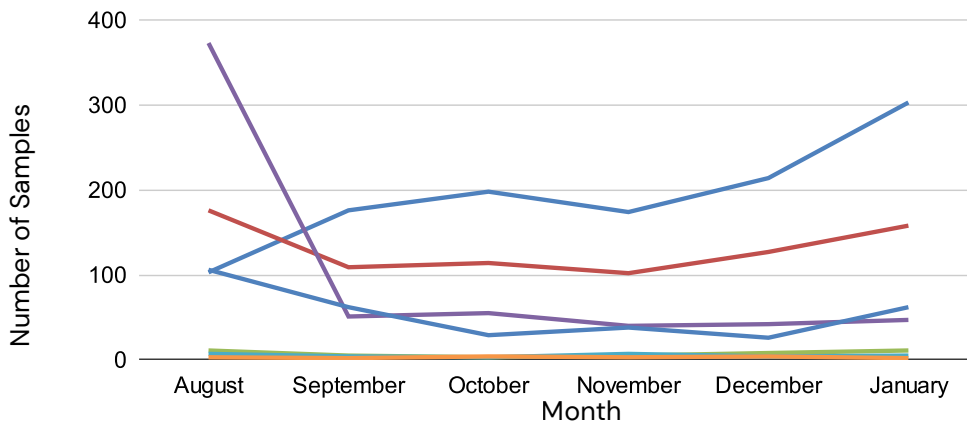




### Key findings

- In January, **588** drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Interior Health region (**26 access points**).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR/test strip increased to **56.1%**. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was the most common detected by FTIR.
- Novel benzodiazepines continue to be detected in unregulated opioids, which included clobromazolam and ethylbromazolam in January.
- There has been an increase in medetomidine in the unregulated drug supply, coinciding with an uptick in drug alerts issued in January. Of the total **12 alerts**, **4** were related to medetomidine, including a province-wide alert issued by the BCCDC, and **2** issued within the IH region. **Two other IH alerts** were related to increased drug poisoning events.
- Among opioid samples sent for secondary testing in January (**n=48**), medetomidine was detected in **17 samples**, and carfentanil in **1 sample**.

### Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



### Number of samples by drug category in Jan.

Opioid	303
Stimulant	158
Depressant	11
Psychedelic	47
Other	5
Polysubstance	2
Unknown	62

**Total: 588**

### Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	99
ANKORS (Grand Forks)	10
ANKORS (Nelson)	36
ANKORS (Trail)	11
ASK (Kamloops)	23
ASK (Kelowna)	76
ASK (Penticton)	173
Interior Health (Kelowna)	112
Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy (Vernon)	40
UBCO (Kelowna)	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>588</b>

Less than 5 samples were tested at each of the following locations, which has been included in the above total:  
ASK (Merritt)

### Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	296	6	1	303
Stimulant	146	12	0	158
Depressant	5	6	0	11
Psychedelic	43	4	0	47
Other	4	1	0	5
Polysubstance	2	0	0	2
Unknown	0	0	62	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>588</b>

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

## Opioids

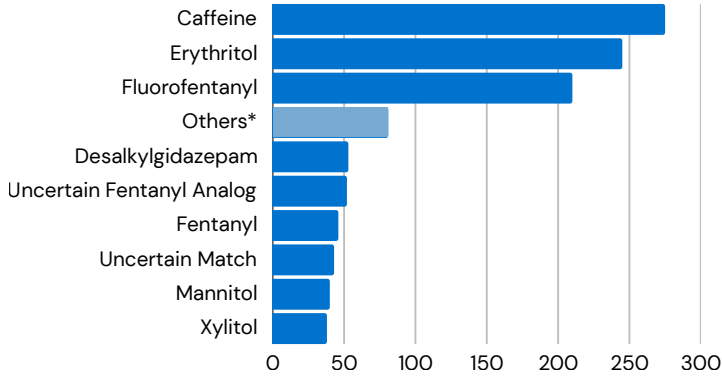
### Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	19	0	0	19
Heroin	0	3	0	3
Down	275	0	0	275
Pharmaceutical	0	3	1	4
Opium	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>303</b>

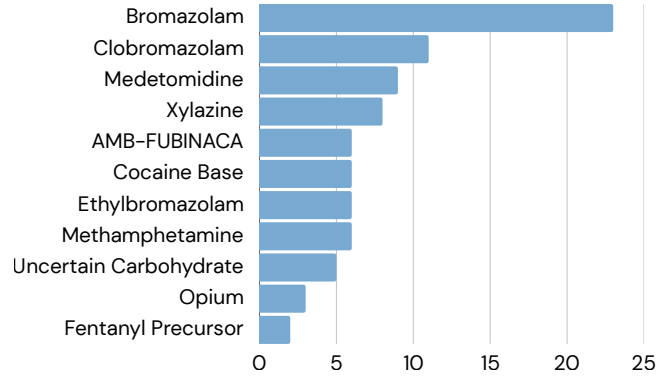
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents. 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

## Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=297)

### Main components

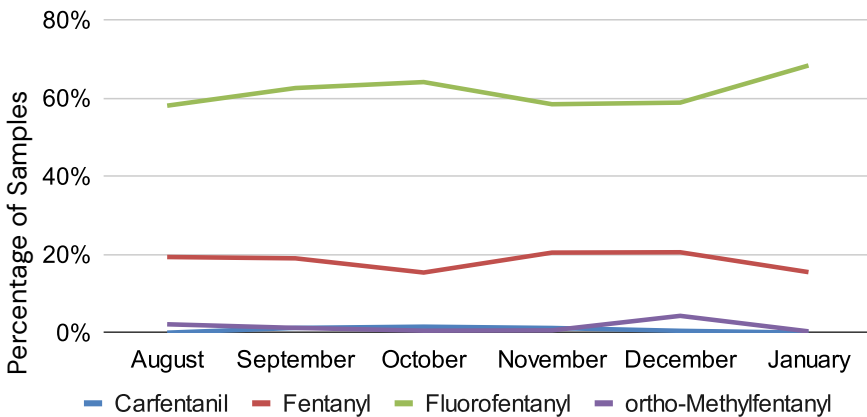


### Other components\*



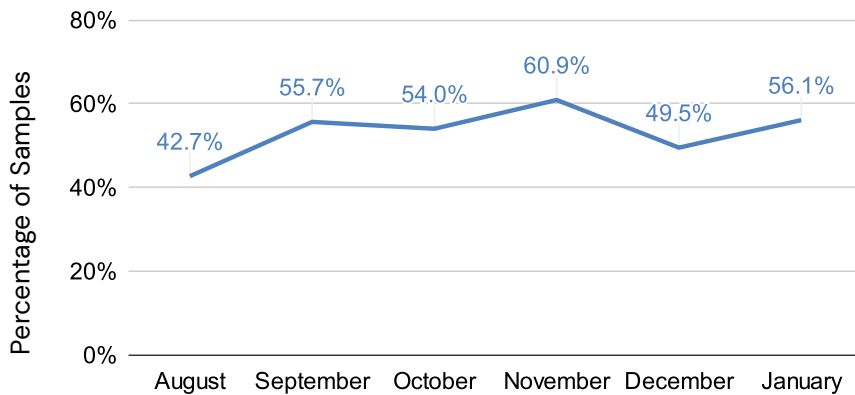
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

## Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



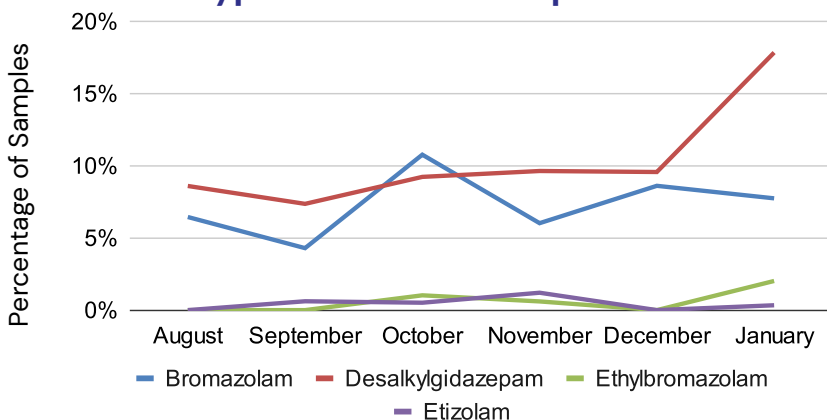
- In January, fluorofentanyl detection by FTIR increased to **68.4%** of unregulated opioids checked (**210 of 297 samples**), while fentanyl detection decreased to **15.5%** (**46 samples**).
- We note that the true number of samples containing carfentanil is expected to be higher than what is observed 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 January, **56.1%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in the Interior Health region (**167 samples of 303 checked**).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true number may be higher, as some benzodiazepines may be missed by test strip.

### Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months

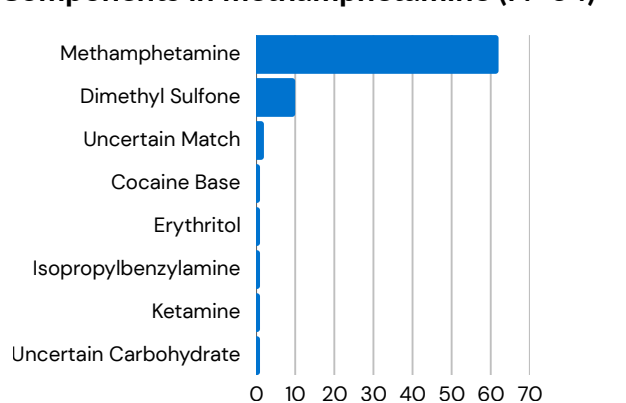


- In January, benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in **31.6%** of all unregulated opioid samples (**94 of 297 samples**), indicating their presence in higher concentrations (>5%).
- Of these, desalkylgizazepam remained the most common, detected in **17.8%** of unregulated opioids tested (**53 samples**).
- We are continuing to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines. In January, this included clobromazolam (**11 samples**), and ethylbromazolam (**6 samples**).

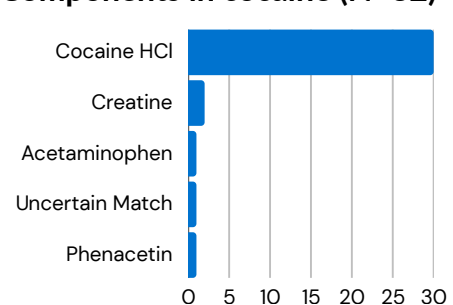
## Non-Opioids

### Components detected in stimulants

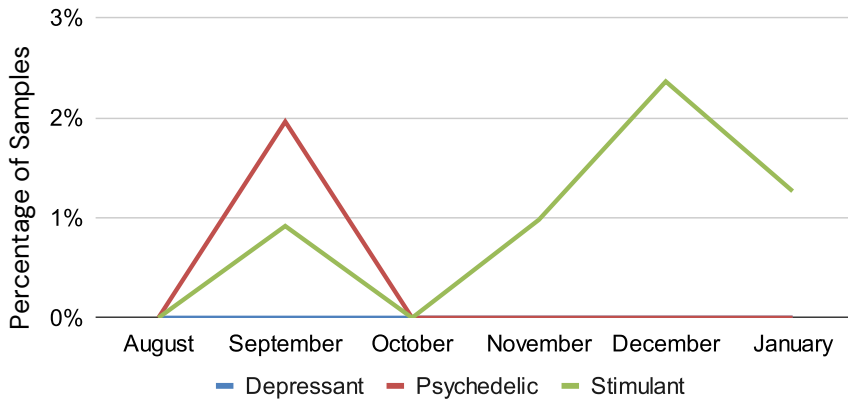
#### Components in methamphetamine (N=64)



#### Components in cocaine (N=32)



### Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months

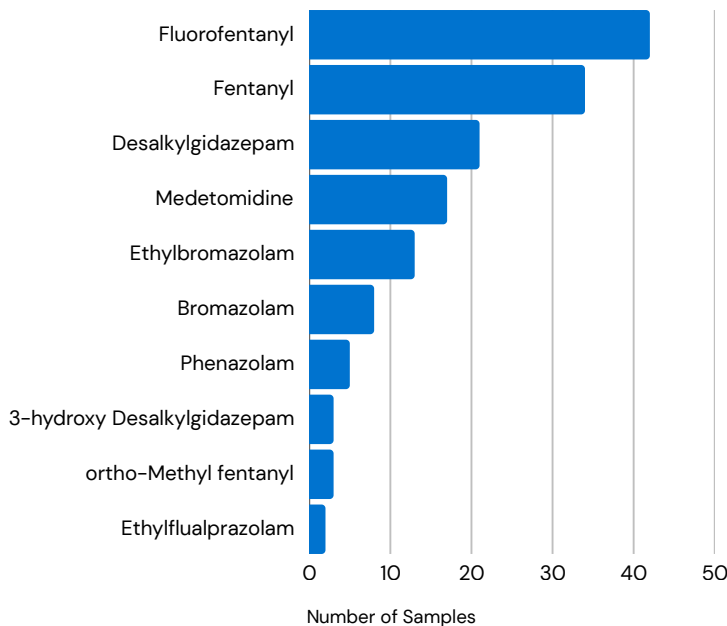


- In January, 2 stimulant samples (crack cocaine) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip.

### 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](#).

#### Active components in opioids submitted (N = 48)



To save space, additional components detected a single time have been omitted from this chart: Benzodiazepine (unknown type), Bromazepam, Carfentanil, Cychlorphine, Etizolam, Fentanyl or analogue, Fluorofentanyl Base, Unknown.

### Public Health Notifications

There has been an increase in medetomidine in the unregulated drug supply, coinciding with an uptick in alerts issued in January. Of the total 12 alerts, 4 were related to medetomidine, including a province-wide alert issued by the BCCDC, and 2 issued within the IH region. Two other IH alerts were related to increased drug poisoning events. Listed below are the alerts pertaining to samples submitted for drug checking.

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
January 27, 2026 Vernon	Alprazolam (Xanax)	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Uncertain Oil, Medetomidine*	N/A	N/A	Xanax tablet sold as Xanax or alprazolam tested positive for medetomidine in Vernon.
January 29, 2026 Kelowna	Oxycodone	Microcrystalline Cellulose, Uncertain Oil	Positive	Negative	Oxycodone sold as Oxycodone/Oxy tested positive for fentanyl or fentanyl analog in Kelowna.

All spectrometry results are determined by FTIR, with the exception of the following:  
 \*Results provided by secondary 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](#).