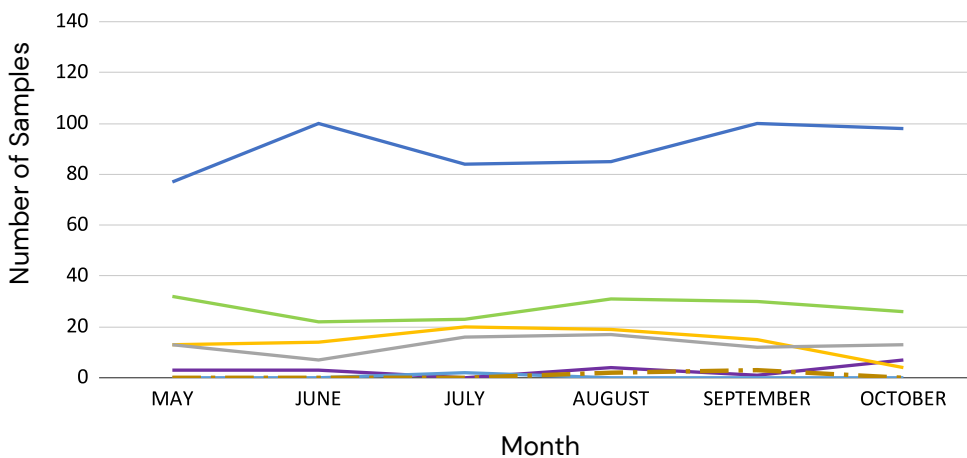




Key Findings

- In October, a total of 148 drug checks were performed by the CMHA Mid-Island Albert Street site in Nanaimo.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip was 68.4% (67 of 98 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 5.2% of unregulated opioids (4 of 96 samples), indicating their presence in higher concentrations.
- Fluorofentanyl was the most common fentanyl analog detected by FTIR (31.3%; 30 of 96 samples), followed by fentanyl (19.8%; 19 samples). Ortho-Methylfentanyl was detected in 5.3% (5 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 2.1% of unregulated opioids (2 of 96 samples).
- Substance (The Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project), offers drug checking in Victoria and communities across the Island. For more information about drug checking sample results in the Island Health region, please visit www.substance.uvic.ca.
- 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.

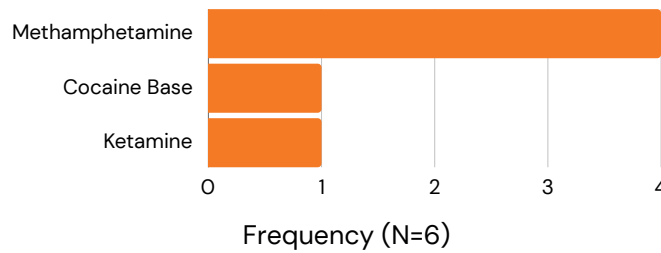
Opioid	98
Stimulant	26
Depressant	7
Psychedelic	4
Other	0
Polysubstance	0
Unknown	13
Total:	148

Number of drug checks at each site

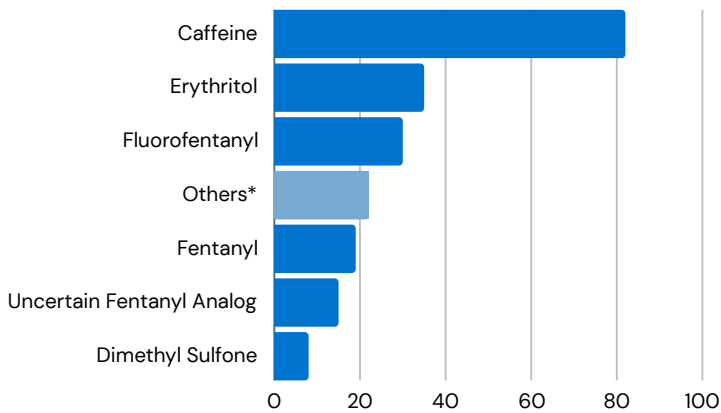
Location	# of Drugs Checked
Albert St. OPS (CMHA Nanaimo)	148
Total:	148

