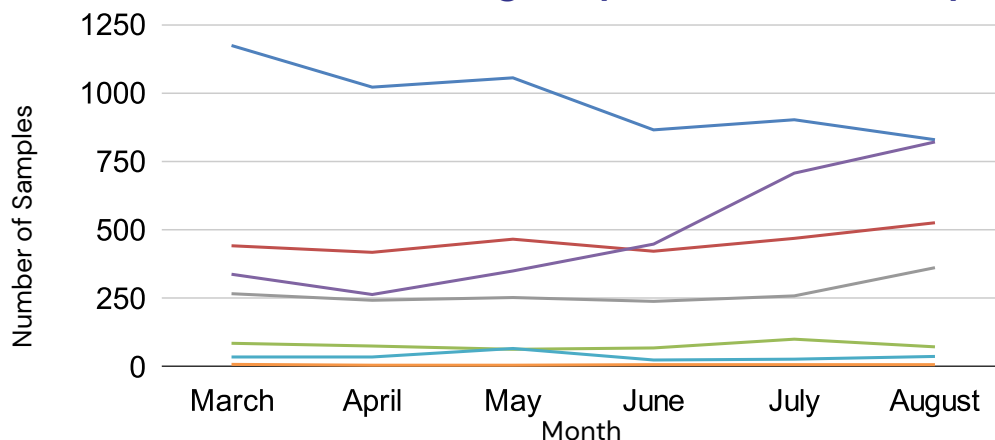




Key findings

- In August, **2,657** drug checks were performed by community drug checking sites in BC (**57 access points**). The number of psychedelic samples increased, coinciding with pop-up services provided at music festivals.
- The percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip increased to **42.5%** in August. The most common, desalkylgidazepam, has been decreasing in detection since June. Conversely, the number of samples containing bromazolam and nifoxipam has been increasing.
- The median concentration of fentanyl in unregulated opioids rose, while fluorofentanyl decreased, both reaching **7.2%**. Overall, the median concentration of samples containing fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl fell to **11.3%**. Concentrations were estimated using a new quantification model with improved sensitivity (see page 3).
- We note there has been an uptick in samples containing carfentanil since the beginning of the year. In August, carfentanil was detected by FTIR in **3 opioid samples**. The true number is expected to be higher, as carfentanil is usually found in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%) via secondary testing.
- Among the subset of opioid samples sent for secondary testing with Paper-Spray Mass Spectrometry (**n=117**), medetomidine was detected in **43 samples**, carfentanil in **19 samples**, and xylazine in **10 samples**.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in August

● Opioid	829
● Stimulant	526
● Depressant	73
● Psychedelic	821
● Other	38
● Polysubstance	8
● Unknown	362

Total: 2,657

Number of samples tested by region

Vancouver Coastal Health region: 1375 (**52%**)

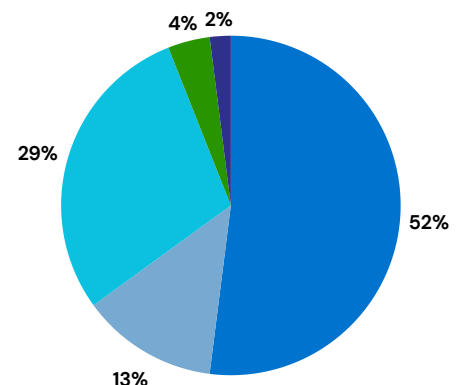
Fraser Health region: 341 (**13%**)

Interior Health region: 779 (**29%**)

Vancouver Island Health region: 118 (**4%**)

Northern Health region: 44 (**2%**)

Total: 2,657



Number of samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Opioid	764	41	24	829
Stimulant	503	22	1	526
Depressant	48	25	0	73
Psychedelic	769	49	3	821
Other	25	8	5	38
Polysubstance	7	1	0	8
Unknown	0	0	362	362
Total	2116	146	395	2657

Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.

Opioids

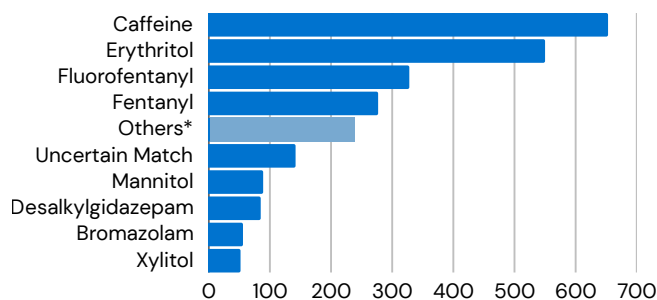
Number of opioid samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Down	637	19	1	657
Pharmaceutical	36	13	25	74
Fentanyl	66	5	1	72
Heroin	18	1	0	19
Opium	7	0	0	7
Total	764	41	24	829

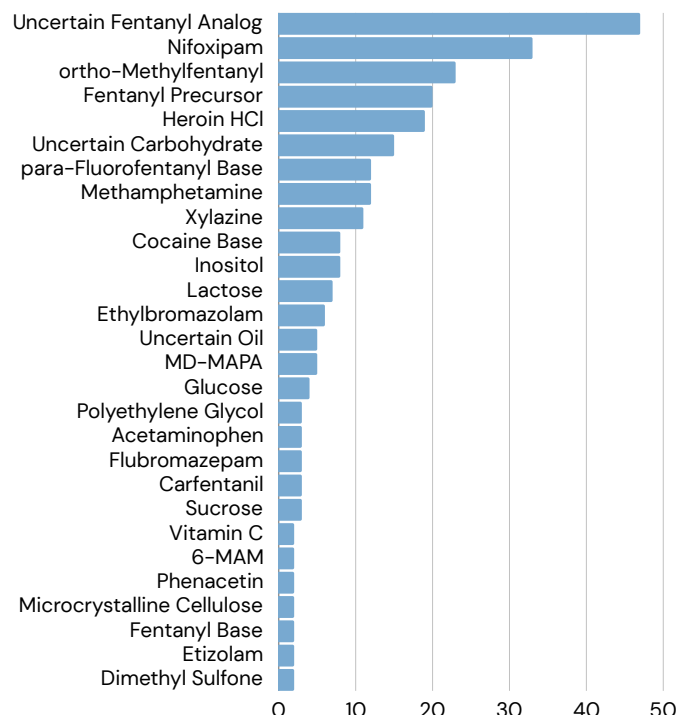
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=748)

Main components



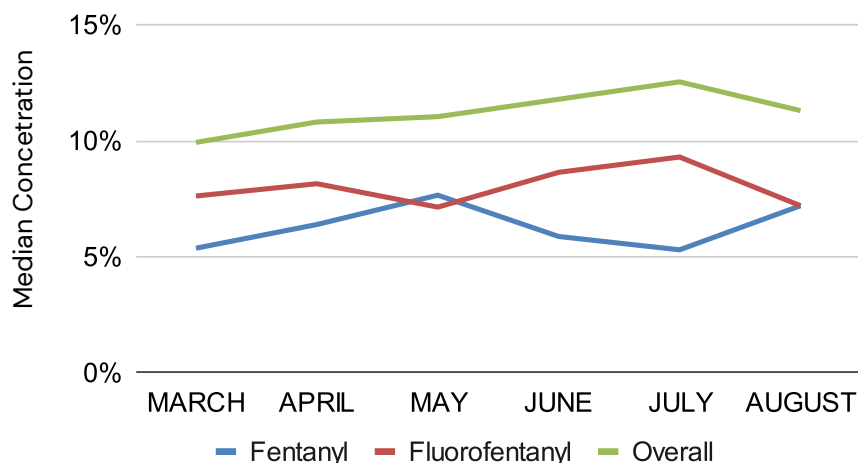
Other components



Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

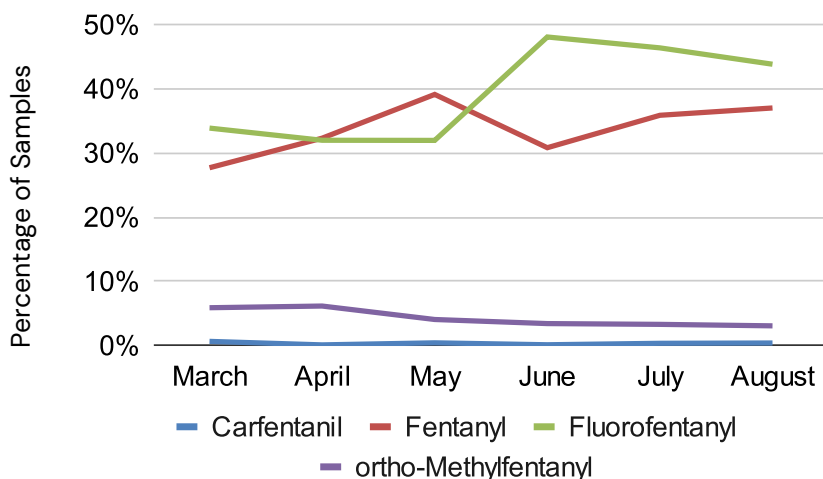
Median fentanyl concentration of unregulated opioids, past 6 months

Concentrations were estimated using a validated quantification model for the purposes of this report with aggregated data. To learn more about the QUANT3 quantification model visit [here](#).



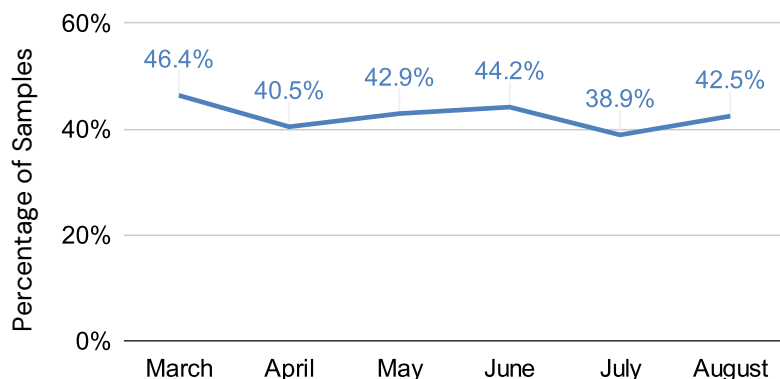
- In August, the median concentration of fentanyl in unregulated opioids increased from the previous month, whereas the median concentration of fluorofentanyl decreased, both converging at 7.2%. The overall median concentration of samples containing fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl fell to 11.3% (n = 644).
- Most unregulated opioids contain fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl HCl at concentrations between 5% and 15%, but samples can range from containing trace amounts to comprising most of the mixture.

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



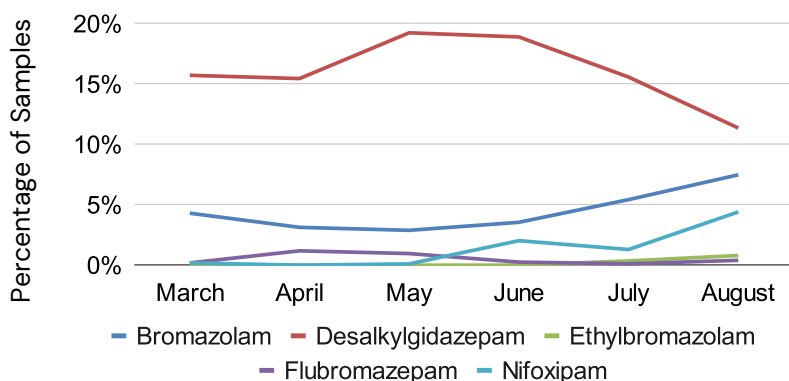
- In August, fluorofentanyl remained the most common opioid detected by FTIR, found in **43.9%** of all unregulated opioids tested (**399 of 748 samples**).
- There has been an uptick in samples containing carfentanil since the beginning of the year. In August, carfentanil was detected by FTIR in **3 opioid samples**.
- The true number of samples containing carfentanil is expected to be higher, as it is usually found in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%). Please see the **Secondary Testing** section of this report for more information (page 6).

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines, past 6 months



- During the month of August, **42.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in our partner sites around BC (**352 samples of 829 checked**).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer.

Benzodiazepines detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months

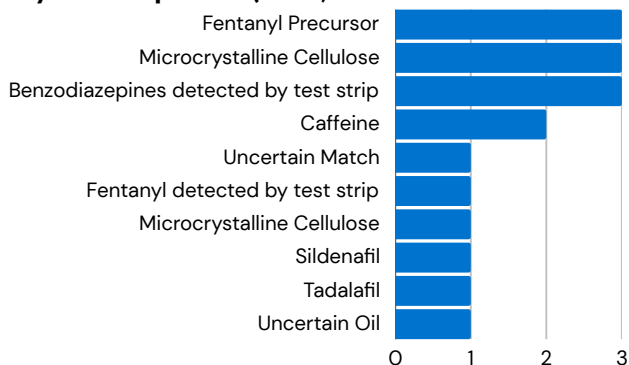


- In August, **24.5%** of all unregulated opioid samples (**183 of 748 samples**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations high enough to be detectable by FTIR (>5%).
- The most common desalkylgidazepam, decreased in detection this month while bromazolam increased.
- We are continuing to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines. In August, nifoxipam detection tripled from the previous month to **33 samples**, and ethylbromazolam was found in **6 samples**.

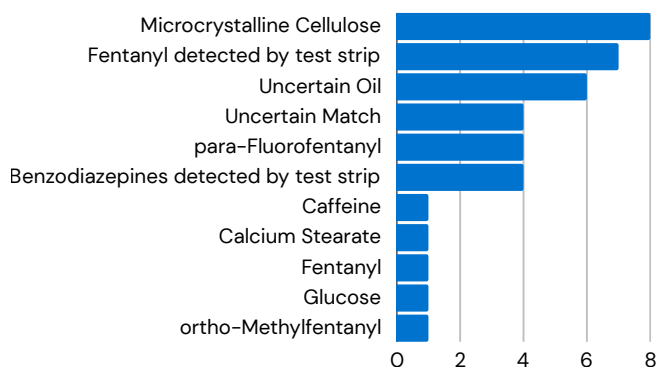
Components detected in pharmaceutical opioids

(where expected drug was absent)

Hydromorphone (N=3)



Oxycodone (N=10)

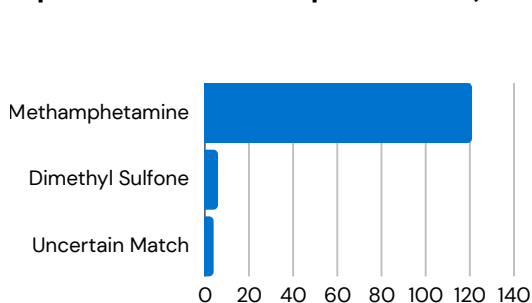


- In August, a total of **74 samples** were submitted expected to be pharmaceutical opioids, the most common were hydromorphone (Dilaudid), and acetaminophen + oxycodone (Percocet).
- Of the oxycodone and hydromorphone samples submitted, **13** did not contain the expected drugs and instead contained other unexpected active components. The most common were fentanyl/fentanyl analogs and benzodiazepines, as detected by FTIR and/or test strip.
- We note there were no instances of acetaminophen + oxycodone samples containing unexpected active components this month.

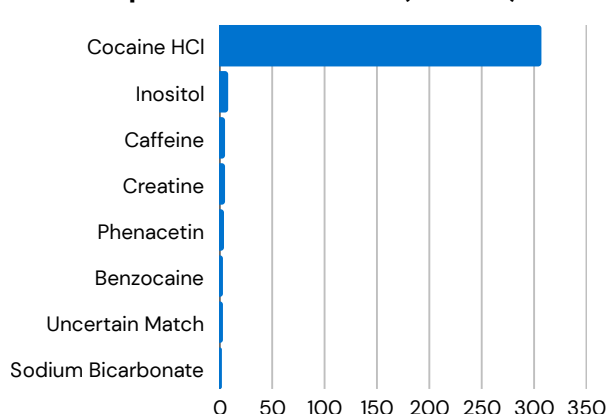
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=127)

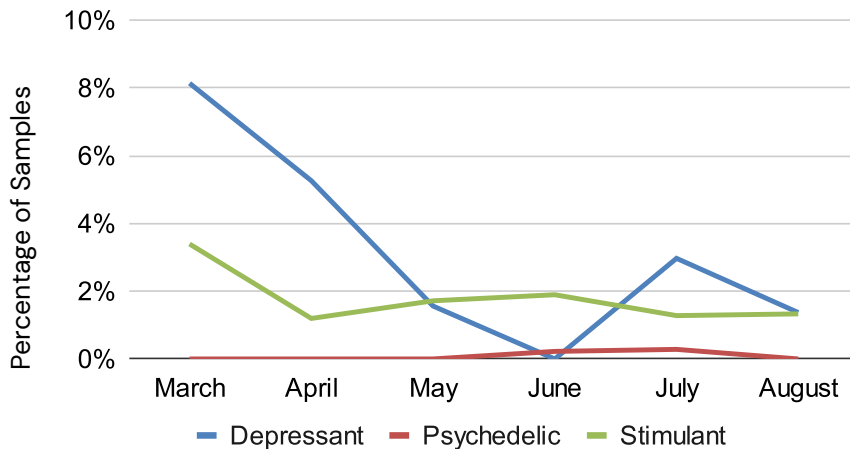


Components in cocaine (N=314)



Additional components detected a single time of samples have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on our [dashboard](#)

Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months



- In August, a total of **9 non-opioids (7 stimulants, 2 depressants)** tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.
- Of these, **2 methamphetamine samples** were expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user, noting that the samples were stored with opioids prior to submitting them for drug checking.

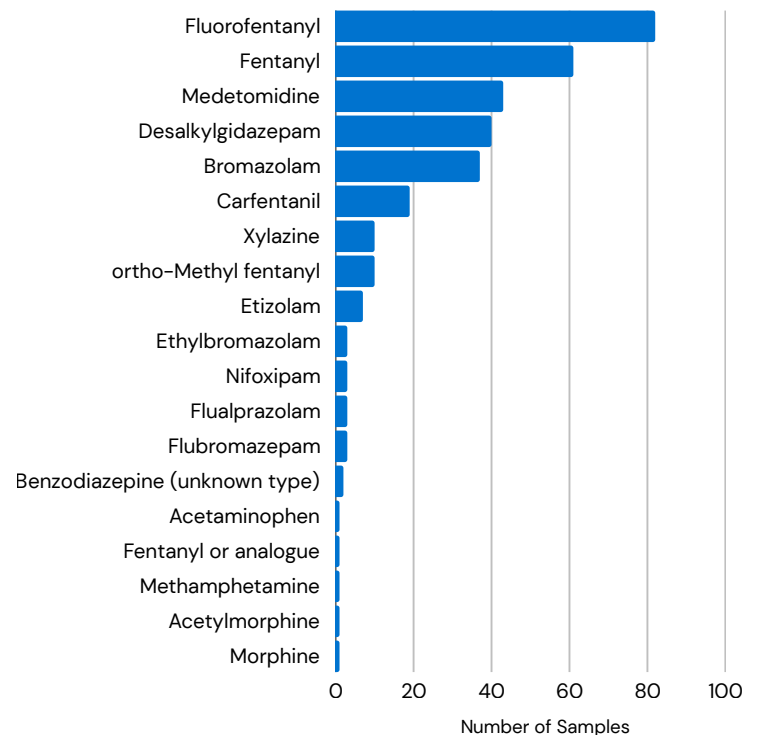
PSMS Secondary Testing Results Summary

A subset of samples were sent for secondary testing provided by Substance at the University of Victoria, using Paper-Spray Mass Spectrometry (PSMS). PSMS is a highly sensitive technology, and can detect components in samples below the detection limit of the FTIR (<5%). Below is a summary of all active components detected in opioid samples sent in confirmatory testing. For more information about Substance please visit their [website](#).

Total opioids sent to Substance

Health Authority	Number of Samples
Fraser Health	49
Interior Health	36
Northern Health	15
Vancouver Coastal Health	12
Island Health	5
Total	117

Active components detected (n=117)



Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
August 8, 2025 Coquitlam	Fentanyl	Xylitol, Erythritol, Inositol, Carfentanil, ortho-Methylfentanyl	Positive	Negative	Beige chunks sold as fentanyl tested positive for high concentrations of Carfentanil in Coquitlam.
August 11, 2025 Vancouver	Down	Xylazine	Negative	Negative	White powder sold as down in Vancouver tested positive for xylazine, a non-opiate sedative and negative for down.
August 14, 2025 Vancouver	Crack Cocaine	Caffeine, Para-Fluorofentanyl, Uncertain carbohydrate	Positive	Negative	Black residue sold as crack cocaine in Vancouver tested positive for para-fluorofentanyl and negative for cocaine. Substance caused overdose.
August 20, 2025 Kamloops	Down	Carfentanil, Fluorofentanyl*	N/A	N/A	Brown granules sold as Down tested positive for Carfentanil and Fluorofentanyl in Kamloops.
August 29, 2025 Vancouver	Hydromorphone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, N-Propionyl Para-Fluoro Norfentanyl Base	Negative	Positive	Triangular white tablet imprinted with "APO" sold as hydromorphone in Vancouver tested positive for a fentanyl analog precursor and benzos, and negative for hydromorphone.

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

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).

About this data

Data represented in this report is collected from our partner sites across the province using Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometry in combination with BTNX fentanyl test strips and benzodiazepine test strips when applicable. We note the FTIR spectrometer has a detection limit of approximately 5% concentration (McCrae, 2019).

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.
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We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of [our partners](#) to collect this data.

To find drug checking services in your area please visit our [site locator](#).