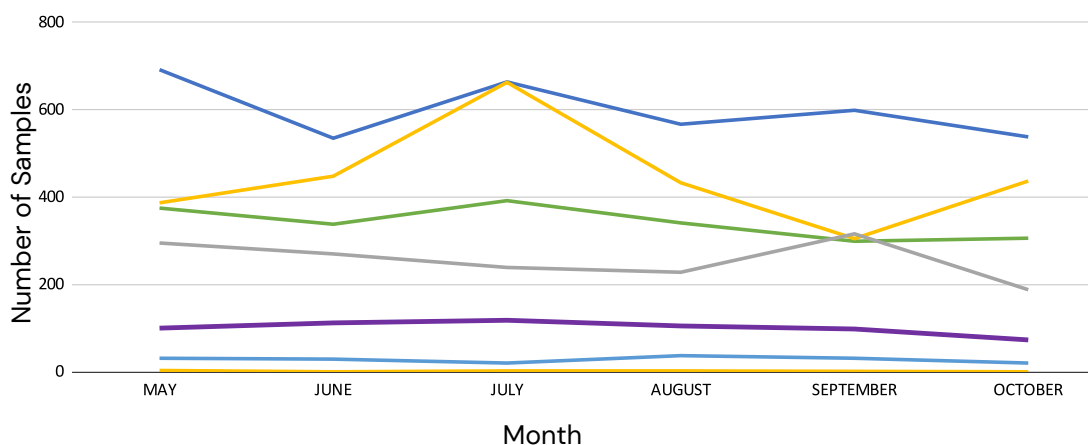




Key Findings

- In October, a total of 1,562 drug checks were performed across the Vancouver Coastal Health region (7 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip was 27.1% (146 of 538 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 11.2% of unregulated opioids (55 of 490 samples), indicating their presence in higher concentrations.
- Fentanyl was the most common fentanyl analog detected by FTIR (45.5%; 223 of 490 samples), followed by fluorofentanyl (26.9%; 132 samples). Ortho-Methylfentanyl was detected in 16.7% (82 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 0.8% of unregulated opioids (4 of 490 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 Oct.

Opioid	538
Stimulant	306
Depressant	73
Psychedelic	437
Other	20
Polysubstance	0
Unknown	188

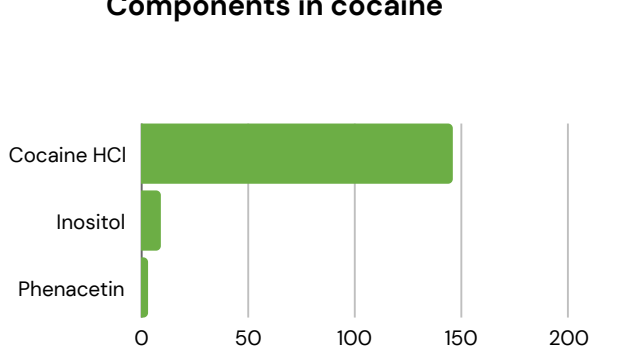
Total: 1,562

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Get Your Drugs Tested (Vancouver)	1249
Insite (Vancouver)	233
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	50
Tla'amin Nation (Powell River)	5
WCSS (Squamish)	14
WCSS (Whistler)	11
Total:	1,562

Components found in drug samples in October

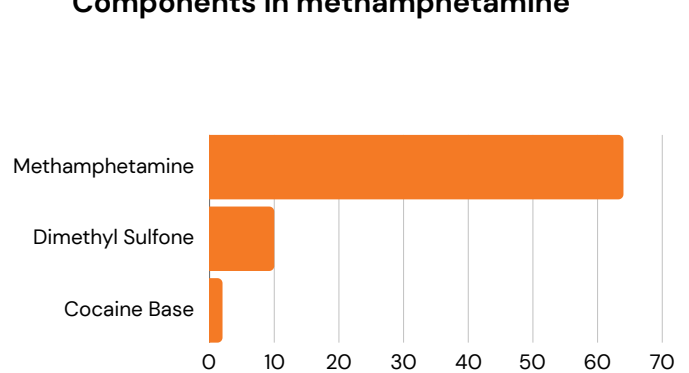
Components in cocaine



Frequency (N=152)

Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: acetaminophen, benzocaine, cocaine base, MDMA, mannitol, methamphetamine, no library match, procaine, pyridoxine, uncertain carbohydrate, uncertain mineral, uncertain oil.

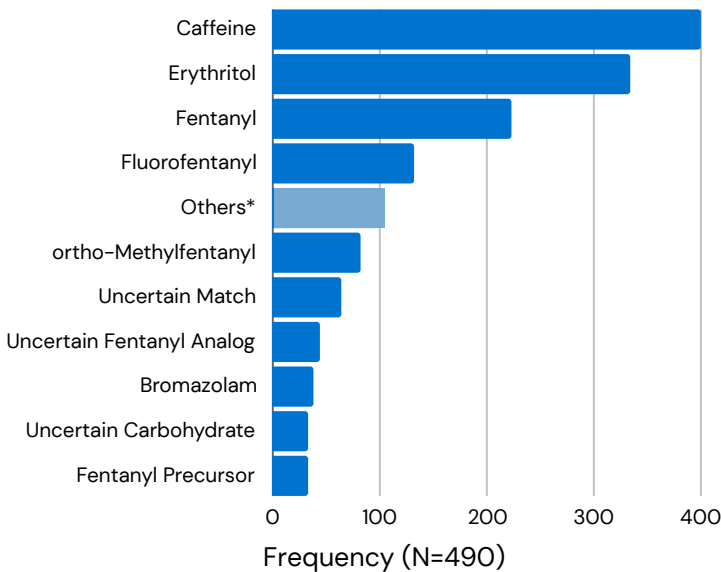
Components in methamphetamine



Frequency (N=69)

Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: fentanyl precursor, MDMA, magnesium sulfate, sucrose, uncertain match.

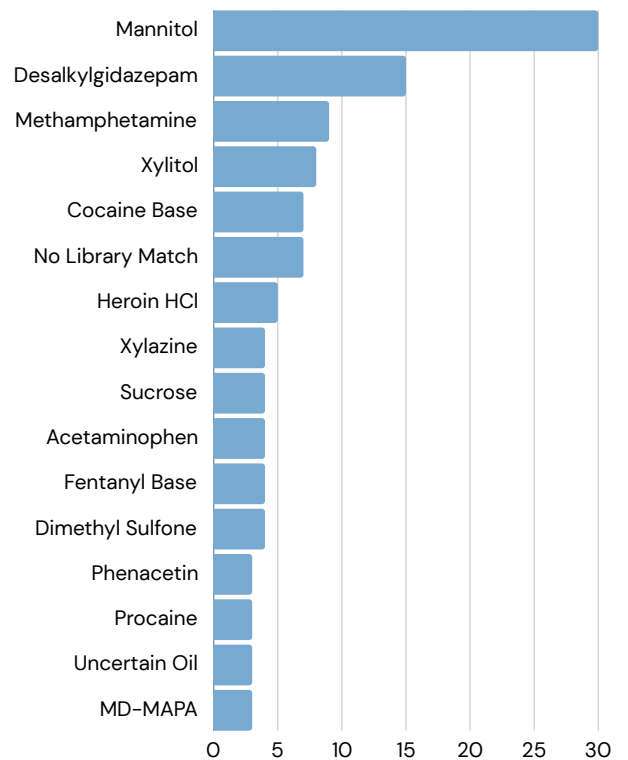
Components in unregulated opioids



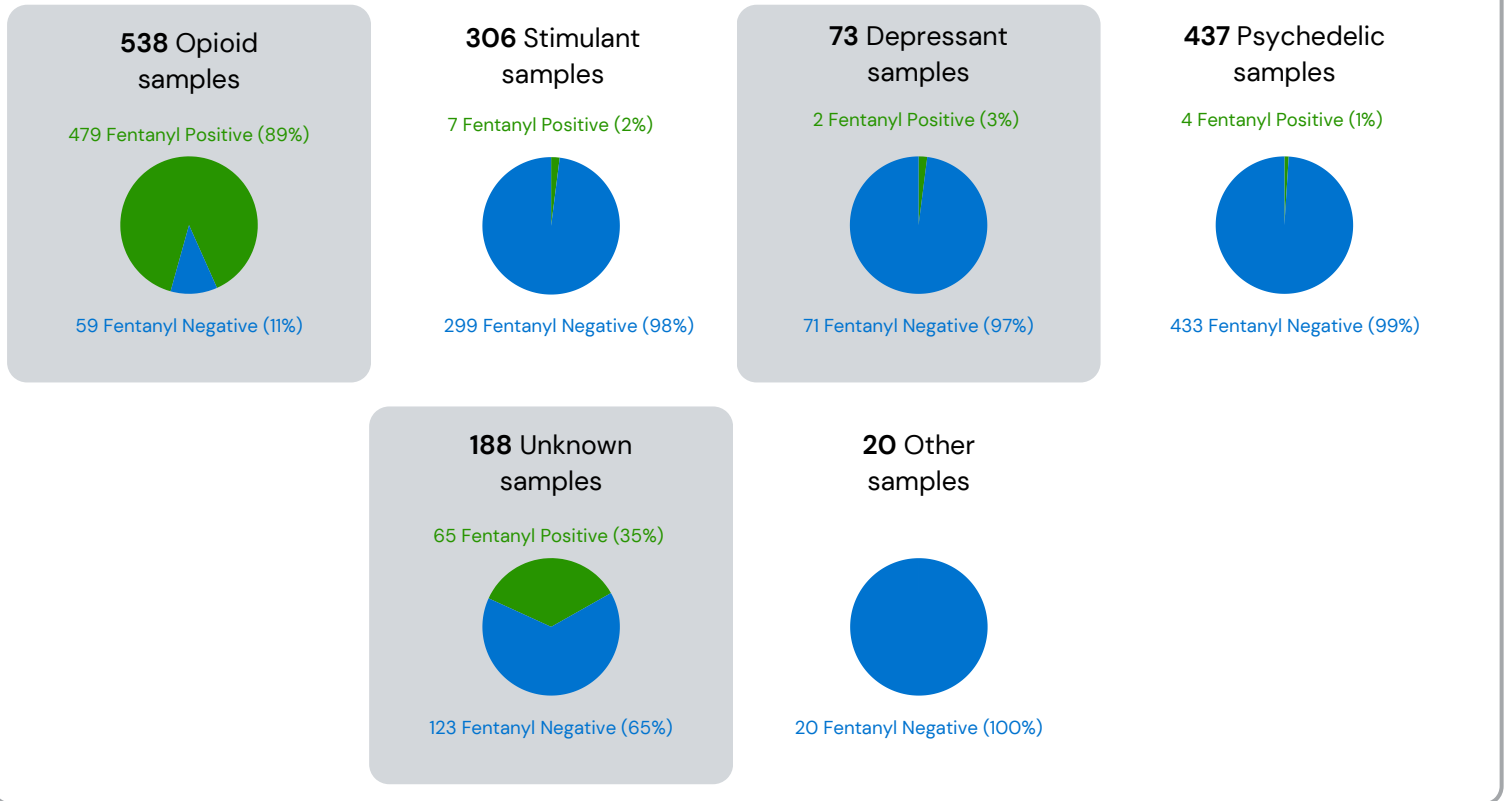
Frequency (N=490)

Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: benzocaine, glucose, medetomidine, flubromazepam, flualprazolam, fentanyl citrate.

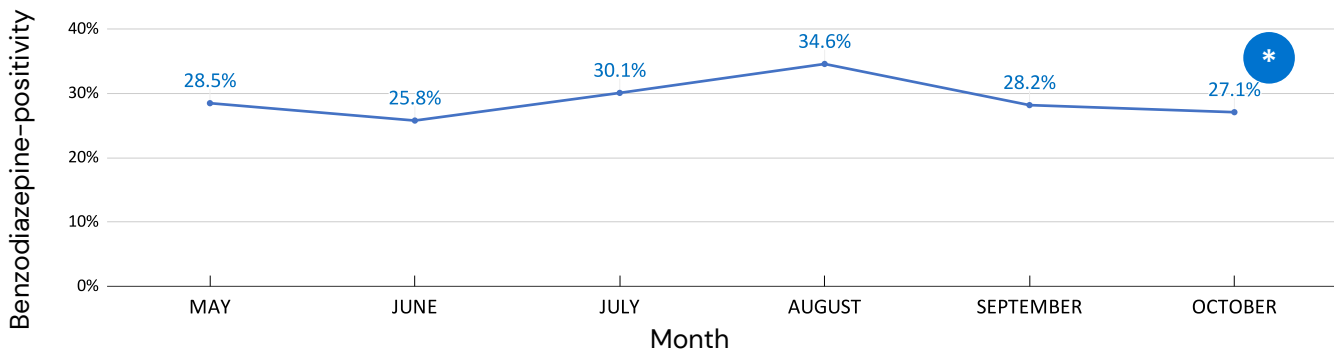
*Other components in unregulated opioids



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**



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



*During the month of October, 27.1% of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (146 samples of 538 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 samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug		Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Opioid		506	23	9	538
Psychedelic		409	16	12	437
Stimulant		284	19	3	306
Unknown		0	0	188	188
Depressant		47	25	1	73
Other		14	5	1	20
TOTAL		1260	88	214	1562

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		391	9	0	400
Fentanyl		80	4	0	84
Pharmaceutical		16	7	9	32
Opium		15	1	0	16
Heroin		4	2	0	6
TOTAL		506	23	9	538

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.

<p>Depressant includes: benzodiazepines, etizolam, GHB, hypnotics</p>	<p>Opioid includes: "down", heroin, fentanyl (unregulated opioids), and pharmaceutical opioids</p>	<p>Polysubstance includes: cross-category mixtures</p>	<p>Psychedelic includes: MDMA and related, 2C-family, tryptamines, ketamine, LSD</p>	<p>Stimulant includes: methamphetamine, "speed," cocaine and crack cocaine, cathinones</p>	<p>Unknown includes: samples where the individual was unable to identify an expected substance - this includes found samples.</p>
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Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
October 1, 2024 Vancouver	Oxycodone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, N-Propionyl-Para-Fluorofentanyl	Negative	Positive	Green pressed pill with imprint "OCD 80/APO" sold as oxycodone in Vancouver tested positive for benzos and n-propionyl-para-fluorofentanyl, a chemical involved in the production of fentanyl analogs with unknown opioid activity. Substance tested negative for oxycodone.
October 2, 2024 Vancouver	Oxycodone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Fentanyl, Xylazine, Uncertain Oil	Positive	Negative	Blue tablet with imprint "M/30" sold as oxycodone in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and xylazine, and negative for oxycodone.
October 4, 2024 Squamish	Cocaine	Cocaine	Positive	N/A	White powder sold as cocaine in Squamish tested positive for cocaine and fentanyl.
October 9, 2024 Squamish	Fentanyl	Fentanyl, Caffeine, Bromazolam, Erythritol	Positive	Positive	Beige chunks sold as fentanyl in Squamish tested positive for fentanyl and bromazolam, a benzo analog. Substance has caused overdose
October 15, 2024 Vancouver	Fentanyl	Medetomidine, Uncertain Carbohydrate, Uncertain Match	Negative	Negative	White powder sold as fentanyl in Vancouver tested positive for medetomidine and negative for fentanyl.
October 18, 2024 Vancouver	2C-B	2C-B	Positive	Negative	White powder sold in Vancouver as 2C-B, a synthetic psychedelic drug, tested positive for 2C-B and fentanyl.
October 23, 2024 Vancouver	Down	Fentanyl, Bromazolam, Medetomidine, Caffeine*	N/A	N/A	Beige chunks sold as down in the downtown eastside of Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl, bromazolam, and medetomidine, a veterinary sedative more toxic than xylazine.
October 25, 2024 Vancouver	Crack Cocaine	Cocaine Base, Xylazine	Negative	Negative	White pebble sold as crack cocaine in Vancouver tested positive for cocaine and xylazine.

Public Health Notifications Cont.

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
October 31, 2024 qathet (Powell River)	Down	Fentanyl, Xylazine, Bromazolam, Flubromazepam*	N/A	N/A	Multiple samples sold as down in qathet (Powell River) region tested positive for fentanyl and xylazine (pink pebbles), or fentanyl, benzos, and xylazine (red granules, purple chunk).

*Results provided by complementary testing partner [Substance](#) using Paper Spray Mass Spectrometry, all other spectrometry results are determined by FTIR.

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).

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:



PROVIDENCE HEALTH CARE
Research Institute

