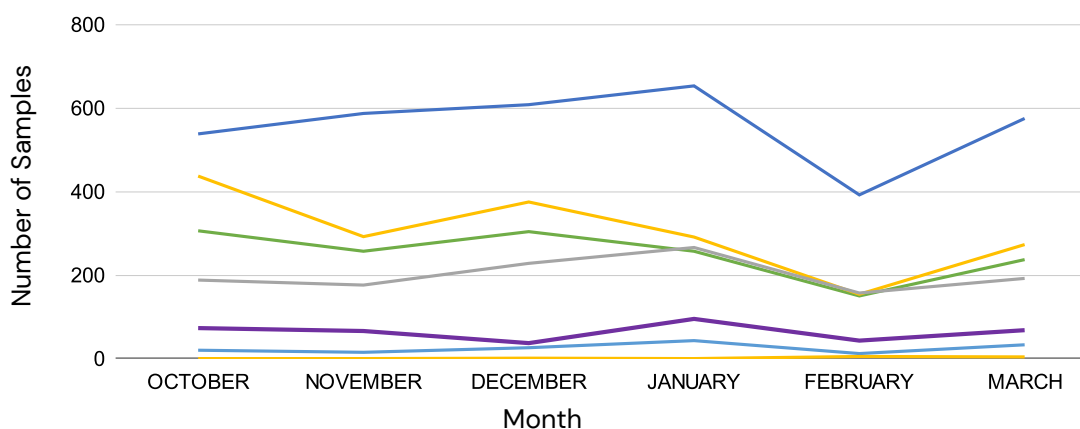




Key Findings

- In March, a total of 1,382 drug checks were performed across the Vancouver Coastal Health region (8 access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased from the previous month to 31.8% (183 of 575).
- Benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in 14.3% of unregulated opioids (70 of 491), indicating their presence in higher concentrations. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was most frequently identified.
- Fluorofentanyl remained the most common opioid detected by FTIR (36.9%; 181 of 491), followed by fentanyl (23.6%; 116 samples). Notably, carfentanil was detected by FTIR in 2 samples.
- Xylazine, a veterinary tranquilizer, was detected by FTIR in 0.4% of unregulated opioids (2 of 491).
- 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 Mar.

Opioid	575
Stimulant	237
Depressant	68
Psychedelic	273
Other	33
Polysubstance	4
Unknown	192

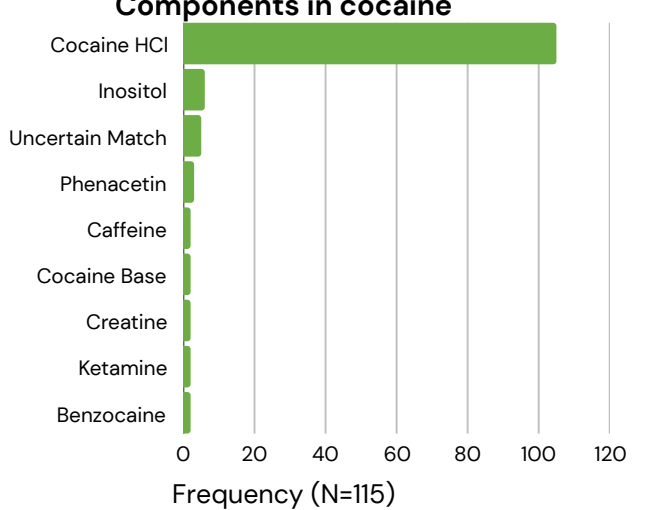
Total: 1,382

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Get Your Drugs Tested (Vancouver)	1053
Insite (Vancouver)	247
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	52
WCSS (Squamish)	20
Tla'amin Nation (Powell River)	10
Total:	1,382

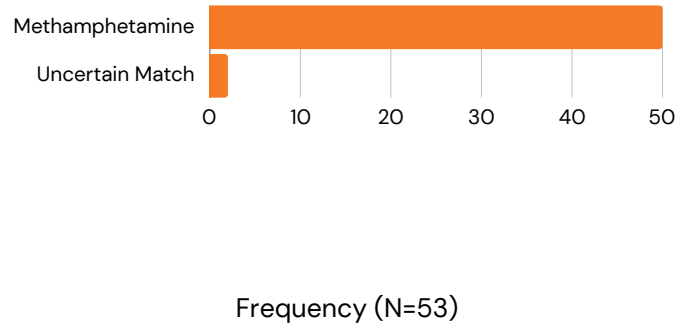
Components found in drug samples in March

Components in cocaine



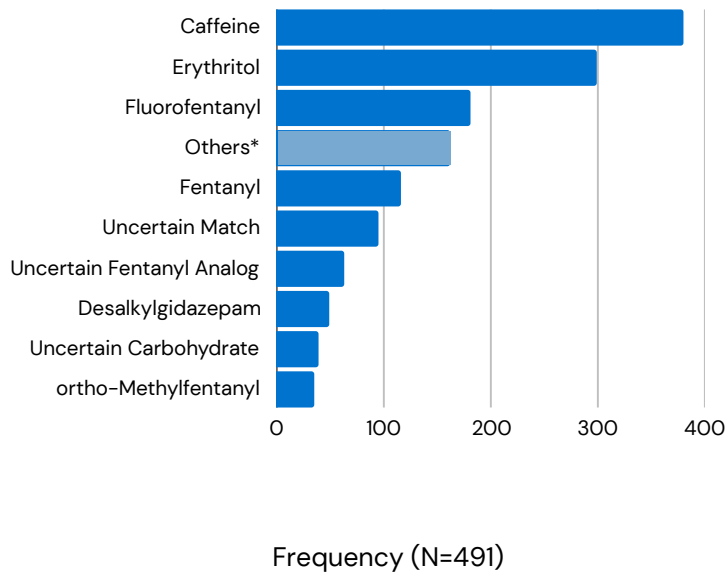
There were additional compounds detected a single time each: BMK Glycidic Acid, Uncertain Carbohydrate, Uncertain Oil, Uncertain Mineral, Levamisole, Mannitol, MDMA, Gabapentin, Uncertain Salt.

Components in methamphetamine

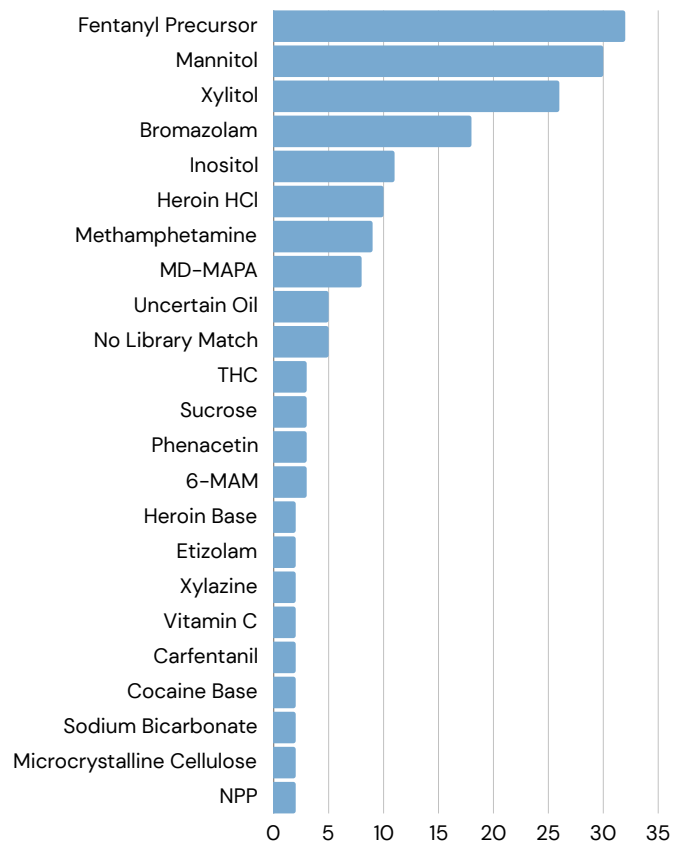


There were additional compounds detected a single time each: Boric Acid, Cocaine Base, Uncertain Carbohydrate.

