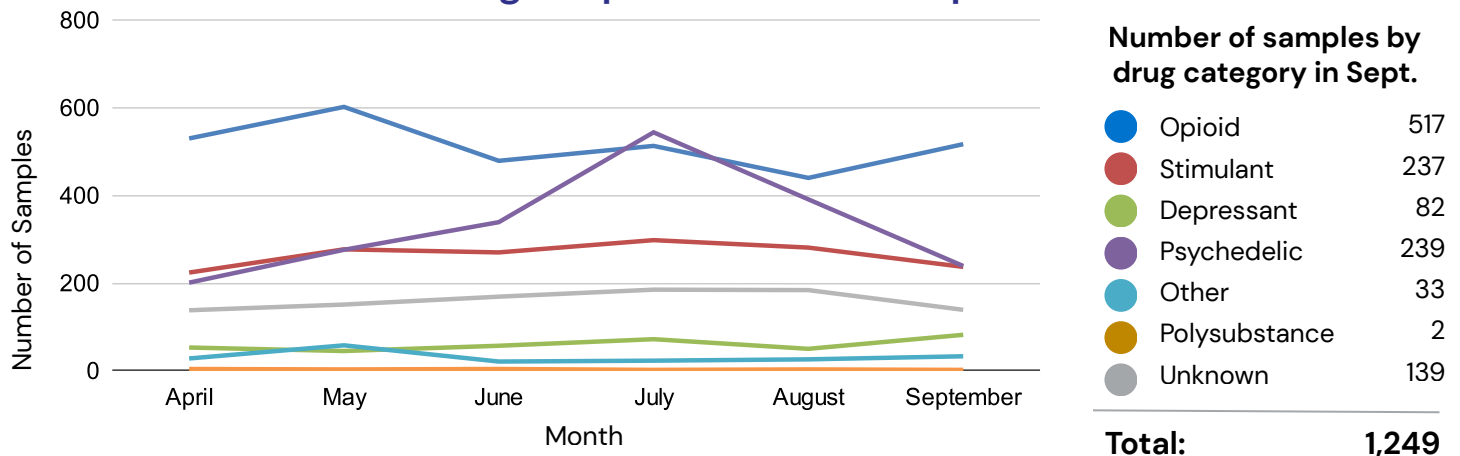




Key findings

- In September, **1,249** drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (**9 access points**).
- The percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip increased to **33.5%** in September. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was most common, followed by bromazolam.
- We note there has been an uptick in samples containing carfentanil since the beginning of this year. 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=19**), carfentanil was detected in **4 samples**, medetomidine in **4 samples**, and xylazine 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)	768
Insite (Vancouver)	468
Whistler Community Service Society (Squamish)	9
Total	1249

Less than 5 samples were tested at the following locations, which has been included in the total:
Whistler Community Service Society (Whistler), Vancouver Coastal Health (Powell River).

Number of samples with the expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Opioid	483	23	11	517
Stimulant	216	21	0	237
Depressant	53	26	3	82
Psychedelic	227	10	2	239
Other	17	9	7	33
Polysubstance	2	0	0	2
Unknown	0	0	139	139
Total	998	89	162	1249

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

Opioids

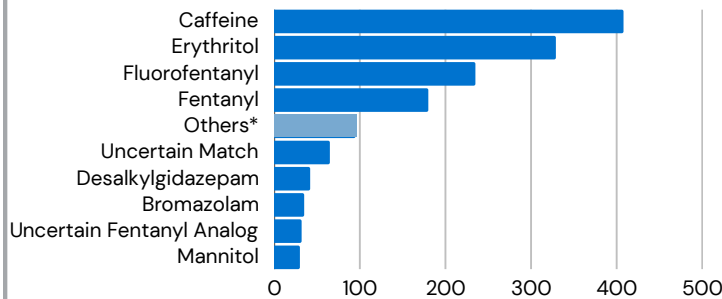
Number of opioid samples with the expected drug present

Expected Drug	Present	Not Present	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	38	3	0	41
Heroin	8	3	1	12
Down	408	12	0	420
Pharmaceutical	15	5	10	30
Opium	14	0	0	14
Total	483	23	11	517

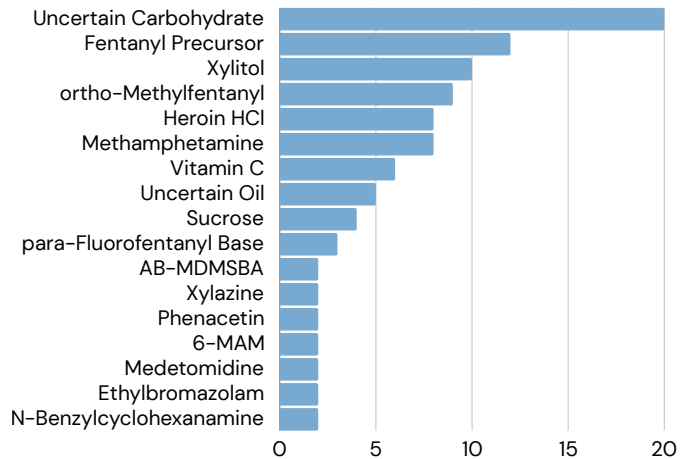
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=473)

Main components

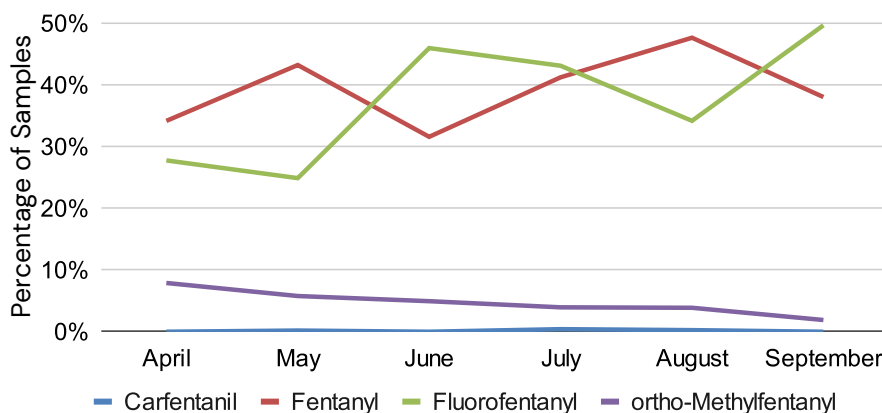


Other components*



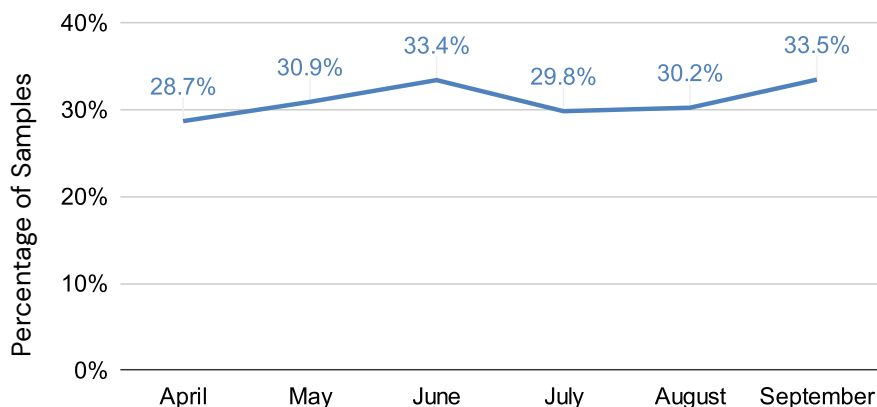
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



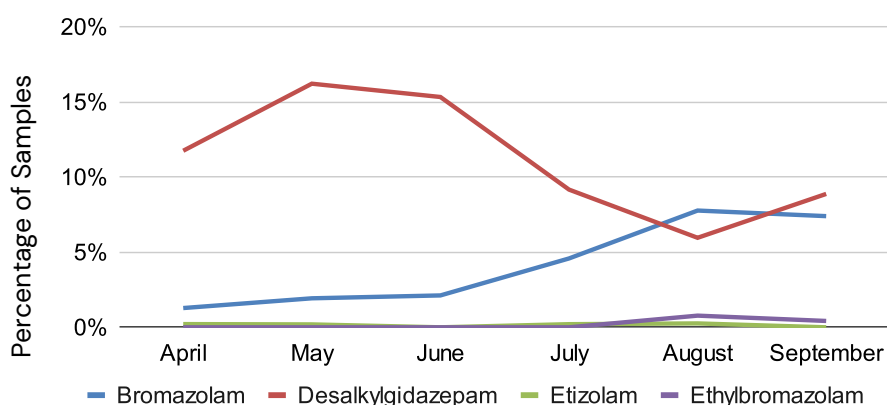
- In September, fluorofentanyl was the most common opioid detected by FTIR, found in **49.7%** of all unregulated opioids tested (**235 of 473 samples**).
- We note there has been an uptick in samples containing carfentanyl since the beginning of this year. The true number is expected to be higher than what is observed by FTIR, as it is usually contained in concentrations below the detection limit (<5%). Please see the **Secondary Testing section** for more information..

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines, past 6 months



- During the month of September, **33.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (**173 samples of 517 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

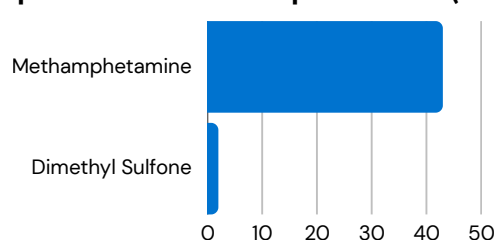


- In September, **16.9%** of all unregulated opioids (**80 of 473 samples**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations high enough to be detectable by FTIR (>5%). Of these, desalkylgizapam was most frequently identified (**42 samples**).
- We are continuing to monitor novel benzodiazepines that emerged at the beginning of the year. In September, ethylbromazolam was detected in **2 samples**.

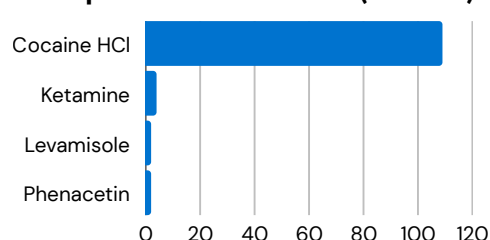
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=44)

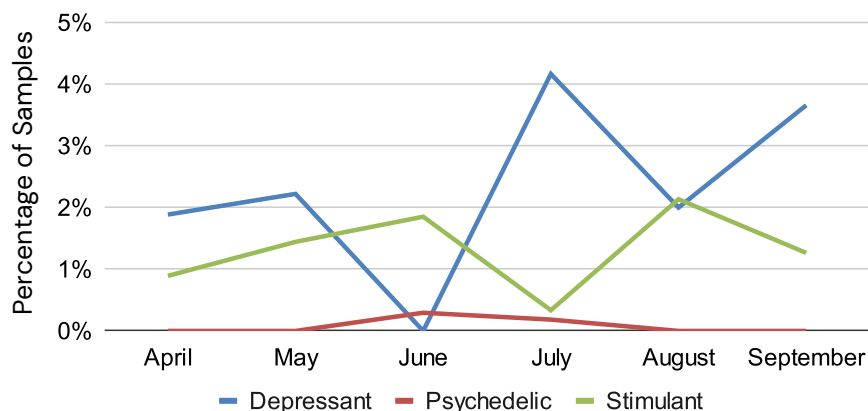


Components in cocaine (N=117)



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 detected in non-opioids, past 6 months

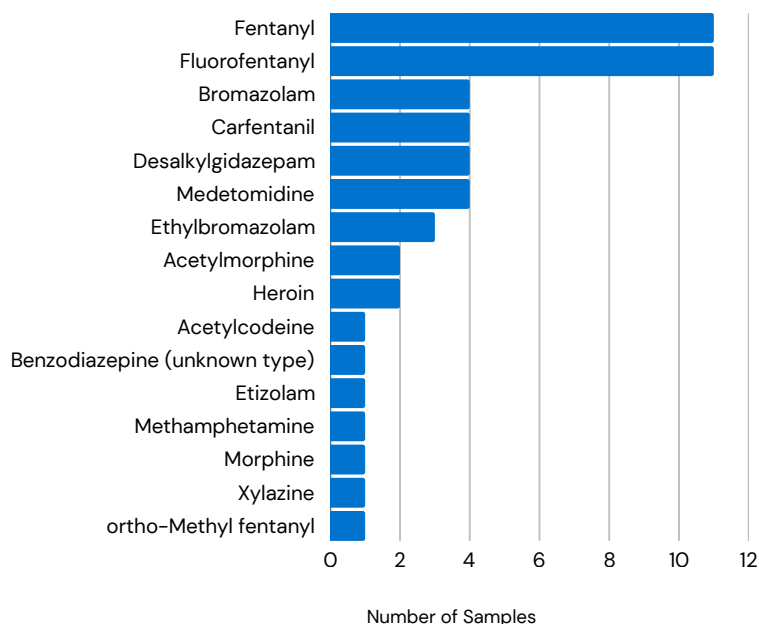


- In August, a total of **8 non-opioid samples** (7 stimulants, 1 depressant) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.
- Of these, **2 methamphetamine samples** were expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user, noting that the samples were stored with opioids prior to submitting 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=19)



Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
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, Desalkylgizapam*	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 desalkylgizapam.

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.

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](#).