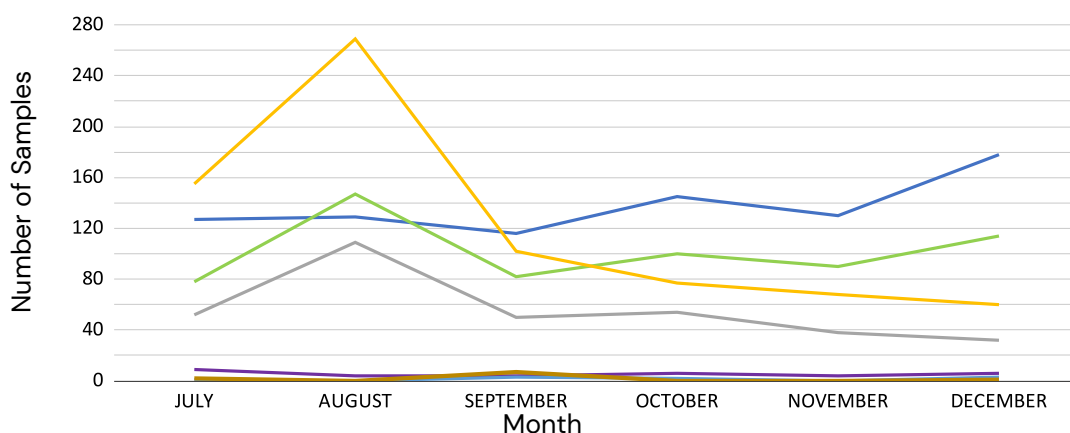




Key Findings

- In December, a total of 394 drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region (18 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip was 57.9% (103 of 178 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in 31.2% of unregulated opioids (54 of 173 samples), indicating their presence in higher concentrations. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was most frequently identified (32 samples), surpassing bromazolam for the second month in a row.
- Fluorofentanyl was the most common fentanyl analog detected by FTIR in unregulated opioids (34.1%; 59 of 173 samples), followed by fentanyl (30.1%; 52 samples). Ortho-Methylfentanyl was found in 3.5% (6 samples).
- Xylazine was detected by FTIR in 11.6% of unregulated opioids (20 of 173 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 Dec.

● Opioid	178
● Stimulant	114
● Depressant	6
● Psychedelic	60
● Other	3
● Polysubstance	1
● Unknown	32

Total: 394

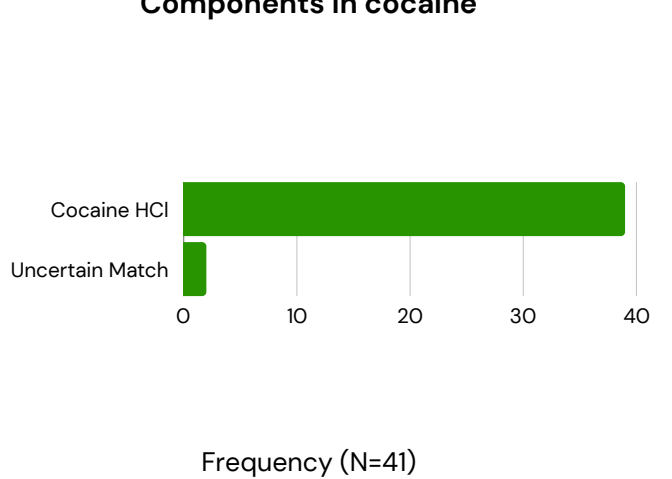
Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	49
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	23
ANKORS (Nelson)	63
ANKORS (Trail)	9
ASK Wellness (Kamloops)	23
ASK Wellness (Penticton)	77
ASK Wellness (Williams Lake)	11
Interior Health (Kelowna)	115
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	23
Total	394

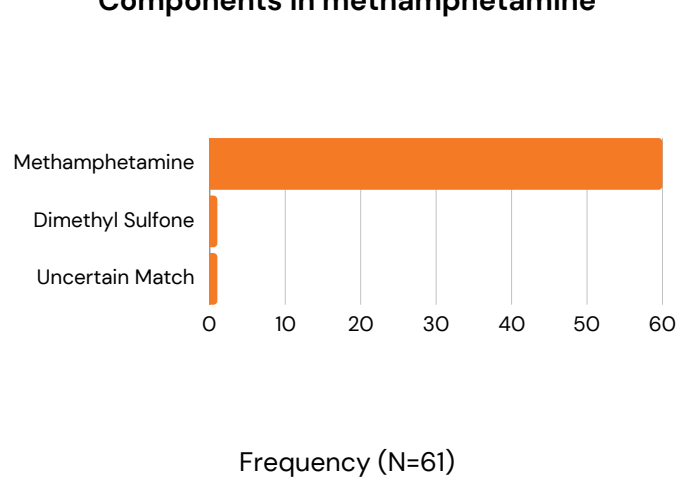
A small number of samples were tested at the following location, which is included in the total: ANKORS (Salmo).

Components found in drug samples in December

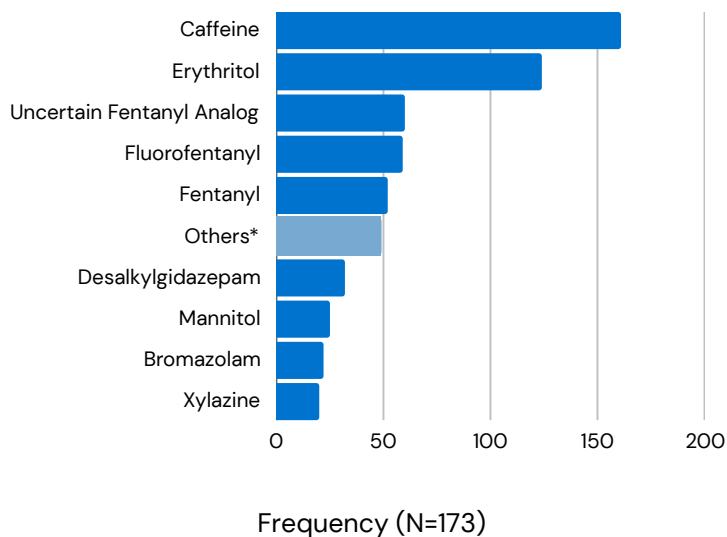
Components in cocaine



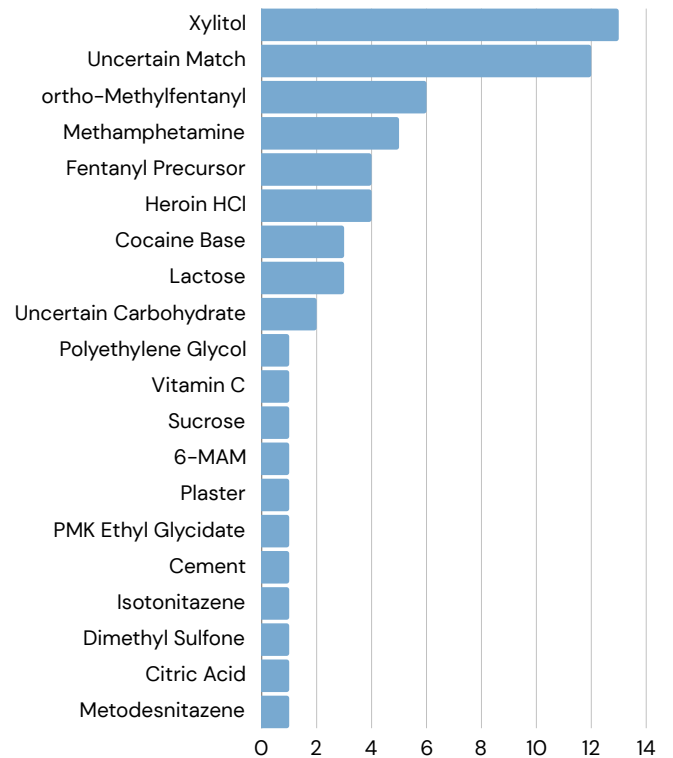
Components in methamphetamine



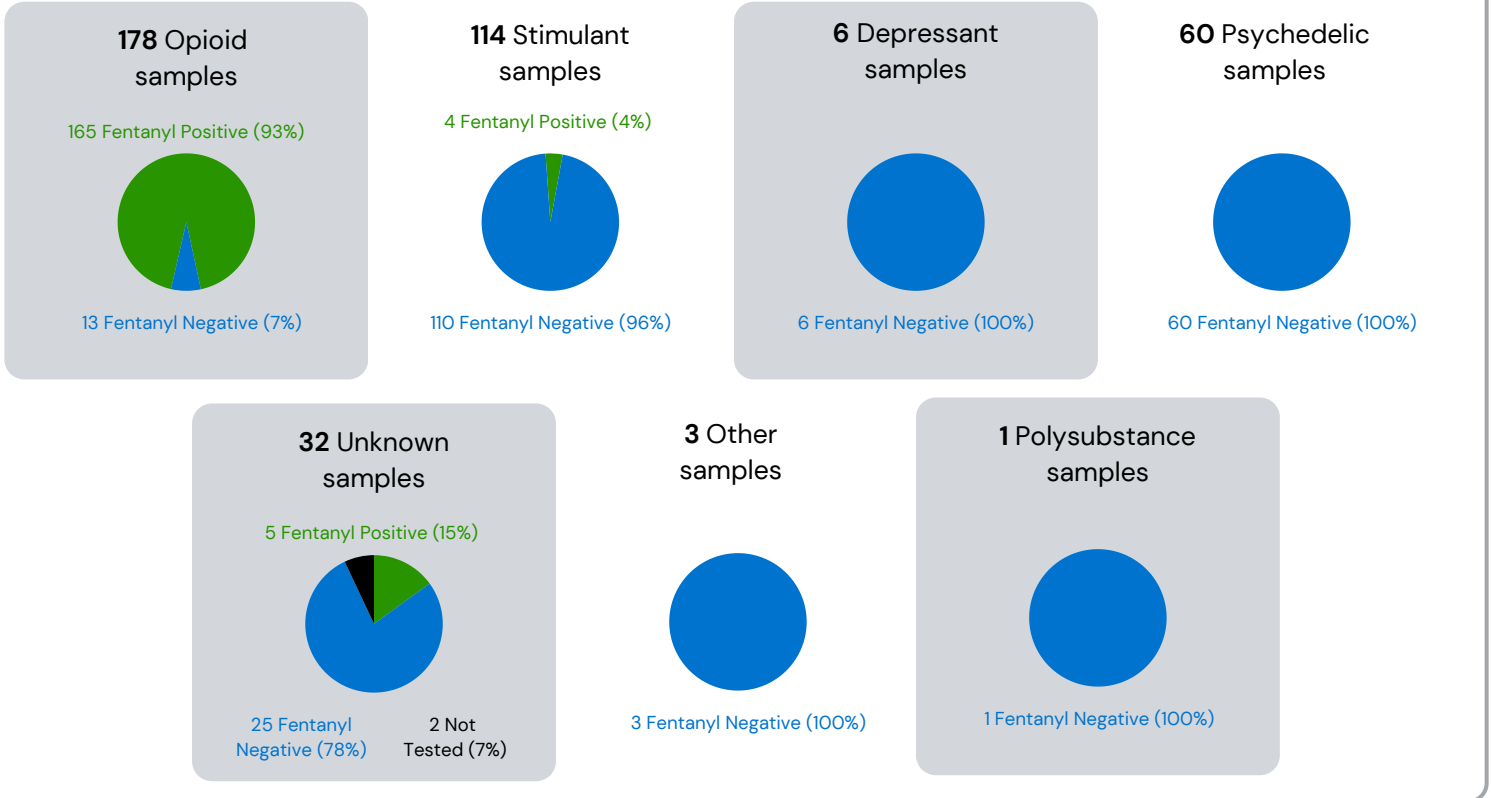
Components in unregulated opioids



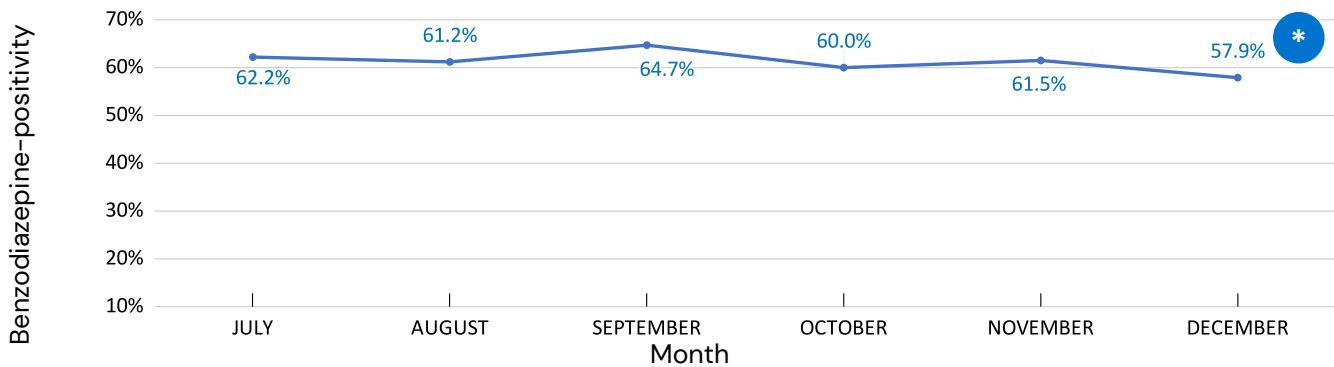
*Other components in unregulated opioids



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**



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



*During the month of December, **57.9%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**103 samples of 178 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		170	4	4	178
Stimulant		108	6	0	114
Psychedelic		54	6	0	60
Unknown		0	0	32	32
Depressant		1	3	2	6
Other		2	0	1	3
Polysubstance		0	1	0	1
TOTAL		335	20	39	394

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		141	3	0	144
Fentanyl		23	1	1	25
Pharmaceutical		2	0	3	5
Heroin		4	0	0	4
TOTAL		170	4	4	178

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
December 3, 2024 Williams Lake	Fentanyl/Down	Erythritol, Caffeine, Isotonitazene, Uncertain Match	Negative	Positive	White powdery substance sold as fentanyl/down in Williams Lake contains nitazene (synthetic opioid) and does not contain fentanyl. Fentanyl test strips will not detect nitazene. Risk for overdose. Naloxone remains effective.
December 3, 2024 Williams Lake	Fentanyl/Down	Caffeine, Xylitol, Erythritol, Fentanyl, Para-Fluorofentanyl	Positive	Positive	Green/yellow crystal chunks sold as fentanyl/down in Williams Lake associated with multiple overdoses.
December 13, 2024 Trail	Down	Carfentanil, Fentanyl, Bromazolam*	N/A	N/A	Purple substance sold as down tested positive for carfentanil, fentanyl, and bromazolam in Trail.
December 13, 2024 Penticton	Down	Medetomidine, Fentanyl, Caffeine, Erythritol*	N/A	N/A	Purple substance sold as down tested positive for medetomidine and fentanyl in Penticton.

*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:

