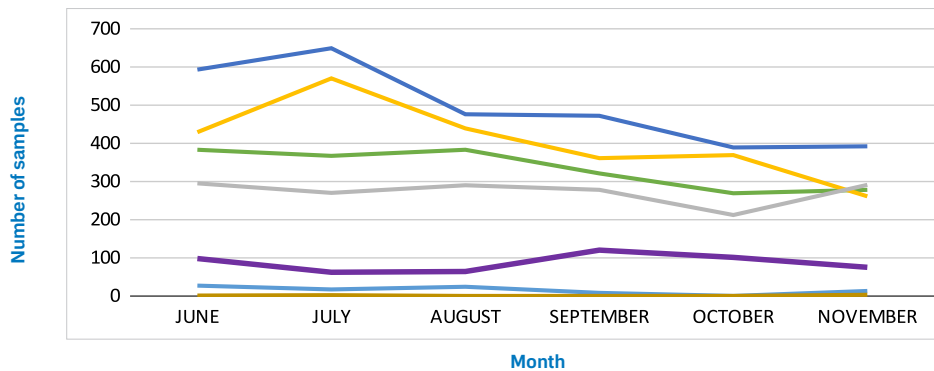


## Key Findings

- In November, a total of 1,320 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 30.5% to 34.4% in November (135 of 393 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were found in concentrations high enough to be detected by FTIR in 9.8% of unregulated opioids checked (33 of 336 samples), with bromazolam most frequently detected (31 samples).
- Fluorofentanyl was detected in 16.6% of unregulated opioids (56 of 336 samples), whereas fentanyl was detected in 50.0% (168 samples).
- Xylazine was detected in 1.5% of unregulated opioids (5 of 336 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



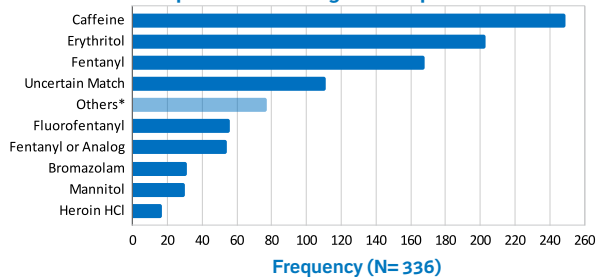
Number of samples by drug category in November

Opioid	393
Stimulant	279
Depressant	76
Psychedelic	262
Other	14
Polysubstance	4
Unknown	292

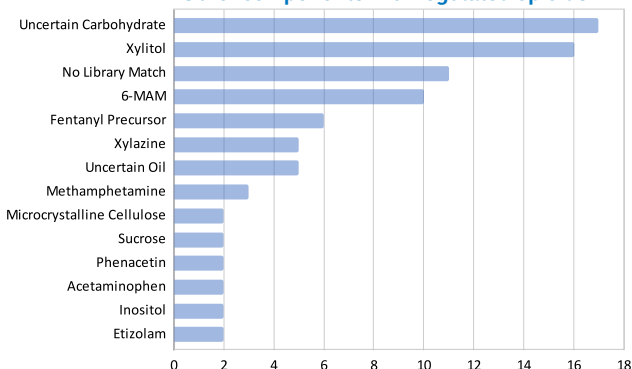
**TOTAL: 1,320**

## Components found in drug samples in November

### Components in unregulated opioids

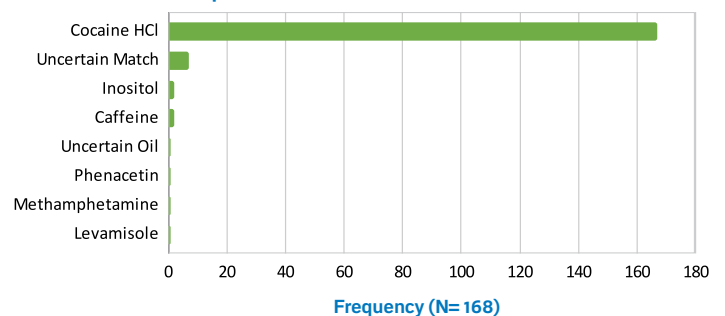


### \*Other components in unregulated opioids

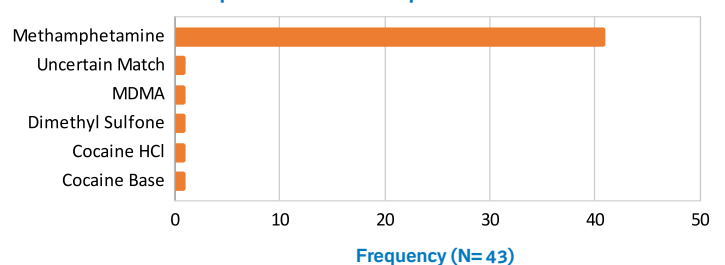


Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: heroin base, cocaine hcl, noscapine, phenylhydrazine, cocaine base.

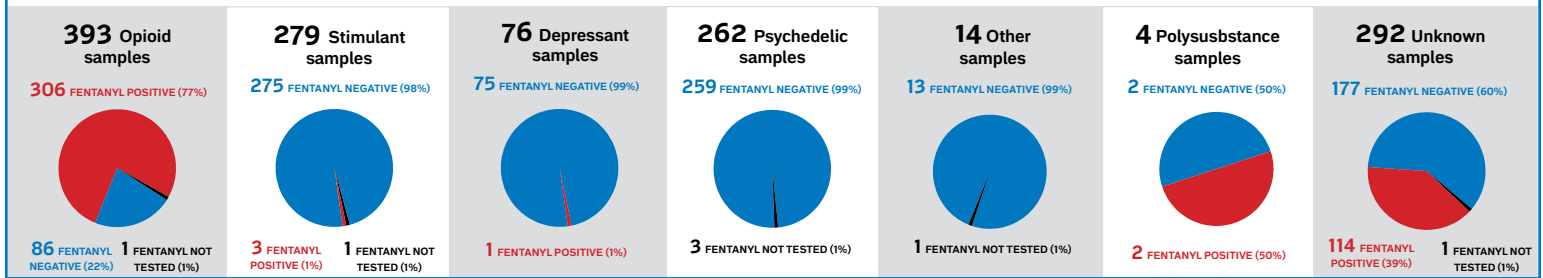
### Components in cocaine



### Components in methamphetamine



## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



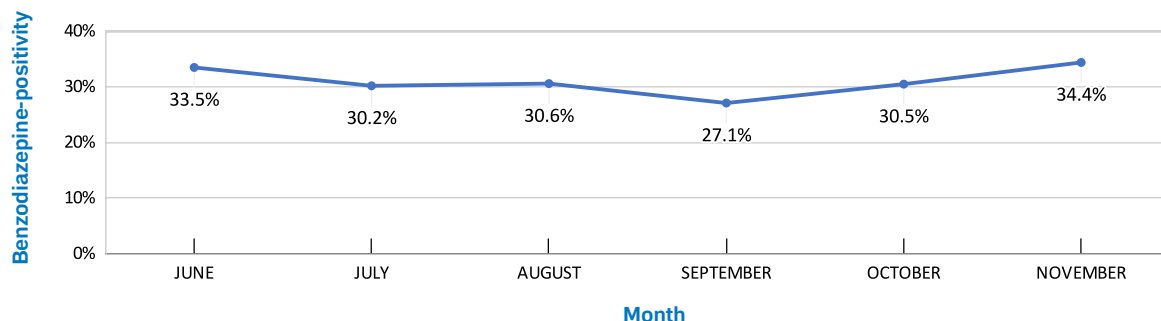
## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
November 21, 2023 Vancouver	Down	Fentanyl, Xylitol, Bromazolam, Xylazine	Positive	Positive	Vancouver	Purple granules sold as down in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl, xylazine and bromazolam, a benzo analogue
November 30, 2023 Vancouver	DMT	AMB-FUBINACA, Caffeine	Positive	Negative	Vancouver	White powder sold as DMT in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and AMB-FUBINACA, a synthetic cannabinoid, and negative for DMT. Substance has caused overdose

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 November, **34.4%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**135 samples of 393 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)	1,256
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	52
Tla'amin Nation (Powell River)	5
WCSS (Whistler)	7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1320</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	352	24	17	393
Stimulant	270	9	0	279
Depressant	64	10	2	76
Psychedelic	231	18	13	262
Other	5	2	7	14
Polysubstance	1	1	2	4
Unknown	0	0	292	292
<b>Total</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>1320</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 	71	2	0	73
Heroin 	16	9	0	25
Other Opioid	0	1	0	1
Down 	233	8	0	241
Pharmaceutical 	20	3	17	40
Opium 	12	1	0	13
<b>Total</b> 	<b>352</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>393</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:

