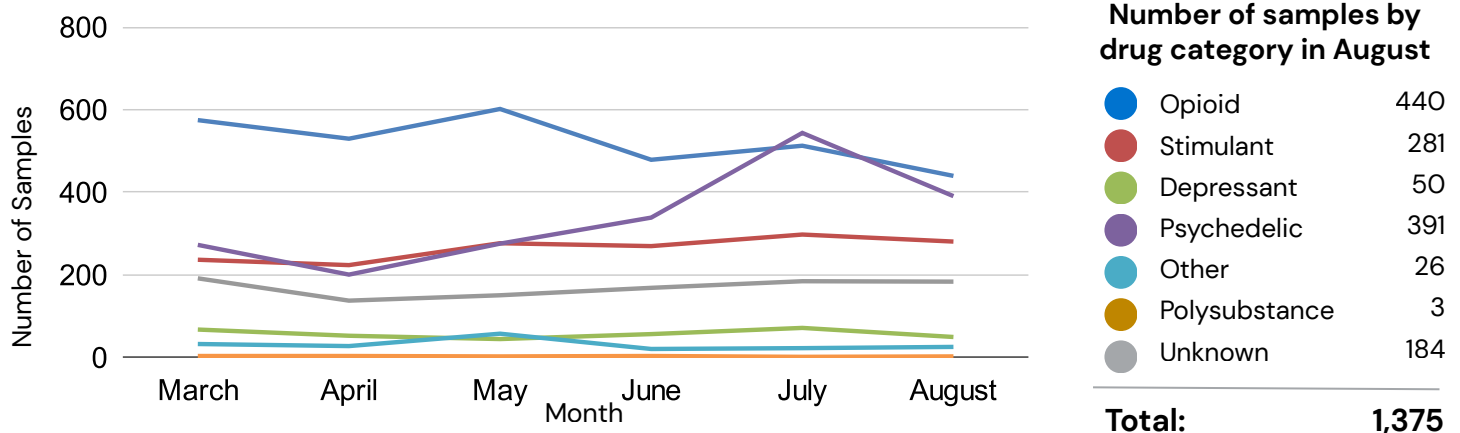




Key findings

- In August, **1,375** drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (7 access points). The number of psychedelic samples checked remained high, which is typical in the summer months.
- The percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip increased to **30.2%** in August. The most common benzodiazepine detected was bromazolam, surpassing desalkylgidazepam for the first time since October 2024.
- 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 **1 opioid sample**. The true number is expected to be higher, as it is usually found in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%) via secondary testing.
- Among the subset of opioids sent for secondary testing with Paper-Spray Mass Spectrometry (**n=12**), medetomidine was detected in **1 sample**.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Get Your Drugs Tested (Vancouver)	1012
Insite (Vancouver)	333
Whistler Community Service Society (Squamish)	19
Whistler Community Service Society (Whistler)	11
Total	1375

Number of samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Opioid	405	23	12	440
Stimulant	265	15	1	281
Depressant	29	21	0	50
Psychedelic	367	21	3	391
Other	16	6	4	26
Polysubstance	3	0	0	3
Unknown	0	0	184	184
Total	1085	86	204	1375

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

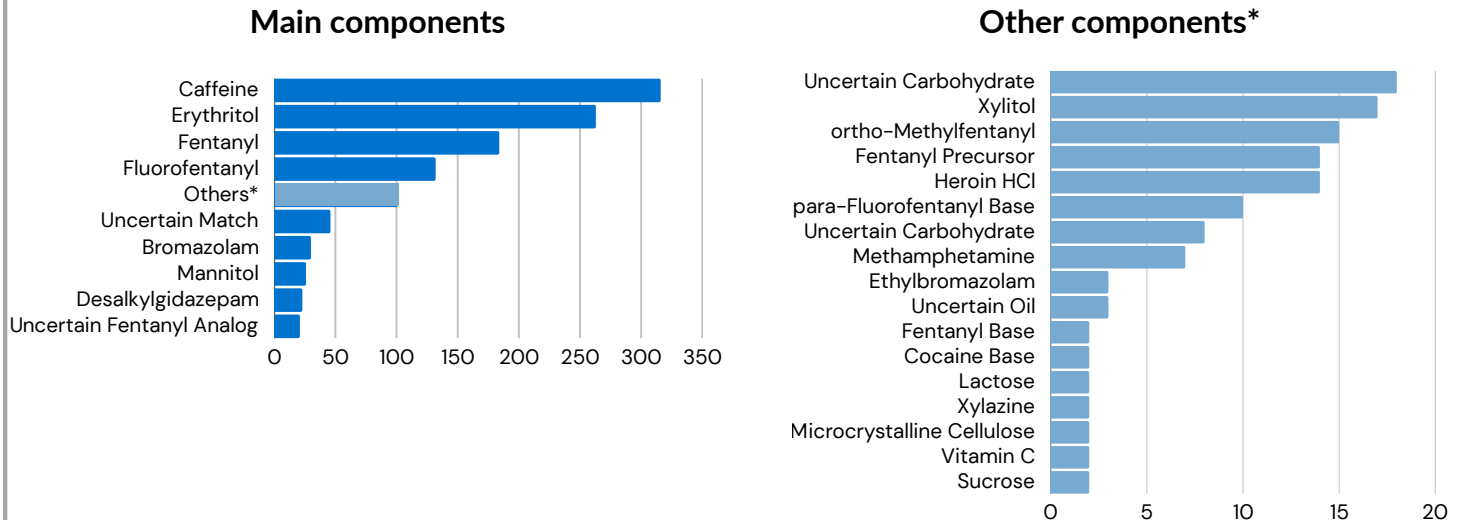
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	37	2	0	39
Heroin	14	0	0	14
Down	320	13	0	333
Pharmaceutical	28	8	12	48
Opium	6	0	0	6
Total	405	23	12	440

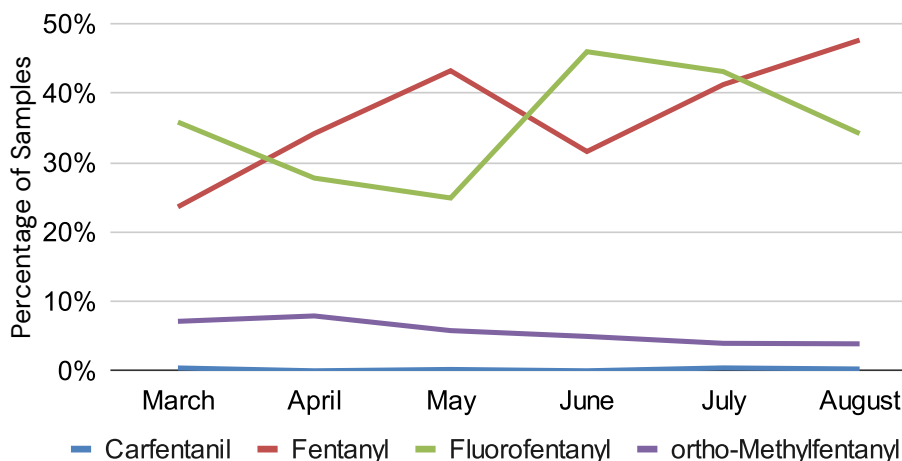
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=386)



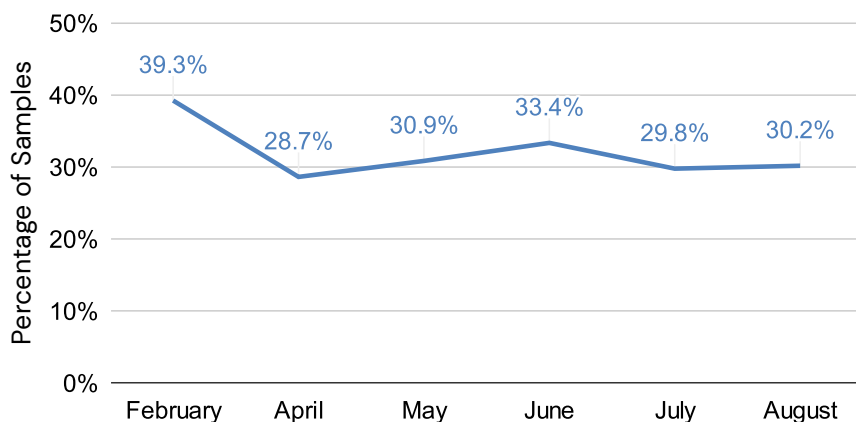
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



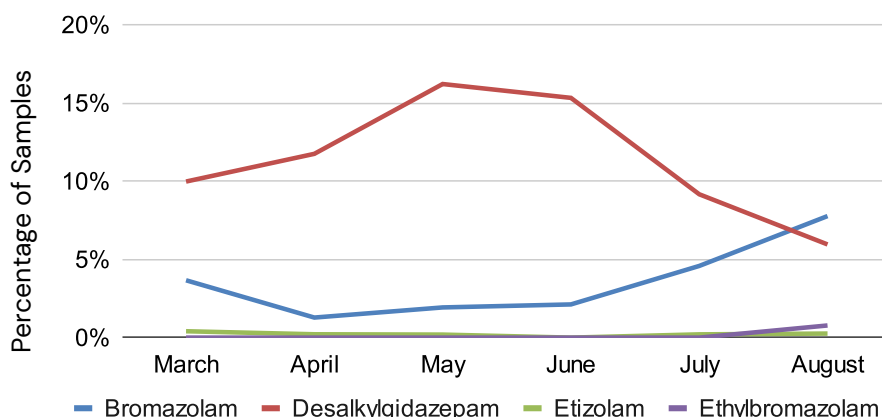
- In August, fentanyl was the most common opioid detected by FTIR, found in **47.7%** of all unregulated opioid samples tested (**184 of 386 samples**).
- We note that carfentanyl was detected in **1 sample** by FTIR in August. The true number of samples containing carfentanyl is expected to be higher than what is observed by FTIR, as it is usually contained in concentrations below the detection limit (<5%). Please see the **Secondary Testing section** of this report for more information.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines, past 6 months



- During the month of August, **30.2%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (**133 samples of 440 checked**).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer.

Benzodiazepines detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months

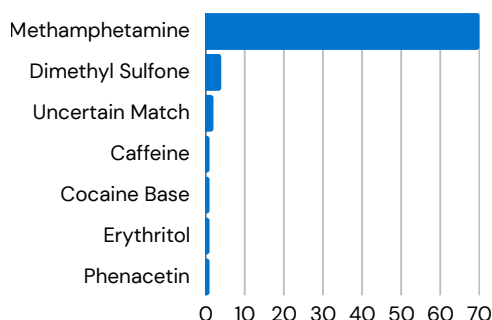


- In August, **14.8%** of all unregulated opioids (**57 of 386 samples**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations high enough to be detectable by FTIR (>5%).
- Of these, bromazepam was most frequently identified (**30 samples**), surpassing desalkylgidazepam detection for the first time since October 2024.
- Notably, ethylbromazepam, a benzodiazepine that was first observed in January 2025 via confirmatory testing, was detected in **3 samples** this month.

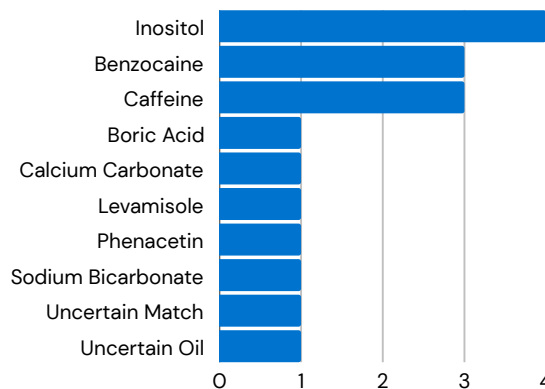
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

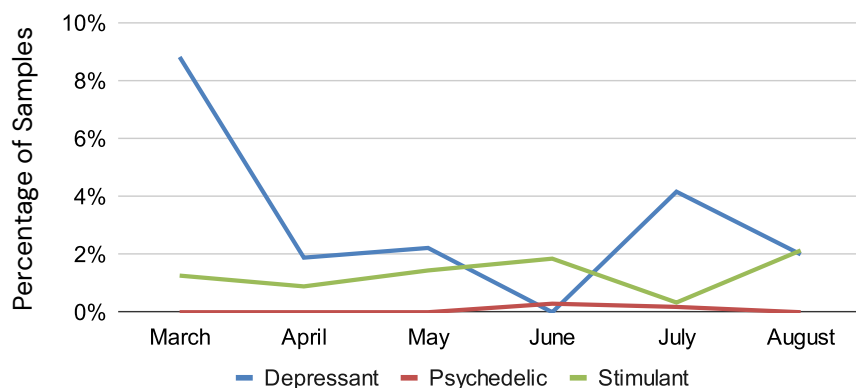
Components in methamphetamine (N=73)



Components in cocaine (N=148)



Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months

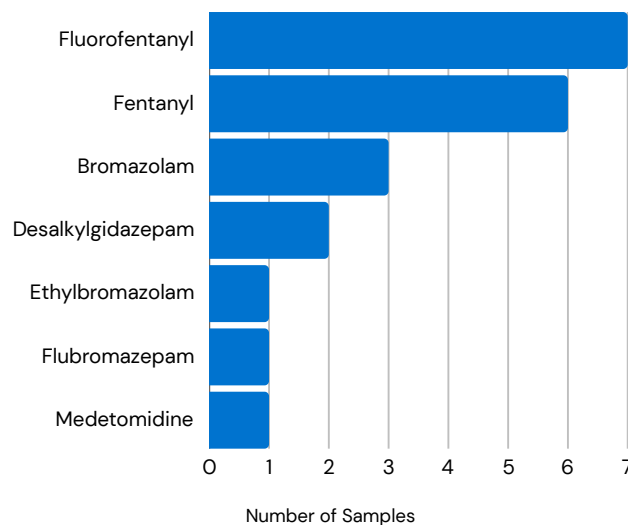


- In August, a total of **8 non-opioid samples** (7 stimulants, 1 depressant) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.
- Of these, **2 methamphetamine samples** were expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user, noting that the samples were stored with opioids prior to submitting 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](https://www.substance.ca).

Active components in opioids submitted (N=12)



Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
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 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.

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.

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](#).