Components in unregulated opioids

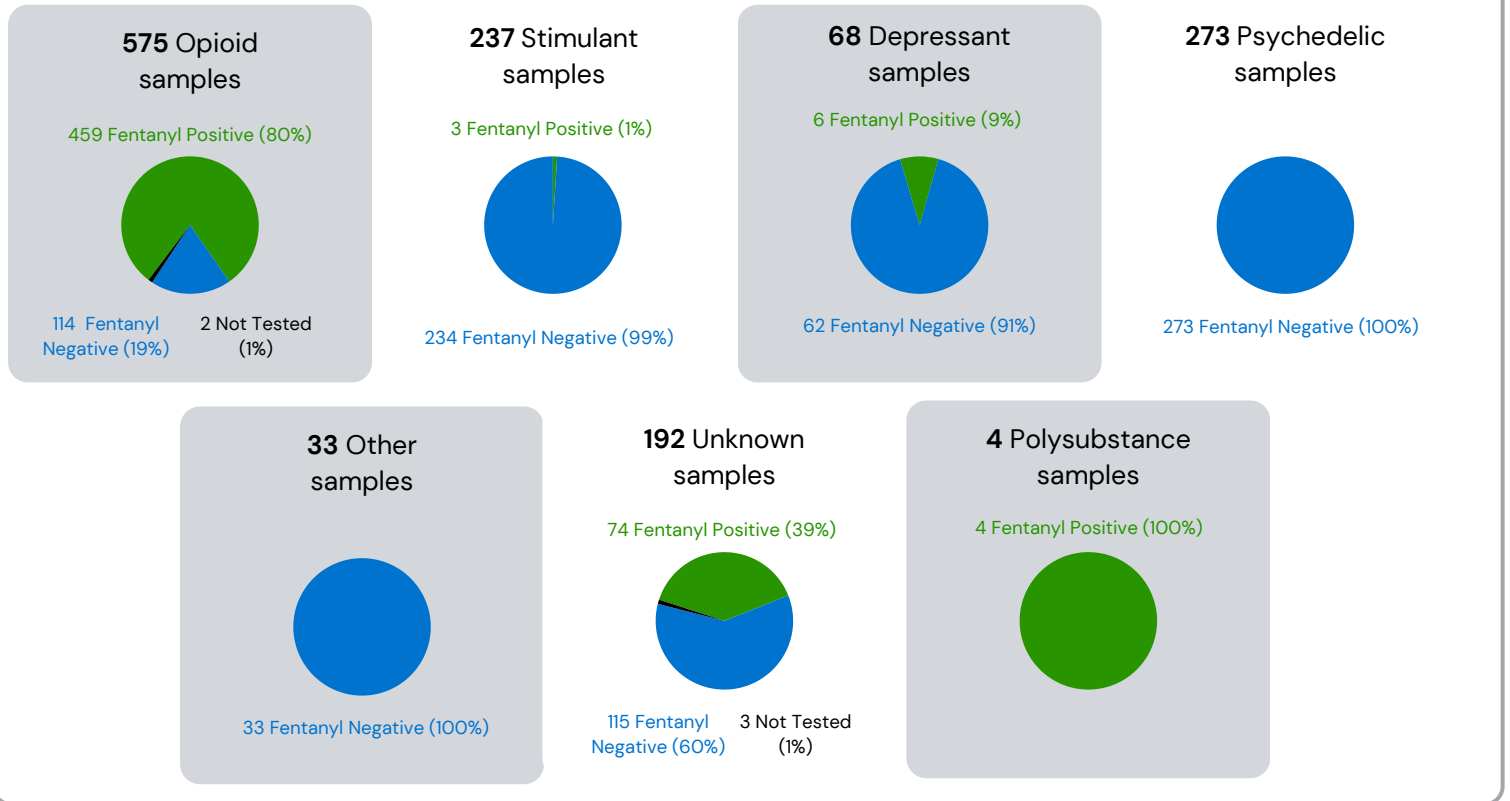


*Other components in unregulated opioids

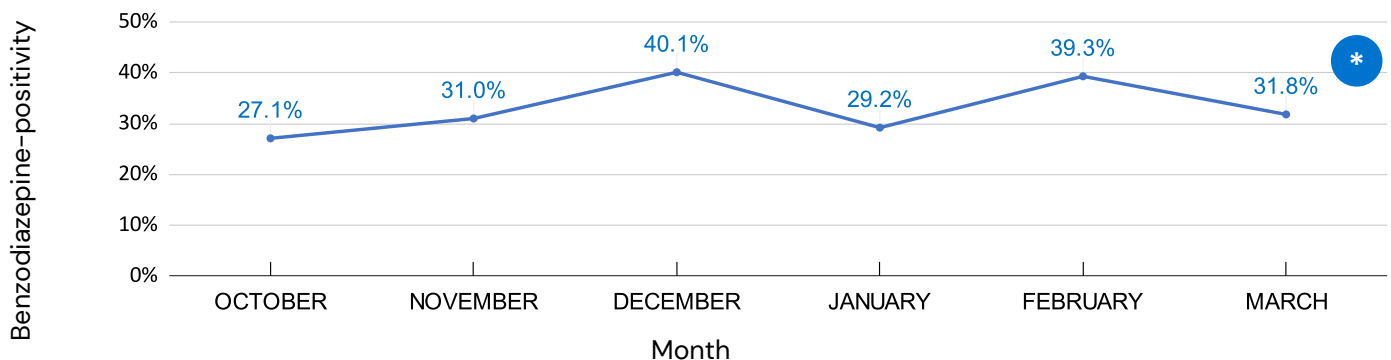


There were additional compounds detected a single time each: Procaine, Polyethylene Glycol, Desalkylflurazepam, Dimethyl Sulfone, Uncertain Mineral, Noscapine, Sodium Acetate Trihydrate.e.

Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**



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



*During the month of March, **31.8%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Vancouver Coastal Health (**183 samples of 575 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		507	50	18	575
Psychedelic		261	8	4	273
Stimulant		208	26	3	237
Unknown		0	0	192	192
Depressant		45	20	3	68
Other		26	3	4	33
Polysubstance		3	1	0	4
TOTAL		1050	108	224	1382

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		361	17	0	378
Fentanyl		83	13	0	96
Pharmaceutical		32	14	17	63
Opium		19	0	0	19
Heroin		11	6	0	17
Other Opioid		1	0	1	2
TOTAL		507	50	18	575

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
March 4, 2025 Vancouver	Down	Caffeine, Desalkylgizapam, Erythritol, Ortho-Methylfentanyl, Para-Fluorofentanyl	Positive	Positive	Blue granules sold as down in Vancouver tested positive for ortho-methylfentanyl, para-fluorofentanyl, and desalkylgizapam, a benzo analog.
March 10, 2025 Vancouver	Unknown	Xylitol, Carfentanil	Positive	Negative	Brown granules sold in Vancouver tested positive for carfentanil.
March 10, 2025 Vancouver	Alprazolam (Xanax)	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Uncertain Oil	Positive	Negative	Counterfeit white Xanax tablet sold in Vancouver and expected to contain the benzo alprazolam tested positive for fentanyl and negative for benzos.
March 10, 2025 Vancouver	Unknown	Desalkylgizapam, Bromazolam, Fentanyl, Medetomidine	Positive	Positive	Yellow granules sold in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl, benzo analogs desalkylgizapam and bromazolam, and the tranquilizer medetomidine.
March 17, 2025 Powell River	Down	Erythritol, Caffeine, Fentanyl, Bromazolam, Flubromazepam, Medetomidine*	N/A	N/A	Light pink granules sold in Powell River as down tested positive for fentanyl, benzos, and medetomidine, a tranquilizer more toxic than xylazine.
March 19, 2025 Powell River	Down	Caffeine, Erythritol, Carfentanil*	N/A	N/A	Multiple samples (blue chunks, pink chunks, pink granules) sold as down in Powell River tested positive for carfentanil.
March 21, 2025 Vancouver	Oxycodone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Calcium Stearate, Uncertain Fentanyl Analog, Uncertain Oil	Positive	Positive	White pressed tablet with imprint "SS/20" sold as oxycodone in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl and benzos and negative for oxycodone.
March 27, 2025 Vancouver	Unknown	Primidone, Medetomidine, Erythritol**	N/A	N/A	White powder in Vancouver tested positive for primidone (desoxyphenobarbital), a barbiturate sedative, and medetomidine, a tranquilizer more toxic than xylazine. This combination could result in decreased consciousness and/or prolonged sedation that will not respond to naloxone.
March 28, 2025 Powell River	Crack Cocaine	Erythritol, Caffeine, Fentanyl	Positive	Positive	Brown substance sold as crack cocaine in Powell River tested positive for fentanyl and negative for cocaine. Substance has caused overdose.

All spectrometry results are determined by FTIR, with the exception of the following:

* Results provided by complementary testing partner [Substance](#) using Paper Spray Mass Spectrometry

**Results provided by complementary testing partner [Health Canada Drug Analysis Service](#) using quantitative nuclear magnetic resonance and/or gas chromatography-mass spectrometry

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:

