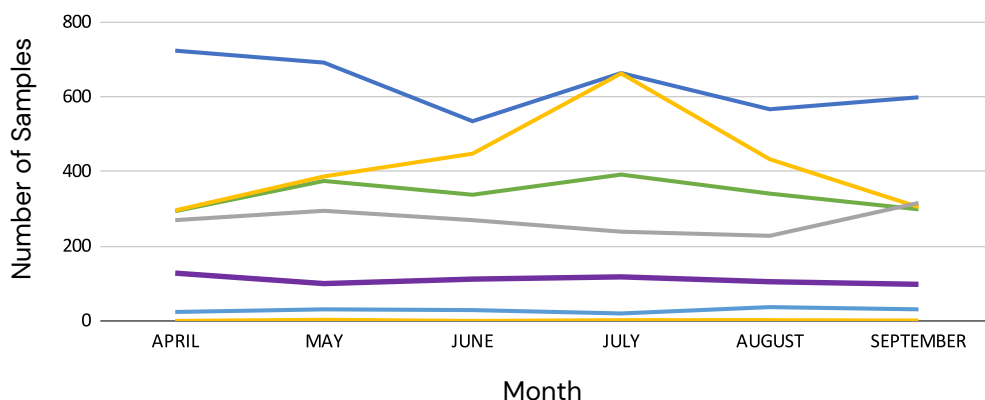




Key Findings

- In September, a total of 1,649 drug checks were performed across the Vancouver Coastal Health region (6 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to 28.2% (169 of 599 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 8.5% of unregulated opioids (45 of 531 samples), indicating their presence in higher concentrations.
- Fluorofentanyl was the most common fentanyl analog detected by FTIR in September (41.2%; 219 of 531 samples), surpassing fentanyl for the first time (31.8%; 169 samples). Ortho-Methylfentanyl was detected in 9.0% of unregulated opioids (48 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 1.5% of unregulated opioids (8 of 531 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 Sept.

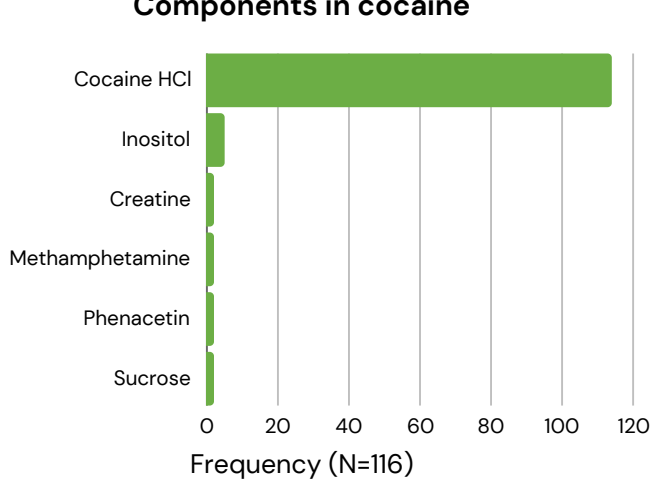
Opioid	599
Stimulant	299
Depressant	98
Psychedelic	305
Other	31
Polysubstance	1
Unknown	316
Total:	1,649

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Get Your Drugs Tested (Vancouver)	1303
Insite (Vancouver)	248
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	63
LIFT Community Services (Sechelt)	16
WCSS (Squamish)	14
WCSS (Whistler)	5
Total:	1649

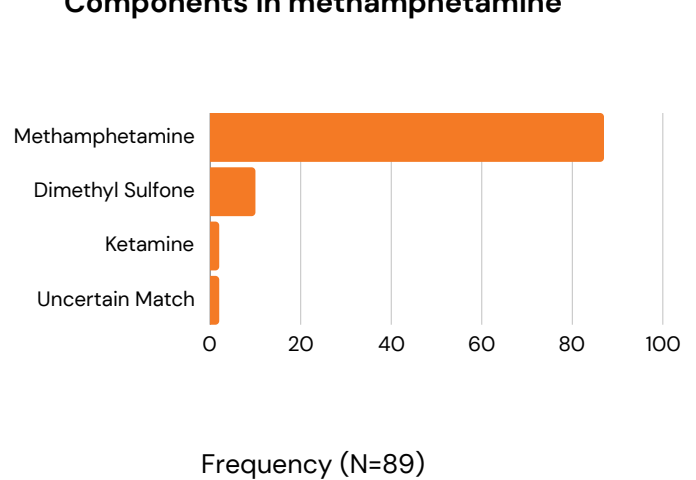
Components found in drug samples in September

Components in cocaine



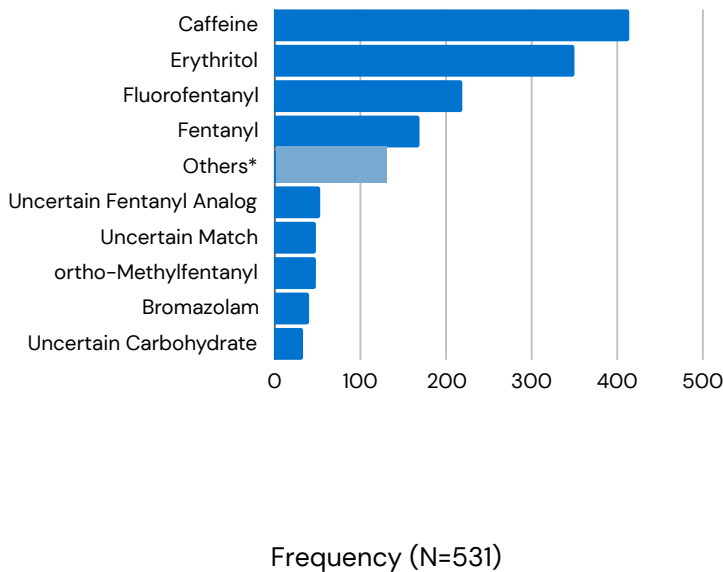
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: caffeine, glutamine, ketamine, uncertain match, uncertain oil.

Components in methamphetamine



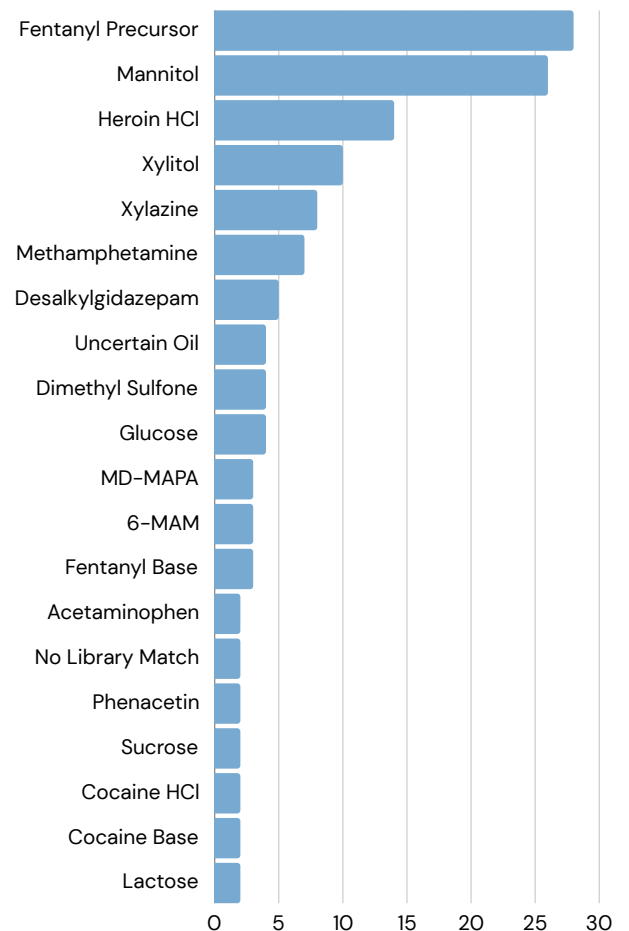
Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: MDA, magnesium sulfate, uncertain fentanyl analog.

Components in unregulated opioids

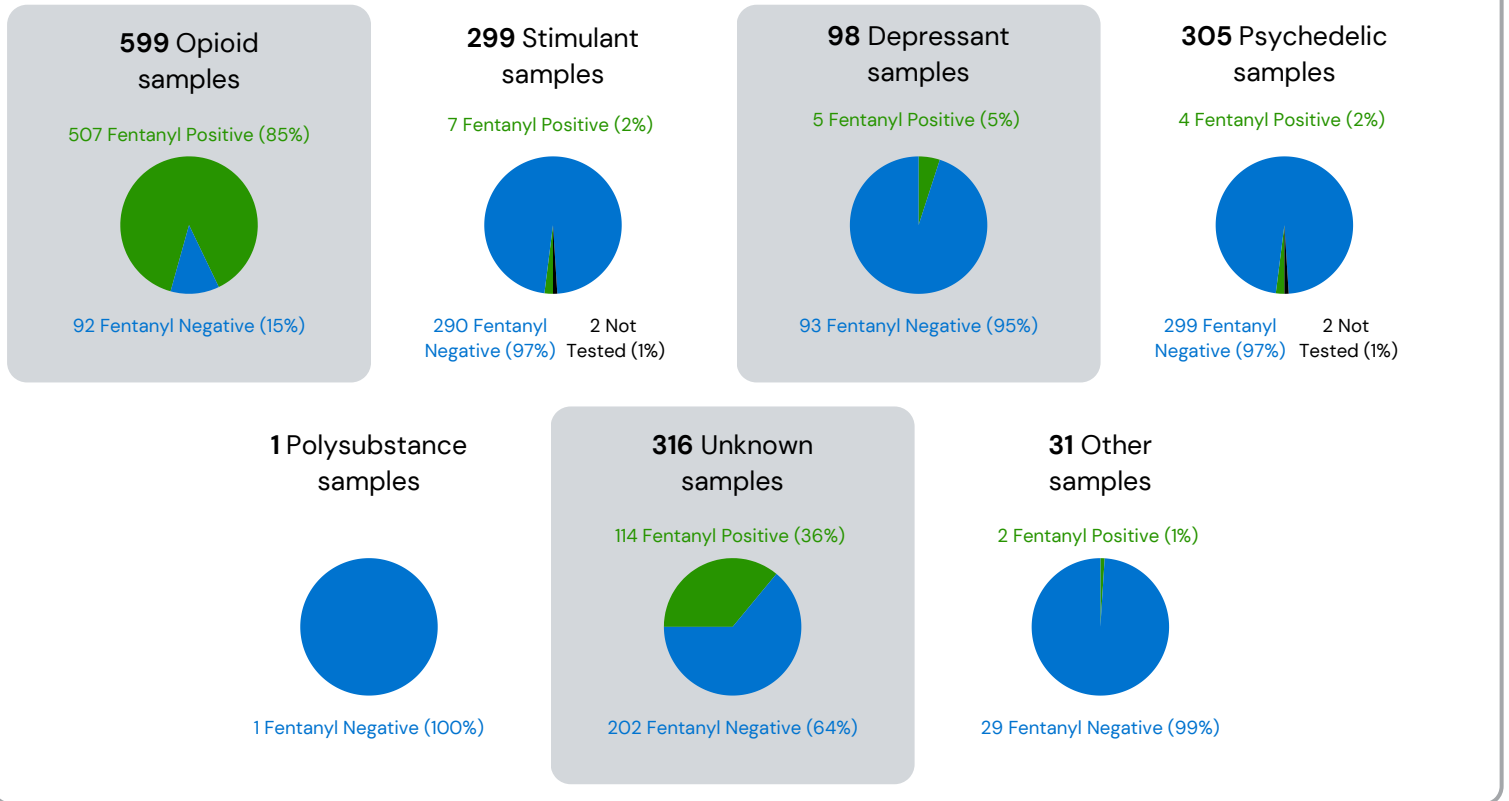


Additional compounds that were detected a single time each have been excluded from this graph, which include: inositol, opium, polyethylene glycol, sodium bicarbonate.

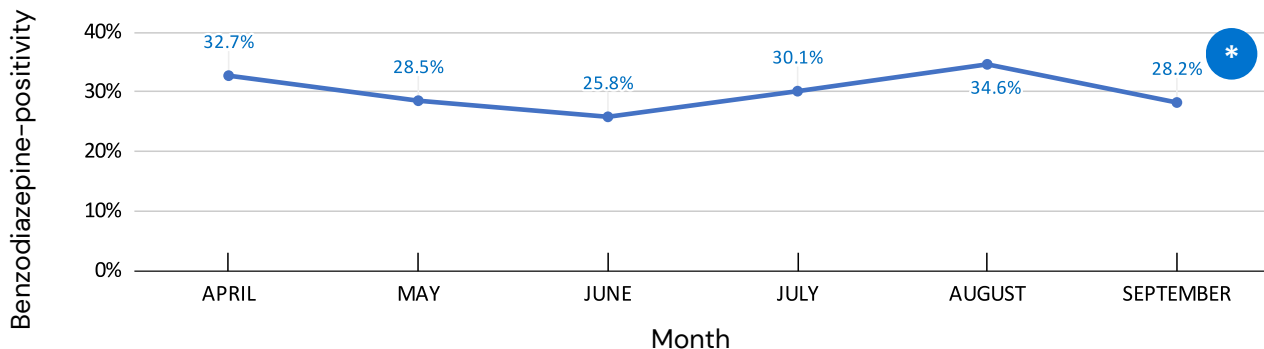
*Other components in unregulated opioids



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**



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



*During the month of September, 28.2% of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (169 samples of 599 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		548	42	9	599
Unknown		0	0	316	316
Psychedelic		268	18	19	305
Stimulant		284	15	0	299
Depressant		80	17	1	98
Other		20	6	5	31
Polysubstance		0	1	0	1
TOTAL		1200	99	350	1649

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		401	12	0	413
Fentanyl		98	3	0	101
Pharmaceutical		29	22	9	60
Heroin		12	5	0	17
Opium		8	0	0	8
TOTAL		548	42	9	599

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
September 24, 2024 Vancouver	Acetaminophen and Oxycodone	Microcrystalline cellulose, fentanyl, ortho-methylfentanyl	Positive	Negative	White pressed pill with imprint "TEC" expected to be Percocet (oxycodone and acetaminophen) in Vancouver tested positive fentanyl and ortho-methyl fentanyl, a fentanyl analogue. Substance tested negative for oxycodone and acetaminophen.

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

