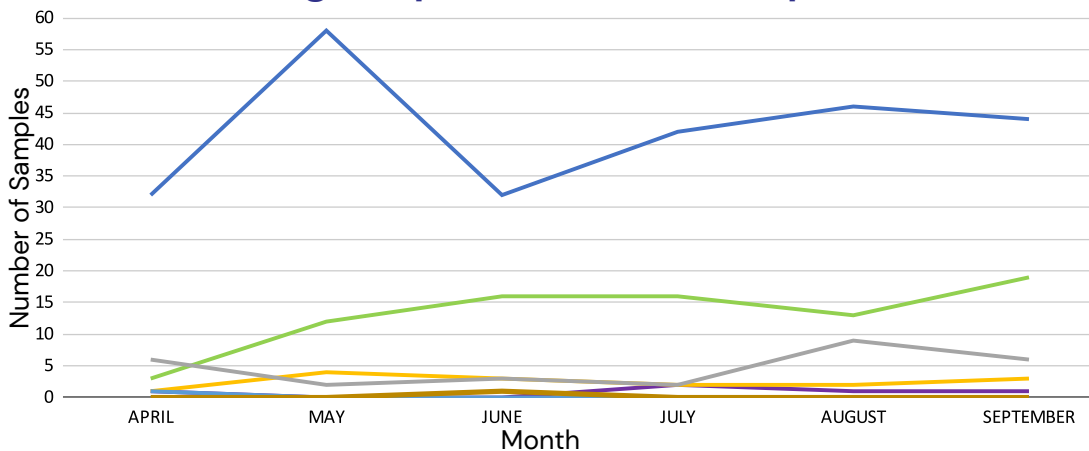




Key Findings

- In September, a total of 73 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region (5 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to 43.2% (19 of 44 samples). The true rate may be higher as benzo-like substances such as etizolam are not reliably detected by test strips.
- Benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in 2.4% of unregulated opioids (1 of 41 samples), indicating its presence in higher concentrations.
- Fluorofentanyl was the most common fentanyl analog detected by FTIR in September (24.4%; 10 of 41 samples), surpassing fentanyl for the first time (14.6%; 6 samples). Ortho-Methylfentanyl was detected in 4.9% of unregulated opioids (2 samples).
- Note that trends are hard to infer due to the small number of samples over a large 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 Sept.

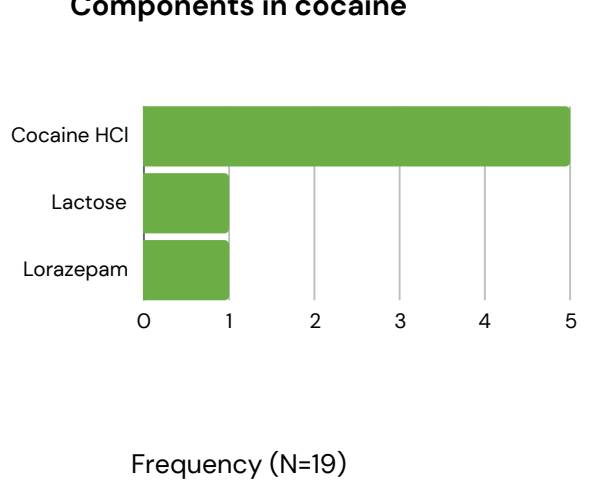
| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Opioid | 44 |
| Stimulant | 19 |
| Depressant | 1 |
| Psychedelic | 3 |
| Other | 0 |
| Polysubstance | 0 |
| Unknown | 6 |
| Total: | 73 |

Number of drug checks at each site

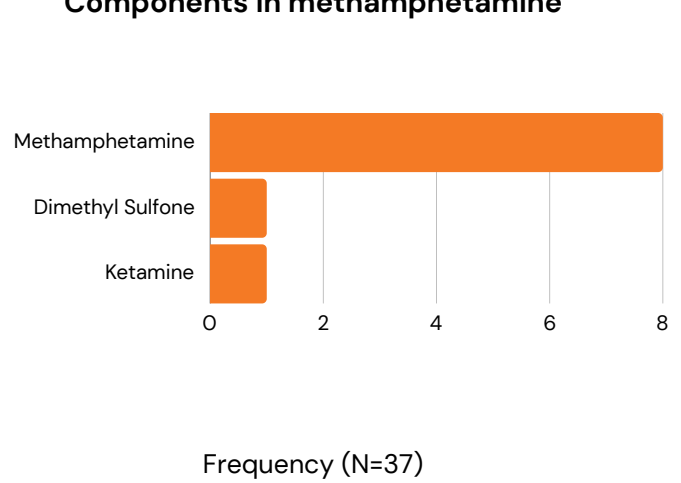
| Location | # of Drugs Checked |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| POUNDS (Prince George) | 48 |
| POUNDS (Quesnel) | 13 |
| POUNDS (Terrace) | 6 |
| Northwest ICMT (Terrace) | 6 |
| Total: | 73 |

Components found in drug samples in September

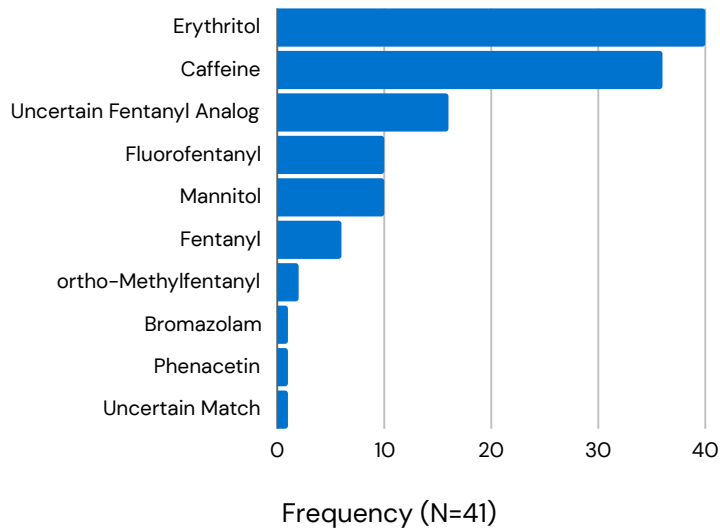
Components in cocaine



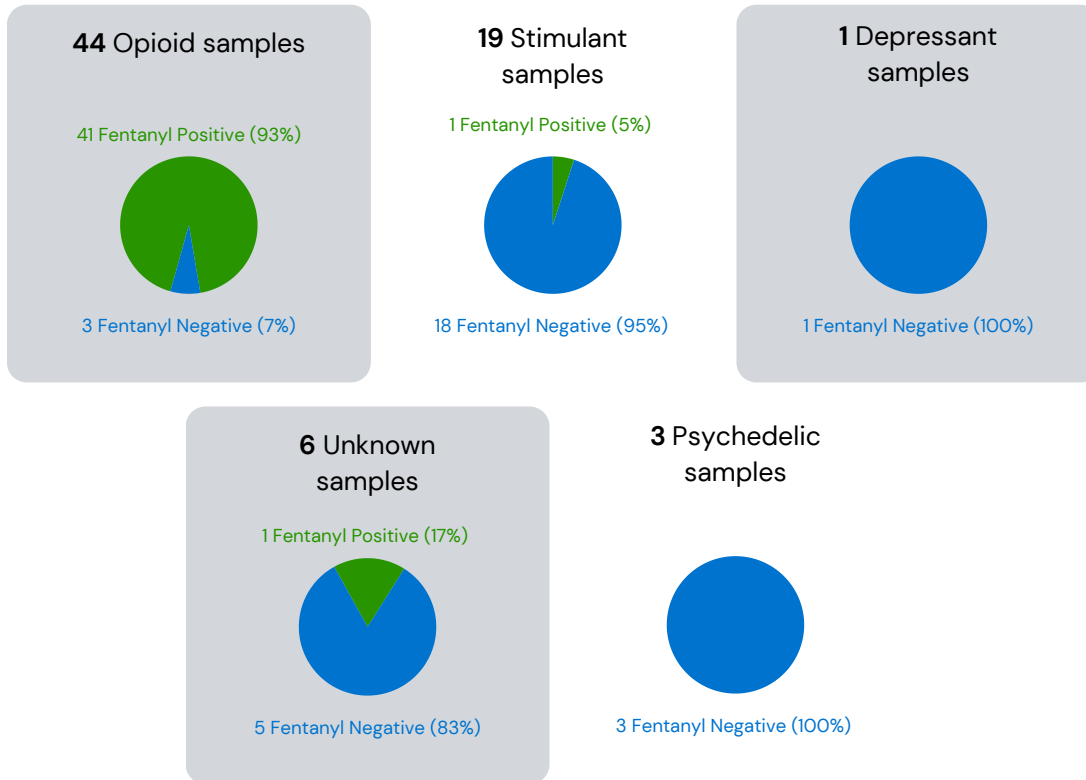
Components in methamphetamine



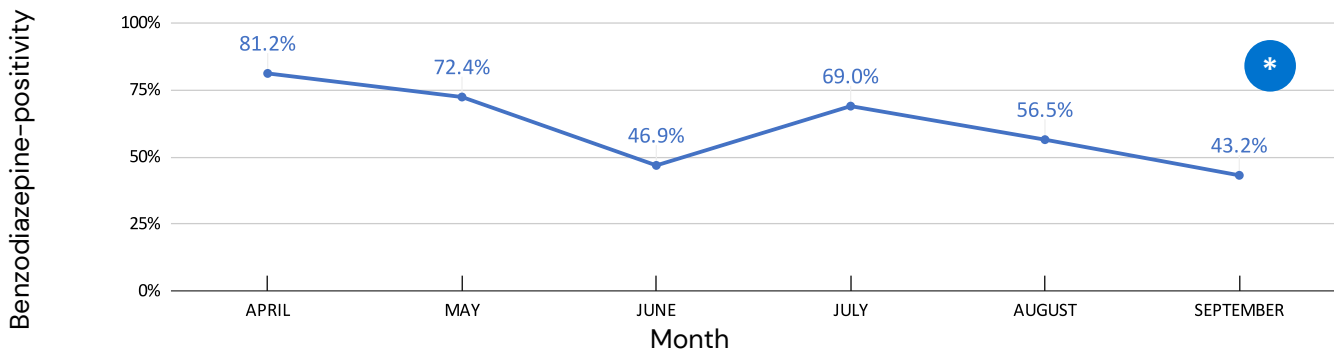
Components in unregulated opioids



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**









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







*During the month of September, **43.2%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner site in Northern Health (**19 samples of 44 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

Number of samples with expected drug present

| Expected Drug | | Present | Not Present | N/A | Total |
|---------------|---|---------|-------------|-----|-------|
| Opioid |  | 44 | 0 | 0 | 44 |
| Stimulant |  | 17 | 2 | 0 | 19 |
| Unknown |  | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Psychedelic |  | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Depressant |  | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| TOTAL |  | 65 | 2 | 6 | 73 |

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.

Number of opioid samples with expected drug present

| Expected Drug | | Present | Not Present | N/A | Total |
|----------------|---|---------|-------------|-----|-------|
| Down |  | 40 | 0 | 0 | 40 |
| Pharmaceutical |  | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Fentanyl |  | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| TOTAL |  | 44 | 0 | 0 | 44 |

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.

Depressant includes:
benzodiazepines,
etizolam, GHB, hypnotics

Opioid includes:
"down", heroin, fentanyl
(unregulated opioids), and
pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures

Psychedelic includes:
MDMA and related, 2C-family,
tryptamines, ketamine, LSD

Stimulant includes:
methamphetamine,
"speed," cocaine and
crack cocaine,
cathinones

Unknown includes:
samples where the individual
was unable to identify an
expected substance - this
includes found samples.

Public Health Notifications

| Date & Location | Expected Drug | Spectrometry Results | Fentanyl Strip | Benzo Strip | Alert Message |
|---|---------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| No alerts for Northern Health this month. | | | | | |

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

Data represented in this report is collected from our partner sites across the province utilizing Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometry in combination with BTNX fentanyl test strips, as well as benzodiazepine test strips when applicable. We note the FTIR spectrometer has a detection limit of approximately 5% concentration (McCrae, 2019).

BCCSU gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following partners:

