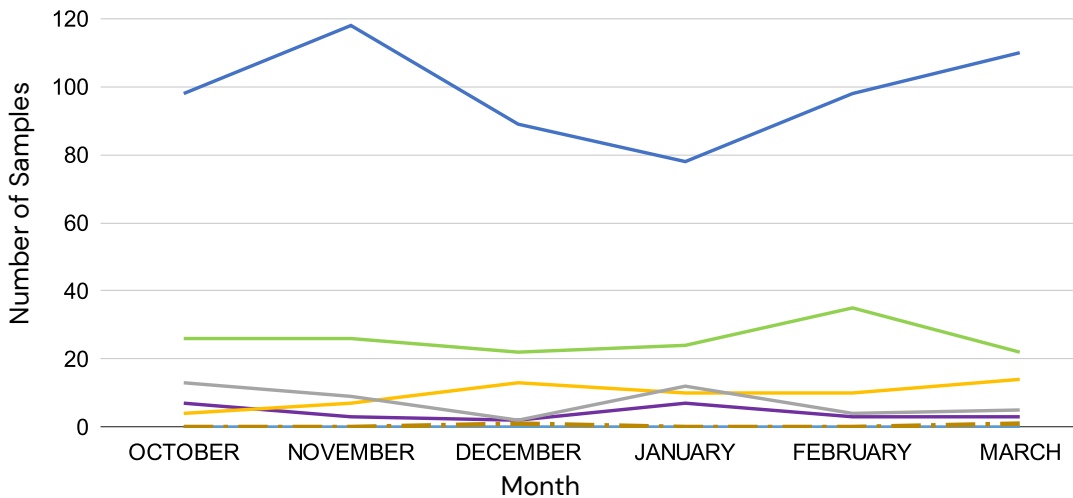




Key Findings

- In March, a total of 155 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 decreased from the previous month to 68.2% (75 of 110 samples).
- Benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in 24.0% of unregulated opioids (21 of 104), indicating their presence in higher concentrations. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was most frequently identified.
- Fluorofentanyl and fentanyl detection was almost on par this month, detected in 27.9% (29 of 104) vs. 26.9% (28 of 104) unregulated opioid samples, respectively.
- Substance (The Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project), offers drug checking in Victoria and communities across the Island. For more information, 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 Mar.

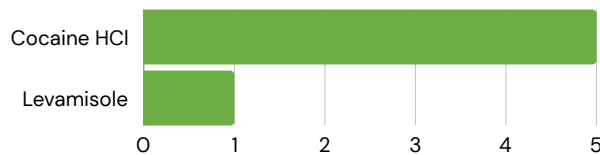
Opioid	110
Stimulant	22
Depressant	3
Psychedelic	14
Other	0
Polysubstance	1
Unknown	5
Total:	155

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Albert St. OPS (CMHA Nanaimo)	155
Total:	155

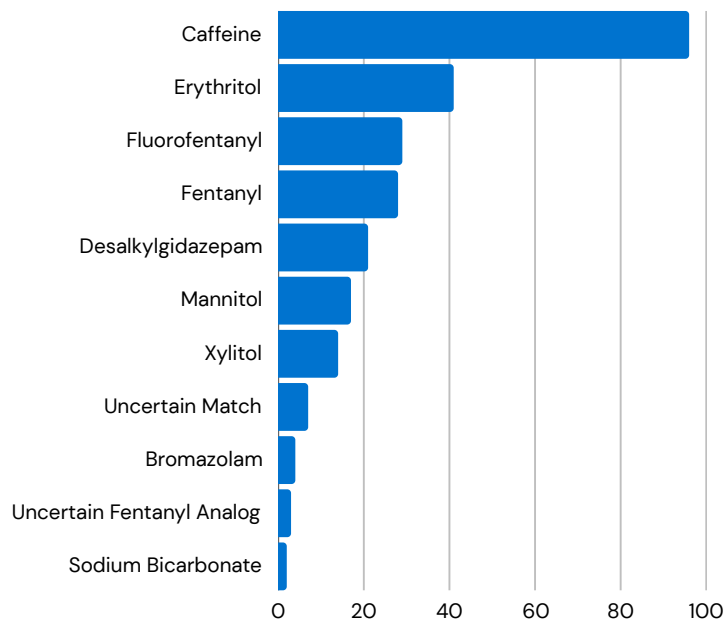
Components found in drug samples in March

Components in cocaine



Frequency (N=5)

