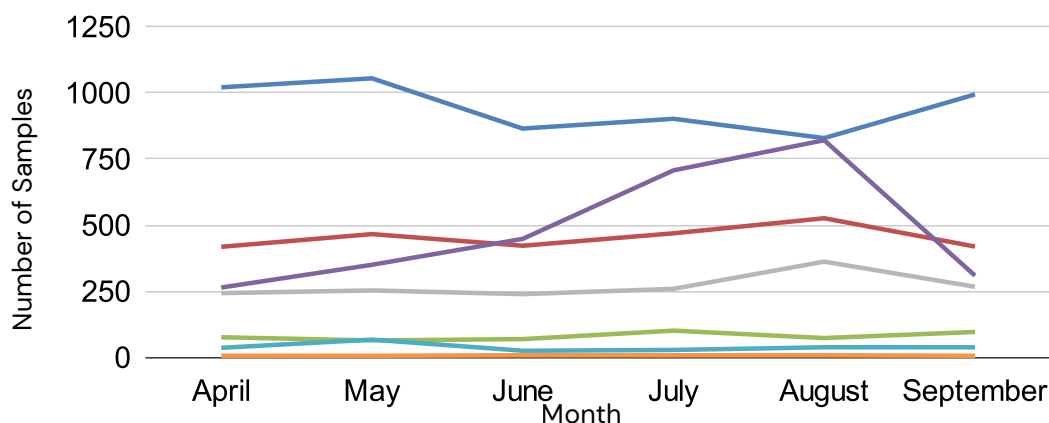




Key findings

- In September, **2,129** drug checks were performed by community drug checking sites in BC (**58 access points**). The number of psychedelic samples decreased, coinciding with the end of the summer festival season.
- The percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip remained consistent at **42.6%** in September. The most common benzodiazepine, desalkylgidazepam, has been decreasing in detection since June.
- The median concentration of fluorofentanyl in unregulated opioids rose to **8.6%**, while fentanyl decreased to **5.9%**. Overall, the median concentration of samples containing fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl increased to **12.5%**. Concentrations were estimated using a new quantification model with improved sensitivity (**see page 3**).
- There has been an uptick in unregulated opioids containing carfentanil this year. In September, carfentanil was detected by FTIR in **3 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=212**), medetomidine was detected in **59 samples**, carfentanil in **27 samples**, and xylazine in **27 samples**.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Sept.

Opioid	994
Stimulant	419
Depressant	96
Psychedelic	309
Other	38
Polysubstance	6
Unknown	267

Total: 2,129

Number of samples tested by region

Vancouver Coastal Health region: 1249 (**59%**)

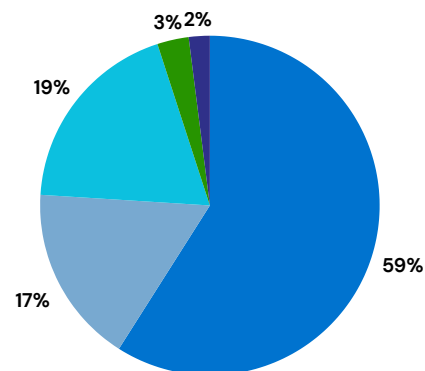
Fraser Health region: 369 (**17%**)

Interior Health region: 409 (**19%**)

Vancouver Island Health region: 56 (**3%**)

Northern Health region: 46 (**2%**)

Total: 2,129



Number of samples with the expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Opioid	933	48	13	994
Stimulant	388	31	0	419
Depressant	58	34	4	96
Psychedelic	292	15	2	309
Other	21	10	7	38
Polysubstance	6	0	0	6
Unknown	0	0	267	267
Total	1698	138	293	2129

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

Opioids

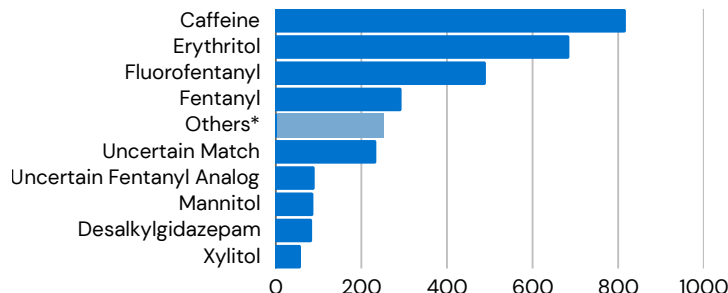
Number of opioid samples with the expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	69	7	0	76
Heroin	9	9	1	19
Other Opioid	1	0	0	1
Down	818	16	1	835
Pharmaceutical	22	16	11	49
Opium	14	0	0	14
Total	933	48	13	994

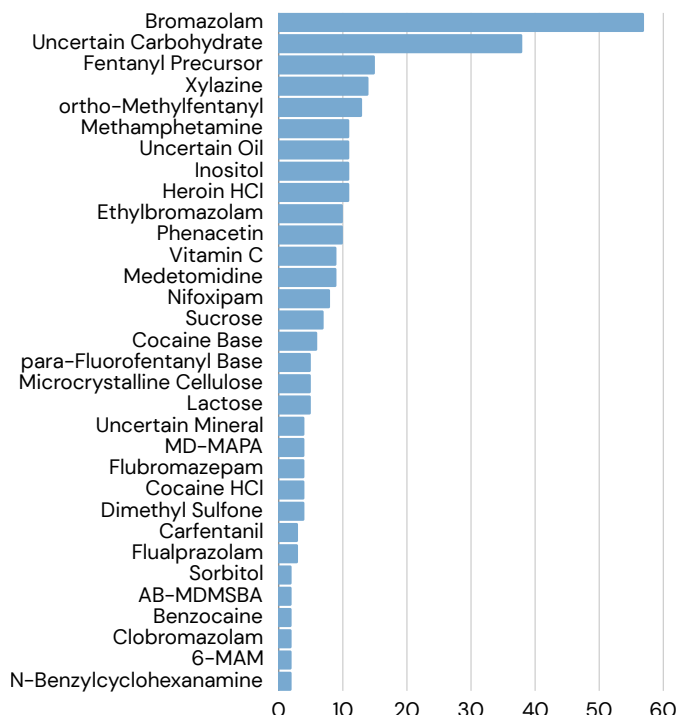
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=930)

Main components



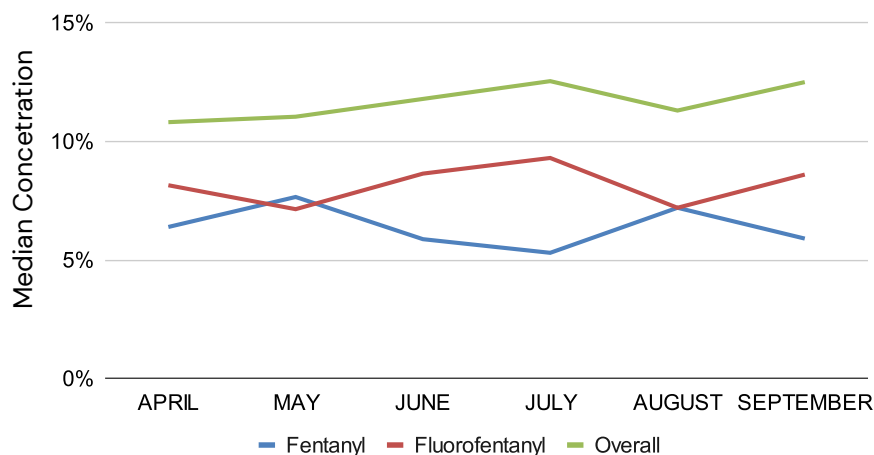
Other components



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

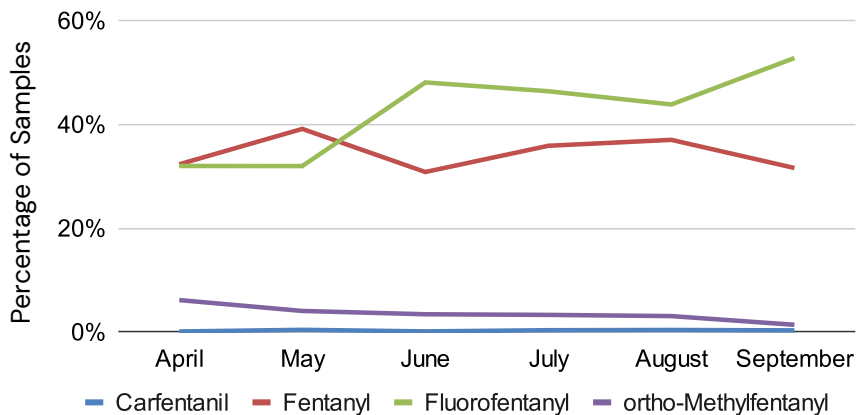
Median fentanyl concentration of unregulated opioids, past 6 months

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](#).



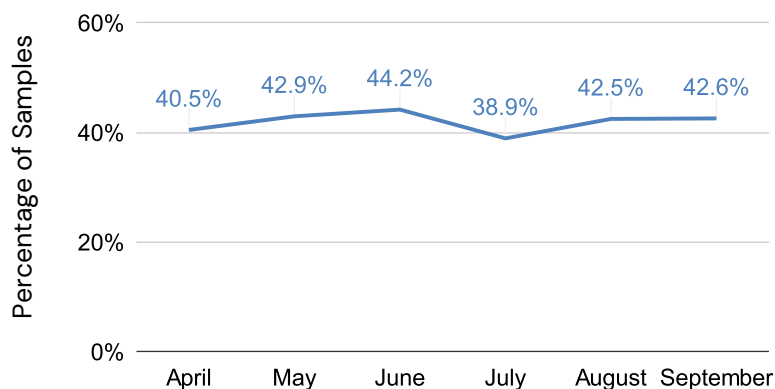
- In September, the median concentration of fluorofentanyl in unregulated opioids rose to **8.6% (n=475)**, while fentanyl decreased to **5.9% (n=663)**. Overall, the median concentration of samples containing fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl increased to **12.5% (n=813)**.
- Most unregulated opioids contain 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



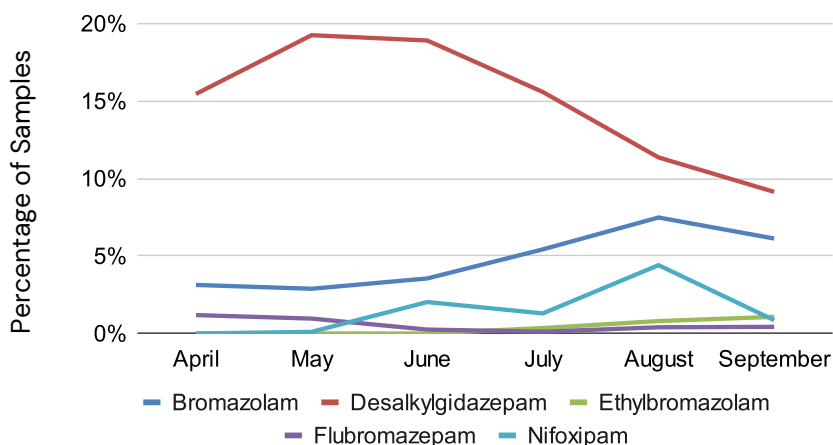
- In September, fluorofentanyl remained the most common opioid found by FTIR, detected in **52.8%** of all unregulated opioids tested (**491 of 930 samples**).
- There has been an uptick in unregulated opioids containing carfentanil this year. In September, carfentanil was detected by FTIR in **3 samples**.
- 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 September, **42.6%** of all expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in our partner sites around BC (**423 samples of 994 checked**).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months

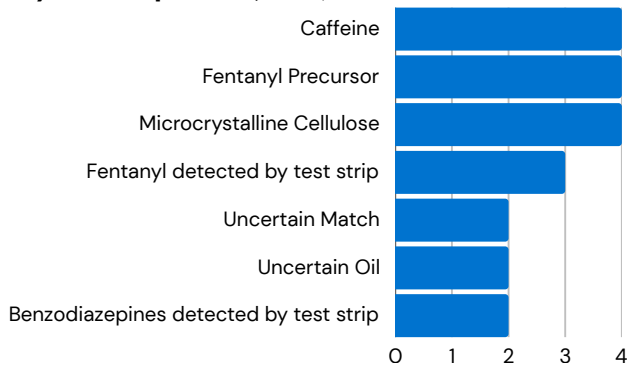


- In September, **18.4%** of all unregulated opioids (**171 of 930 samples**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations high enough to be detectable by FTIR (>5%). The most common, desalkylgizapam, decreased in detection this month.
- We are continuing to monitor novel benzodiazepines that emerged at the beginning of the year. In September, nifoxipam was detected in **8 samples**, and ethylbromazolam was detected in **10 samples**.

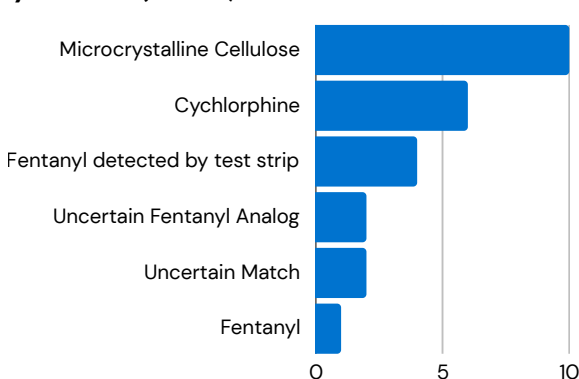
Components detected in pharmaceutical opioids

(where expected drug was absent)

Hydromorphone (N=4)



Oxycodone (N=10)

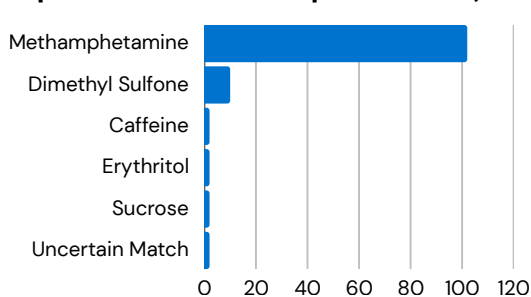


- In September, a total of **49 samples** were submitted expected to be pharmaceutical opioids, the most common being oxycodone and hydromorphone (Dilaudid). Of these, **14** did not contain the expected drugs and instead contained other unexpected active components.
- Among the hydromorphone samples submitted, n-propionyl-parafluoronorfentanyl base, a fentanyl precursor, was the most common unexpected component detected, followed by fentanyl/analogs and benzodiazepines, as detected by test strip.
- Among the oxycodone samples, cyclorphine, a buporphine-related opioid, was the most common unexpected component detected, followed by fentanyl and fentanyl analogs. We note that all **4 samples** containing cyclorphine were submitted in the same batch, and at this time, not much is known about its potency or effects..

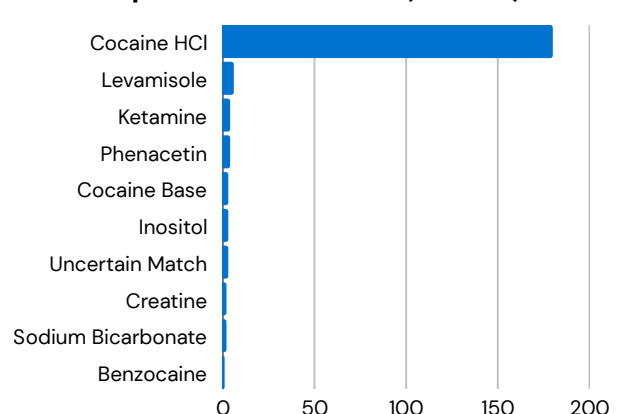
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=106)

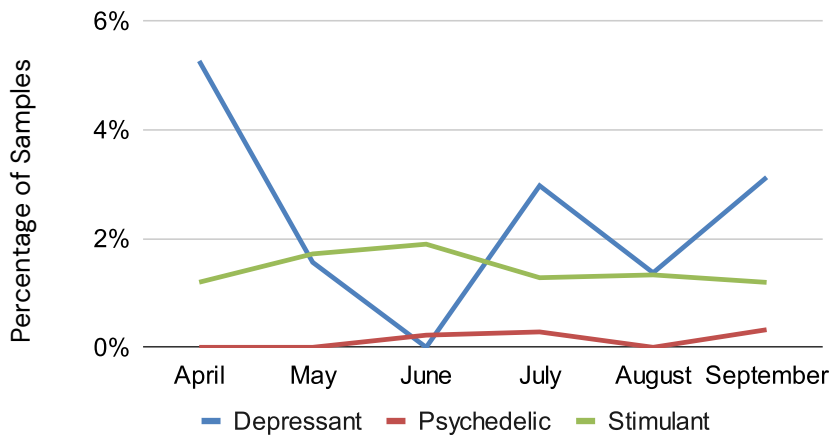


Components in cocaine (N=191)



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

Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months



- In September, a total of **9** non-opioids (**5** stimulants, **3** depressants, and **1** psychedelic) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.
- Of these, **1 sample** submitted as an unknown benzodiazepine, and 1 as crack cocaine, were expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user, noting that they were stored with opioids prior to drug checking.

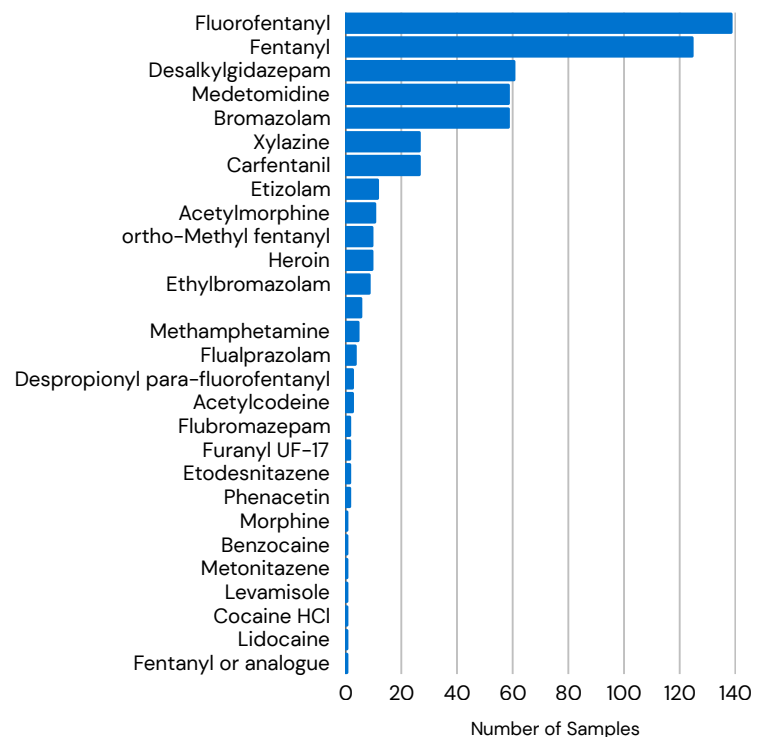
PSMS Secondary Testing Results Summary

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	109
Interior Health	59
Northern Health	20
Vancouver Coastal Health	19
Island Health	5
Total	212

Active components detected (n=212)



Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
September 5, 2025 Penticton	Crack Cocaine	Erythritol, Xylitol, Caffeine, Fentanyl	Positive	Negative	Cream/beige chunks sold as “crack caviar” tested positive for fentanyl in Penticton.
September 8, 2025 Vancouver	Benzodiazepine (Unknown)	Erythritol, Medetomidine	Negative	Negative	White powder sold as benzos in Vancouver tested positive for the tranquilizer medetomidine and negative for fentanyl and benzos.
September 12, 2025 Vancouver	Alprazolam (Xanax)	Microcrystalline Cellulose, ADB-BUTINACA, Uncertain Match	Negative	Positive	White granules sold as alprazolam in Vancouver tested positive for ADB-BUTINACA, a synthetic cannabinoid, and positive for benzos.
September 19, 2025 Vancouver	Cocaine	Inositol, Uncertain Oil, Fentanyl	Positive	Negative	White powder sold as cocaine in Vancouver tested positive for fentanyl, and negative for cocaine.
September 26, 2025 Vancouver	Down	Fluorofentanyl, Carfentanil, Medetomidine, Desalkylgidazepam*	Positive	Positive	Pink chunks and pink pebbles sold as down in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver tested positive for fluorofentanyl, carfentanil, and medetomidine, a non-opioid tranquilizer more potent than xylazine. Pink pebbles also tested positive for benzodiazepine desalkylgidazepam.

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](#).