Components found in drug samples in October

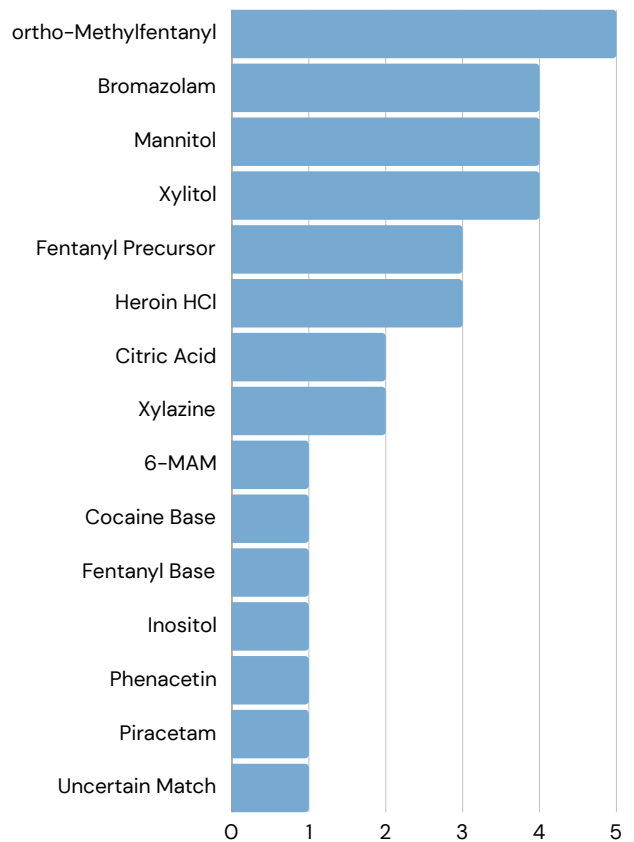
Components in methamphetamine



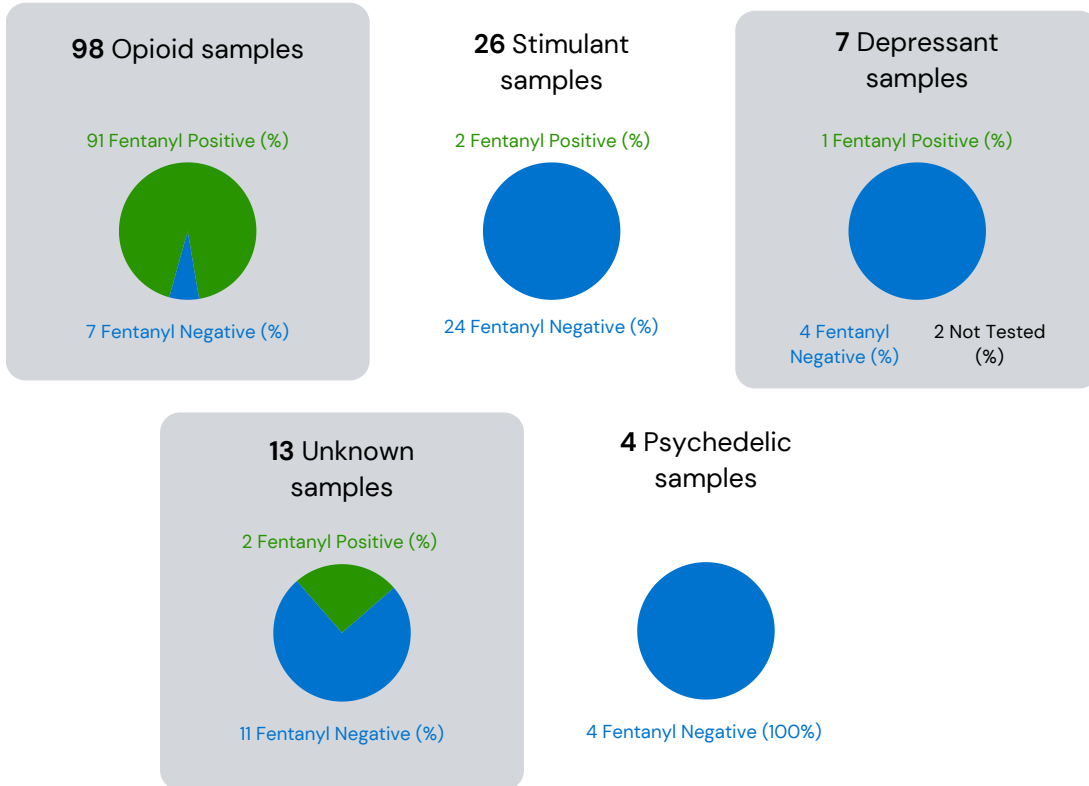
Components in unregulated opioids



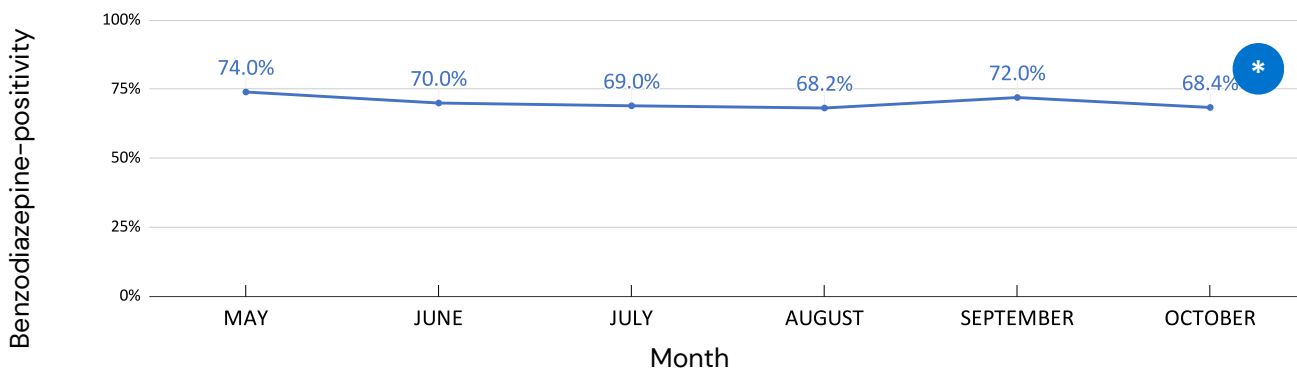
*Other components in unregulated opioids



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**



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



*During the month of October, **68.4%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner site in Island Health (**67 samples of 98 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	93	3	2	98
Stimulant	23	3	0	26
Unknown	0	0	13	13
Depressant	7	0	0	7
Psychedelic	4	0	0	4
TOTAL	127	6	15	148

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	76	2	0	78
Fentanyl	14	0	0	14
Heroin	3	1	0	4
Pharmaceutical	0	0	2	2
TOTAL	93	3	2	98

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 Island 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:



Canadian Mental
Health Association