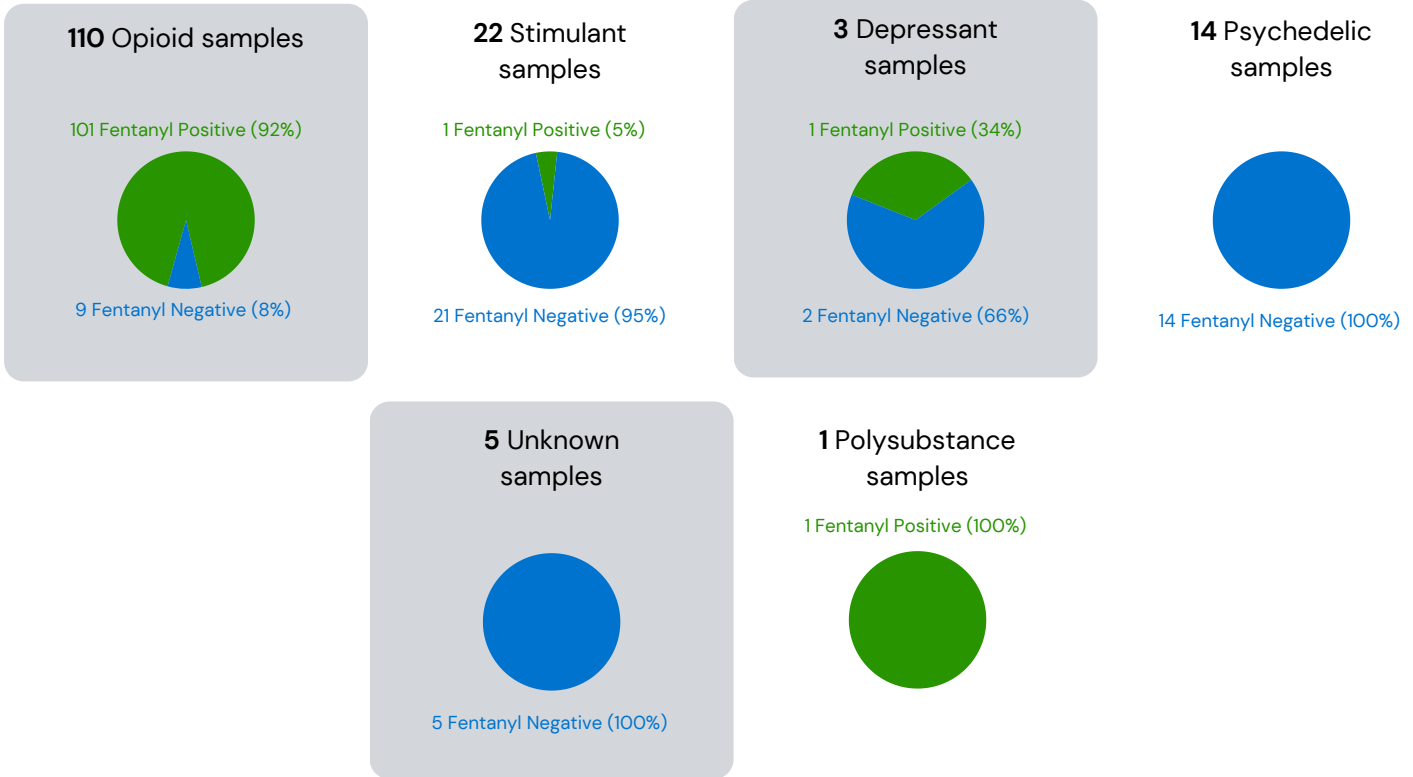
Components in unregulated opioids



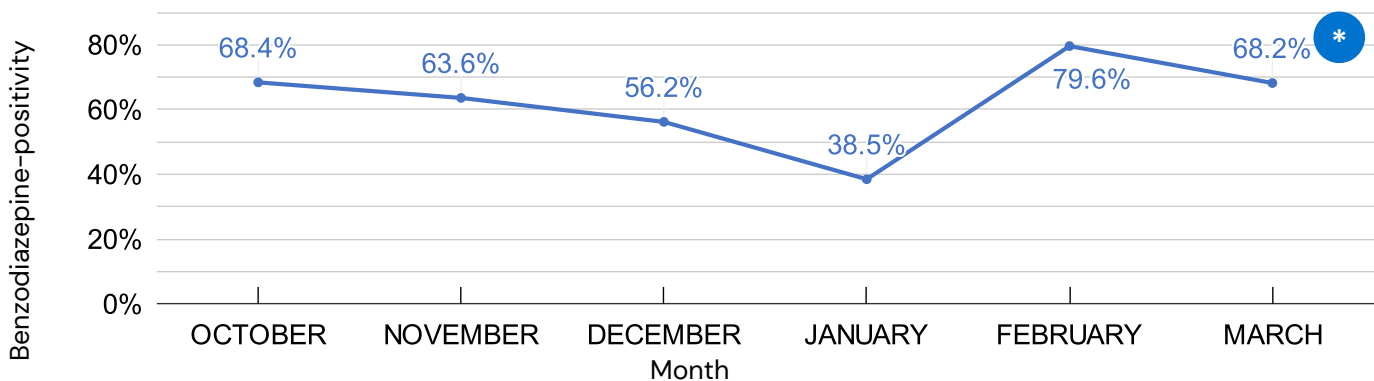
There were additional compounds detected a single time each:
Cocaine Base, Dimethyl Sulfone, Etomidate, Fentanyl Base, No Library Match, Uncertain Carbohydrate

Frequency (N=104)

Number of samples tested with **fentanyl present**










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








*During the month of March, **68.2%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner site in Island Health (**75 samples of 110 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		99	9	2	110
Stimulant		19	3	0	22
Psychedelic		8	6	0	14
Unknown		0	0	5	5
Depressant		2	1	0	3
Polysubstance		1	0	0	1
TOTAL		129	19	7	155

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		82	1	0	83
Fentanyl		17	3	0	20
Pharmaceutical		0	4	2	6
Heroin		0	1	0	1
TOTAL		99	9	2	110

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