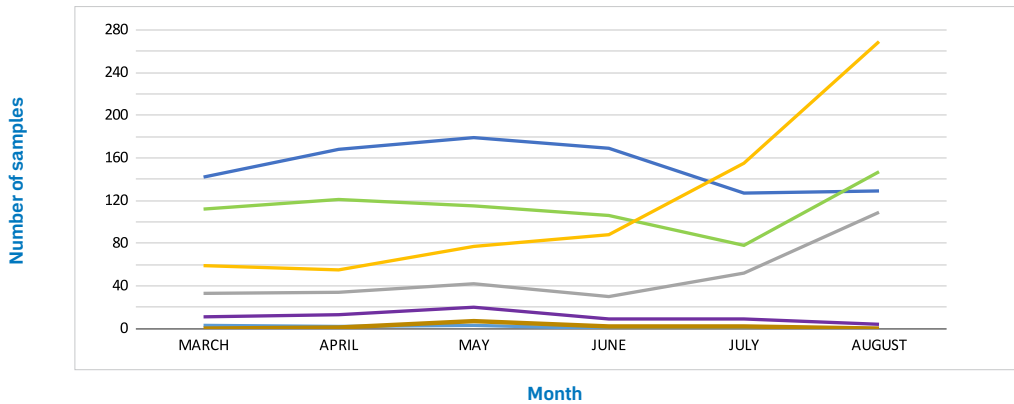


Key Findings

- In August, a total of 658 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region (16 access points). The number of psychedelics, stimulants, and unknown samples (ground finds) increased, primarily due to drug checking services being provided at Wicked Woods and Electric Love music festivals.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to 61.2% (79 of 129 samples). The true rate may be higher as benzo-like substances such as etizolam are not reliably detected by benzodiazepine test strips.
- Benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in 15.7% of unregulated opioids (20 of 127 samples), indicating their presence in higher concentrations.
- Fluorofentanyl was the most common fentanyl analogue detected by FTIR in unregulated opioids (47.2%; 60 of 127 samples), followed by fentanyl (35.4%; 45 samples). Ortho-Methylfentanyl was detected in 2.4% (3 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 4.7% of unregulated opioids (6 of 127 samples).
- To find drug checking services near you, please see our [site locator](#).

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



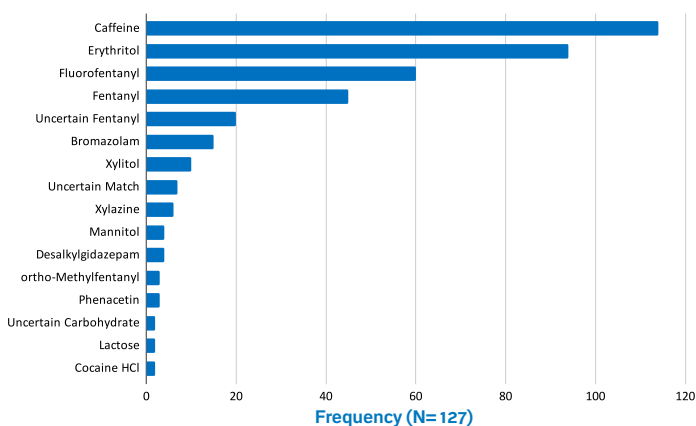
Number of samples by drug category in August

Opioid	129
Stimulant	147
Depressant	4
Psychedelic	269
Other	0
Polysubstance	0
Unknown	109

TOTAL: 658

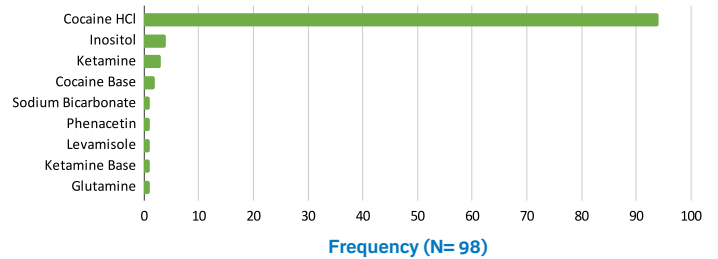
Components found in drug samples in August

Components in unregulated opioids

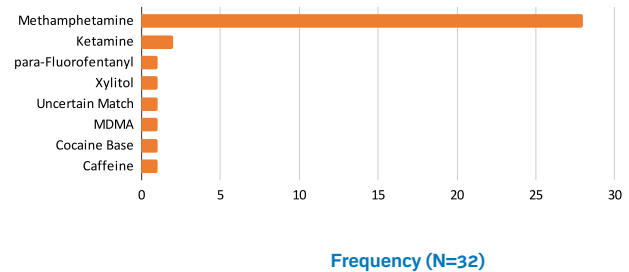


Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: 4-Chloro-deschloroalprazolam, fentanyl base, ketamine base, medetomidine, methamphetamine, sodium silicate, stearic acid, uncertain oil.

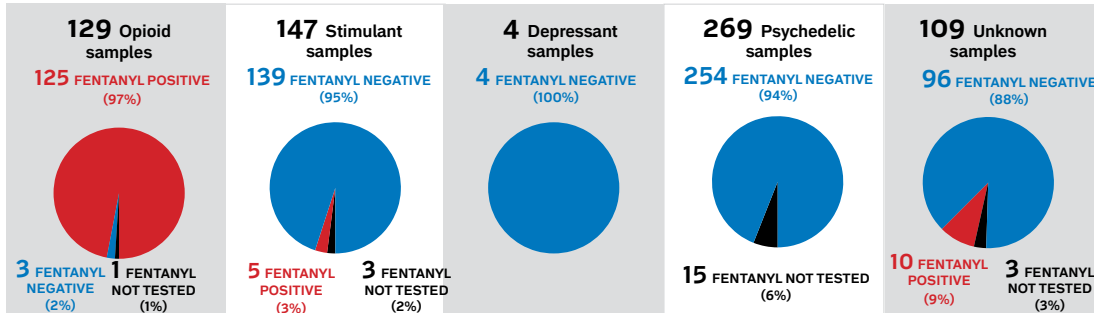
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

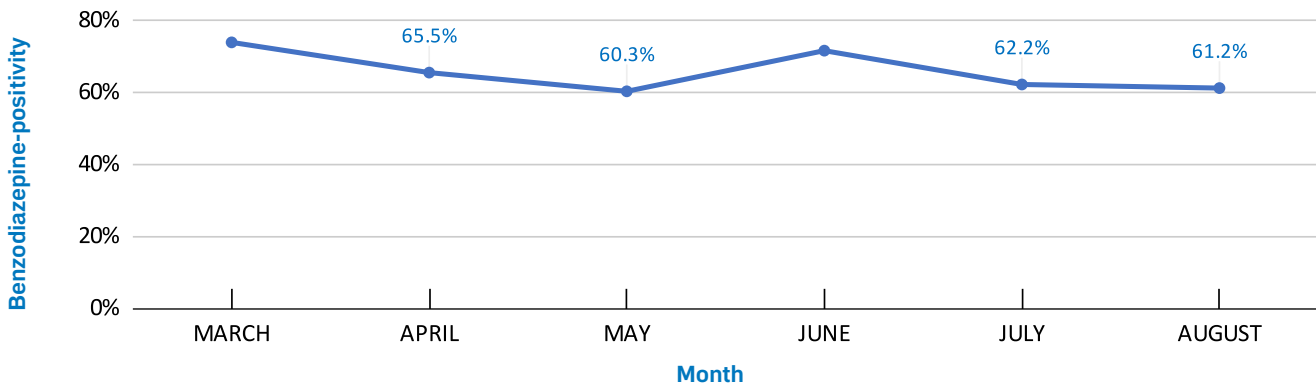


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	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 August, **61.2%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**79 samples of 129 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 (Castlegar)	5
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	46
ANKORS (Wicked Woods Music Festival)	203
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	14
ANKORS (Nelson)	75
ANKORS (Trail)	5
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	52
Ask Wellness (Electric Love Music Festival)	110
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	59
Interior Health (Kelowna)	62
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	27
Total	658

Number of samples with expected drug present

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG	Present	Not Present	Presence Not Determined	Samples Tested
Opioid	123	5	1	129
Stimulant	140	7	0	147
Depressant	2	2	0	4
Psychedelic	253	11	5	269
Unknown	0	0	109	109
Total	518	25	115	658

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	4	0	0	4
Down	119	3	0	122
Heroin	0	1	0	1
Pharmaceutical	0	1	1	2
Total	123	5	1	129

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:

