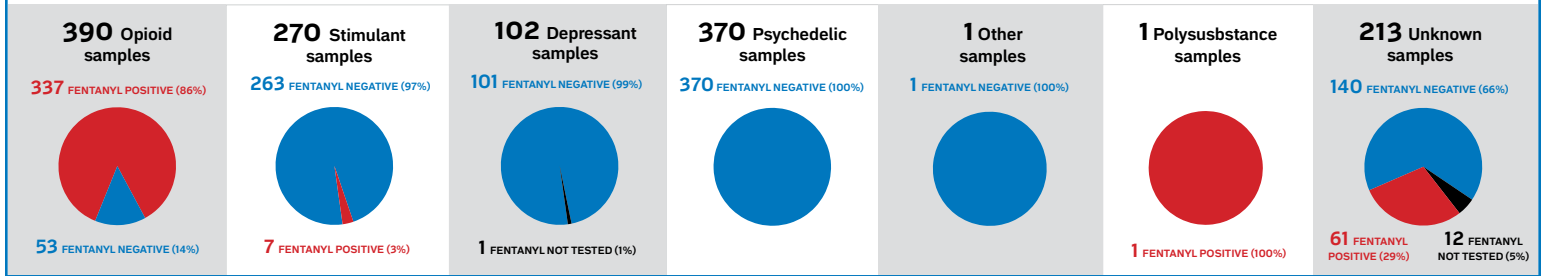
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: caffeine, glutamine, ketamine, levamisole, sodium bicarbonate.

### Components in methamphetamine



Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: dimethyl sulfone, THC.

## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



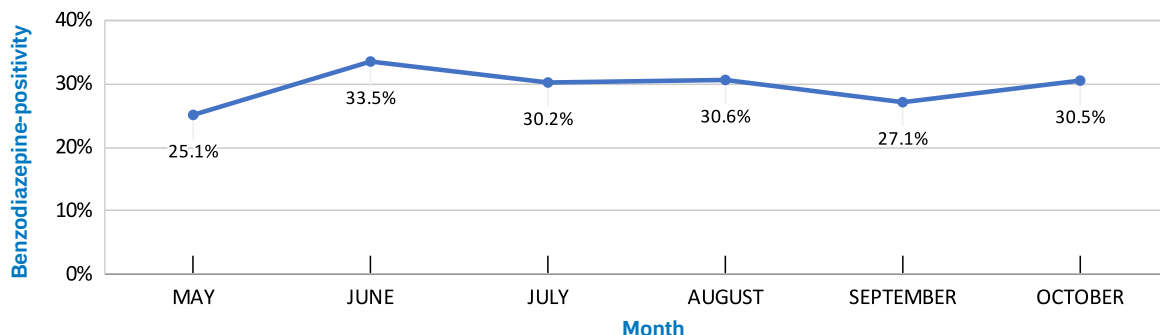
## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
October 10, 2023 Vancouver	Down	Bromazolam, Uncertain Carbohydrate	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Yellow powder sold as down in Vancouver tested positive for bromazolam, a benzo analog, and fentanyl.
October 23, 2023 Vancouver	Hydromorphone	Lactose, Uncertain Carbohydrate, Hydromorphone, Uncertain Oil	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Light pink chunk sold as hydromorphone in Vancouver tested positive for hydromorphone, fentanyl, and benzos.
October 25, 2023 Vancouver	Fentanyl	Fentanyl, Bromazolam, Caffeine, Uncertain Carbohydrate	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Pink granules sold as fentanyl in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and bromazolam, a benzo analog.
October 31, 2023 Vancouver	Crack Cocaine	Cocaine Base, Ketamine Base	Negative	N/A	Vancouver	Grey granules sold as crack cocaine in Vancouver tested positive for cocaine and ketamine.

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 October, **30.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**119 samples of 390 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)	1273
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	63
Tla'amin Nation (Powell River)	7
WCSS (Whistler)	4
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1347</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	356	29	5	390
Stimulant	258	11	1	270
Depressant	87	15	0	102
Psychedelic	349	11	10	370
Other	1	0	0	1
Polysubstance	1	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	213	213
<b>Total</b>	<b>1052</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>1347</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	113	4	1	118
Heroin	6	7	0	13
Other Opioid	2	1	0	3
Down	217	8	0	225
Pharmaceutical	13	9	4	26
Opium	5	0	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>390</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:

