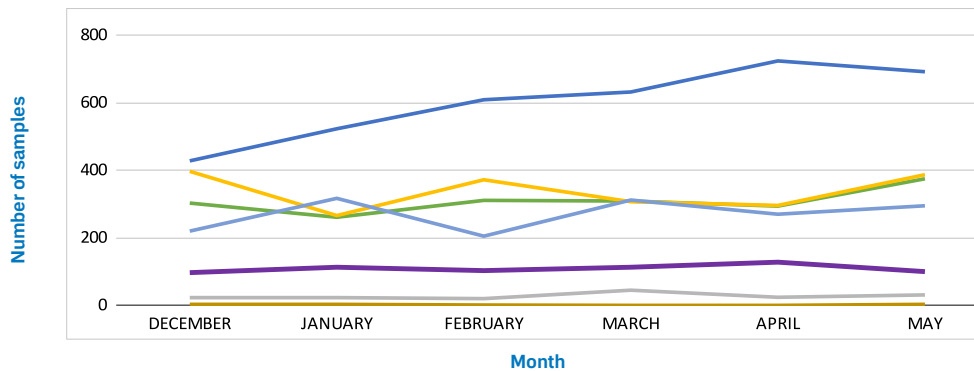


## Key Findings

- In May, a total of 1,883 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Vancouver Coastal region (10 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to 28.5% (197 of 692 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 9.3% of unregulated opioids (58 of 624 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 14.6% of samples (91 of 624). Fluorofentanyl was detected in 22.3% (139 samples).
- Xylazine detection by FTIR increased slightly from 1.1% to 1.6% of unregulated opioids in May (10 of 624 samples).
- Drug checking services are available at several locations in the Vancouver Coastal region. To find drug checking services near you, please see our [site locator](#)

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



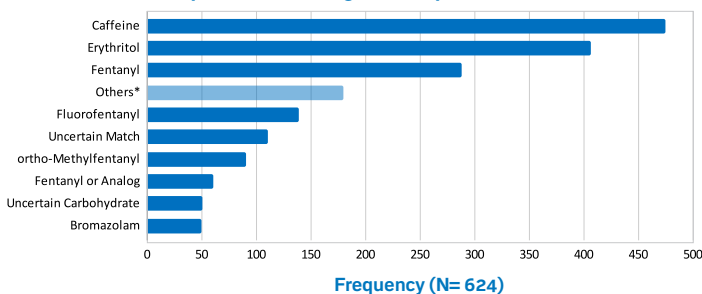
## Number of samples by drug category in May

Opioid	692
Stimulant	375
Depressant	100
Psychedelic	387
Other	31
Polysubstance	3
Unknown	295

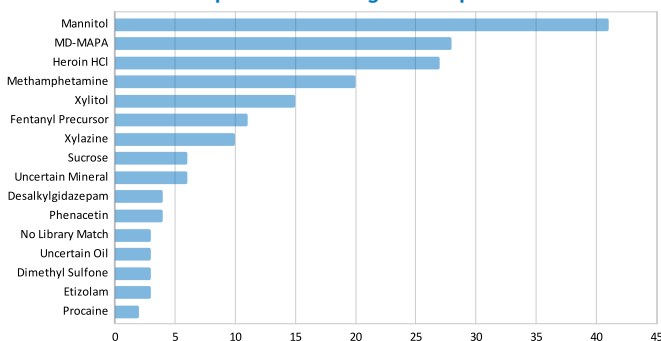
**TOTAL: 1,883**

## Components found in drug samples in May

### Components in unregulated opioids

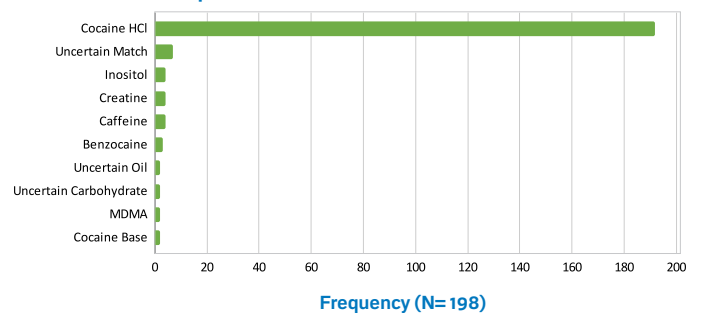


### Other components in unregulated opioids



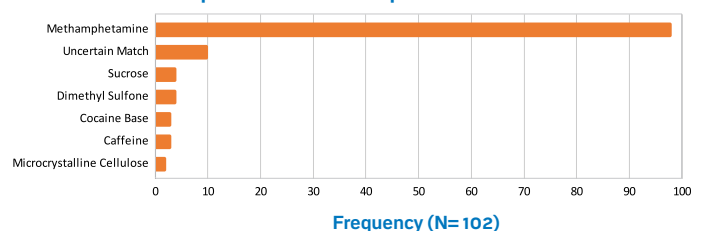
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: sodium bicarbonate, vitamin C, sodium sulfate, etodesnitazene, propylene glycol, cocaine base, MDP2P, MDAI, MAPA, flubromazepam, benzocaine.

### Components in cocaine



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

### Components in methamphetamine

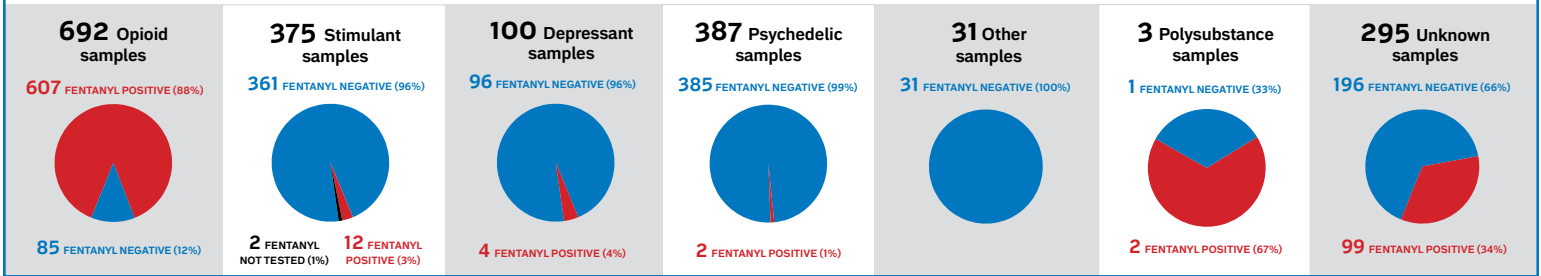


Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: erythritol, no library match, THC.

May  
2024

# Drug Checking in Vancouver Coastal

## Number of samples tested with fentanyl present



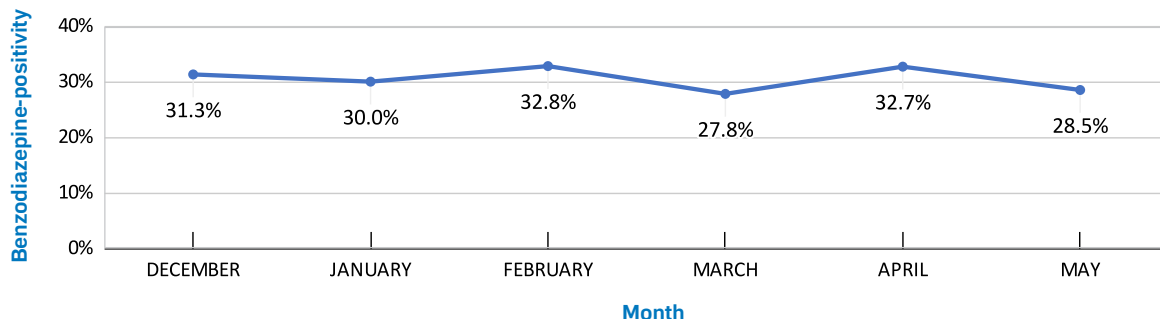
## PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
May 10, 2024 Vancouver	Oxycodone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Protonitazene, Uncertain Oil, Uncertain Match	Negative	Negative	Yellow pressed pill with imprint "40" resembling oxycodone sold in Vancouver tested positive for Protonitazene, a synthetic opioid, and negative for oxycodone
May 21, 2024 Vancouver	Cocaine	Caffeine	Positive	Negative	White granules sold as cocaine in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and negative for cocaine

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 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, **28.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**197 samples of 692 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)	1486
Insite (Vancouver)	284
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	91
Tla'amin Nation (Powell River)	6
WCSS (Whistler)	16
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1883</b>

## Number of samples with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	651	34	7	692
Stimulant	356	18	1	375
Depressant	88	12	0	100
Psychedelic	345	28	14	387
Other	18	4	9	31
Polysubstance	2	1	0	3
Unknown	0	0	295	295
<b>Total</b>	<b>1460</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>1883</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	147	0	0	147
Heroin	14	7	0	21
Down	449	7	0	456
Pharmaceutical	33	20	7	60
Opium	8	0	0	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>692</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:

