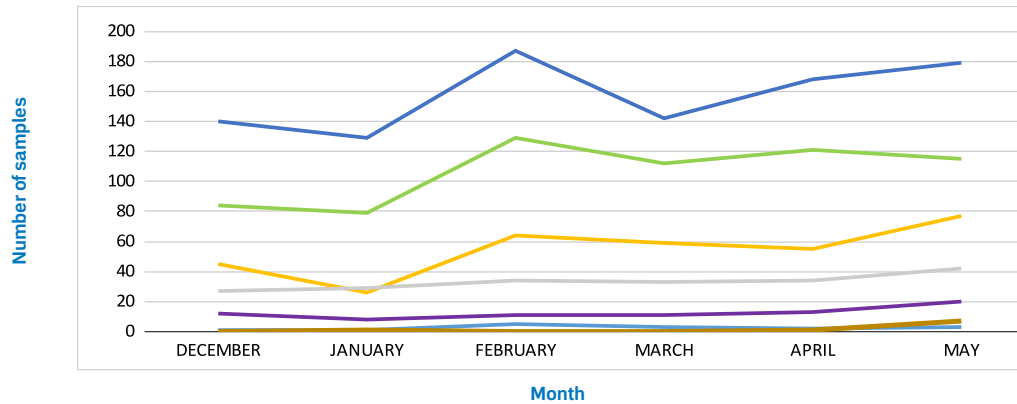


## Key Findings

- In May, a total of 443 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region (23 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to 60.3% (108 of 179 samples). The true rate may be higher as benzo-like substances such as etizolam are not reliably detected with benzodiazepine test strips.
- Benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in 15.0% of unregulated opioids (25 of 167 samples), indicating their presence in higher concentrations.
- Multiple fentanyl analogues have been detected in unregulated opioids. The most recent to emerge, ortho-Methylfentanyl, was detected by FTIR in 1.8% of samples (3 of 167). Fluorofentanyl was detected in 37.1% (62 samples).
- Xylazine detection by FTIR in unregulated opioids increased from 7.4% to 9.6% in May (16 of 167 samples).
- Drug checking services are available at several locations in the Interior Health region. To find drug checking services near you, please see our [site locator](#).

## Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



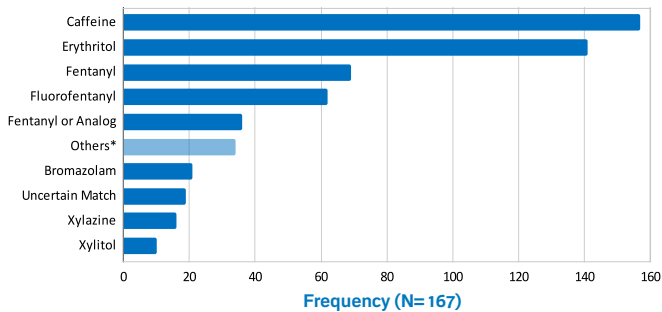
Number of samples by drug category in May

Opioid	179
Stimulant	115
Depressant	20
Psychedelic	77
Other	3
Polysubstance	7
Unknown	42

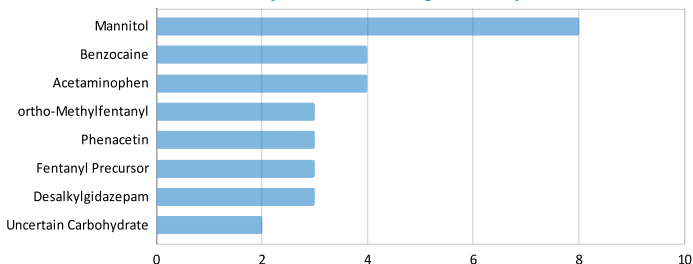
**TOTAL: 443**

## Components found in drug samples in May

### Components in unregulated opioids

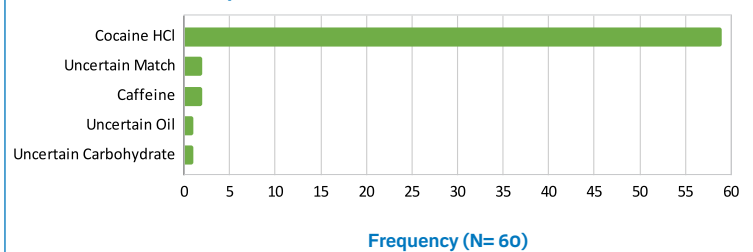


### \*Other components in unregulated opioids

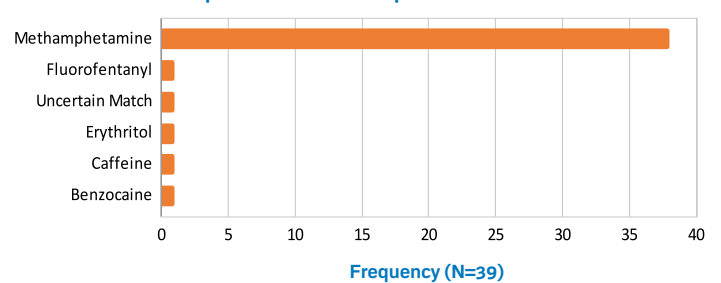


Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: etizolam, heroin HCl, lactose, methamphetamine, no library match, opium, sodium bicarbonate, THC.

### Components in cocaine



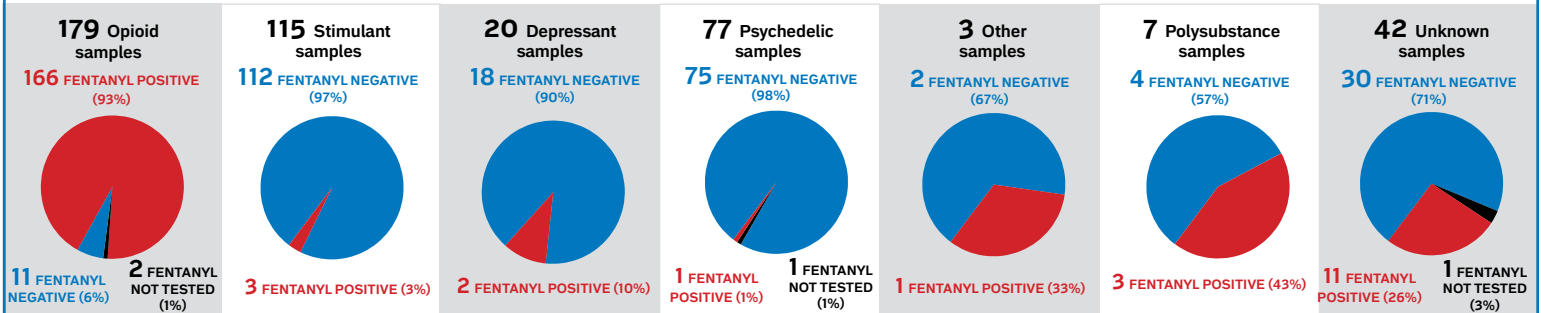
### Components in methamphetamine



May  
2024

# Drug Checking in Interior Health

## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

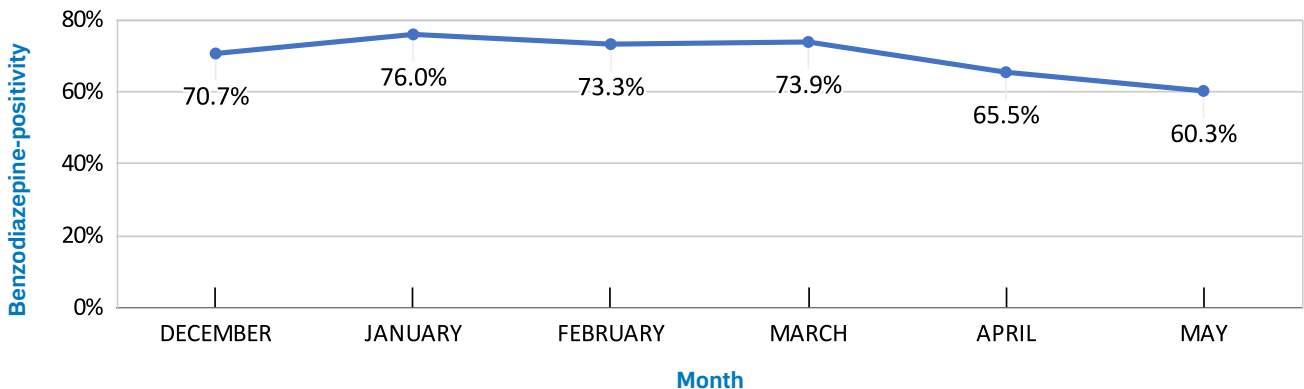


## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
No alerts for Interior Health this month.					

To subscribe to the provincial drug alert and response system, text the word JOIN to 253787 (ALERTS).

## Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the past 6 months



During the month of May, **60.3%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**108 samples of 179 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)	45
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	51
ANKORS (Nelson)	45
ANKORS (Trail)	20
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	67
ASK Wellness (Merritt)	5
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	37
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	27
UBCO HaRT (Kelowna)	141
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>

Less than 5 samples were tested at each of the following locations, which are included in the total:  
ANKORS (Castlegar), ASK Wellness (Williams Lake).

## Number of samples with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	165	8	6	179
Stimulant	108	6	1	115
Depressant	17	2	1	20
Psychedelic	68	9	0	77
Other	1	0	2	3
Polysubstance	3	0	4	7
Unknown	0	0	42	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>443</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 with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Fentanyl 	11	0	0	11
Heroin 	1	1	0	2
Down 	150	3	1	154
Pharmaceutical 	3	4	5	12
<b>Total</b> 	<b>165</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>179</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:

