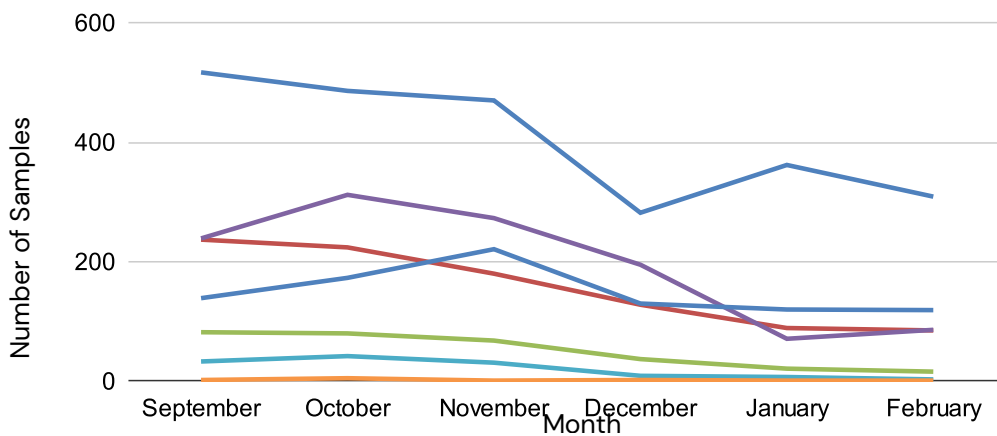




Key findings

- In February, **619** drug checks were performed by services offering FTIR drug checking in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (**9 access points**). The decrease in samples from previous months is due to the closure of a high-volume site in December.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines by FTIR and/or test strip decreased to **20.4%**, the lowest level observed since August 2022. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was the most common detected by FTIR.
- There has been an increase in medetomidine in the unregulated drug supply. While **1 opioid sample** was found to contain medetomidine by FTIR this month, we expect the true number to be higher since it is usually present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%)

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Feb.

Opioid	309
Stimulant	85
Depressant	16
Psychotropic	86
Other	3
Polysubstance	1
Unknown	119
Total:	619

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Insite (Vancouver)	589
Vancouver Coastal Health (Powell River)	7
Whistler Community Service Society (Squamish)	9
Whistler Community Service Society (Whistler)	12
Total	619

Less than 5 samples were tested at the following locations, which have been included in the total:
Insite (Richmond), WCSS (Mount Currie).

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	281	15	13	309
Stimulant	75	9	1	85
Depressant	14	2	0	16
Psychedelic	73	12	1	86
Other	2	1	0	3
Polysubstance	0	1	0	1
Unknown	0	0	119	119
Total	445	40	134	619

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

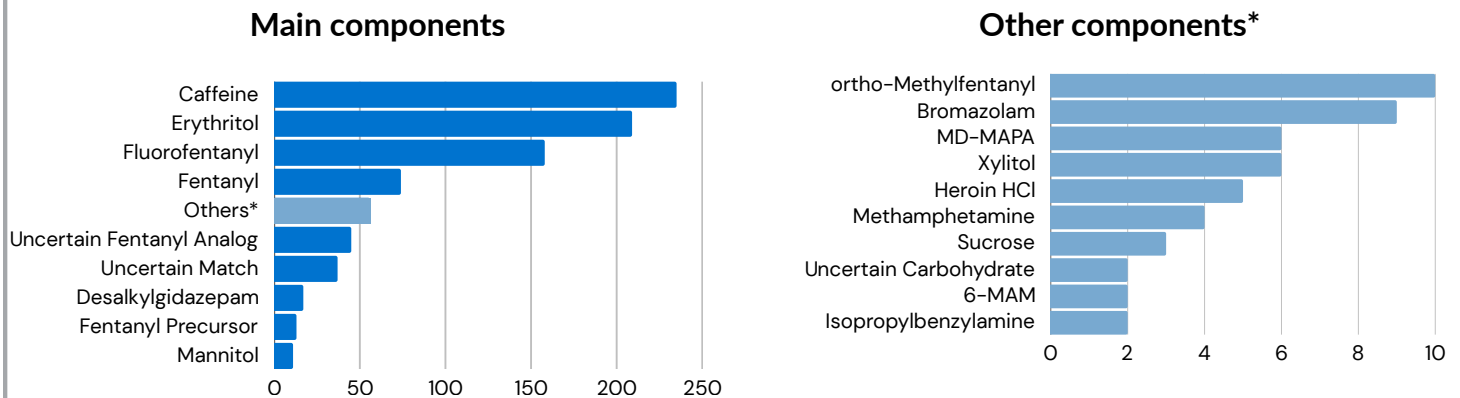
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with the expected drug present

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	35	1	0	36
Heroin	4	2	0	6
Down	232	12	0	244
Pharmaceutical	8	0	13	21
Opium	2	0	0	2
Total	281	15	13	309

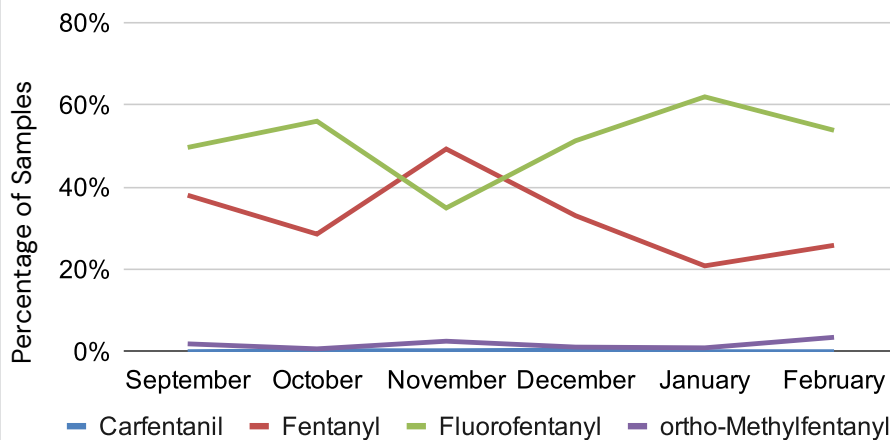
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents. 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=286)



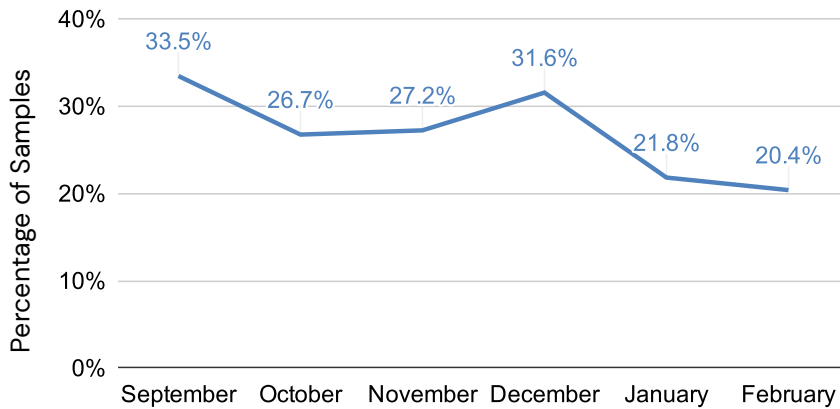
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



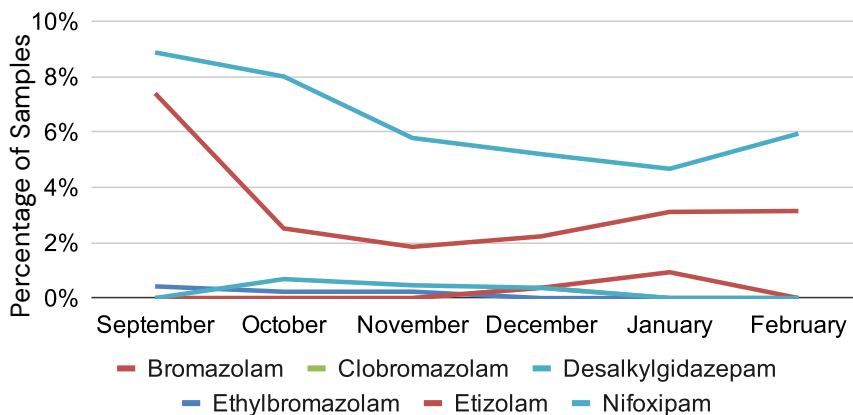
- In February, fluorofentanyl remained the most common opioid detected, though detection by FTIR decreased to **53.8%** of unregulated opioids checked (**158 of 286 samples**), while fentanyl detection increased to **25.9%** (**74 samples**).
- Carfentanil was not detected in the Vancouver Coastal region by FTIR this month, but continues to be found in samples sent for secondary testing in BC. 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 February, **20.4%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines in the Vancouver Coastal Health region (**43 samples of 309 checked**).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true prevalence may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months

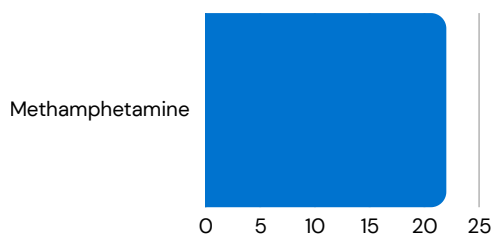


- In February, **9.1%** of unregulated opioids (**26 of 286 samples**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations detectable by FTIR (>5%).
- After declining since September, detection of desalkylgidazepam, the benzodiazepine most commonly found in unregulated opioids, rose to **5.9%** this month (**33 samples**).
- We are continuing to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines. In February, no novel benzodiazepines were detected by FTIR in the Vancouver Coastal region.

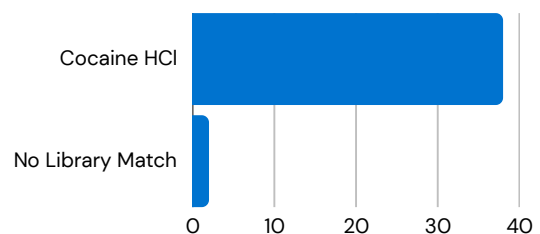
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=23)

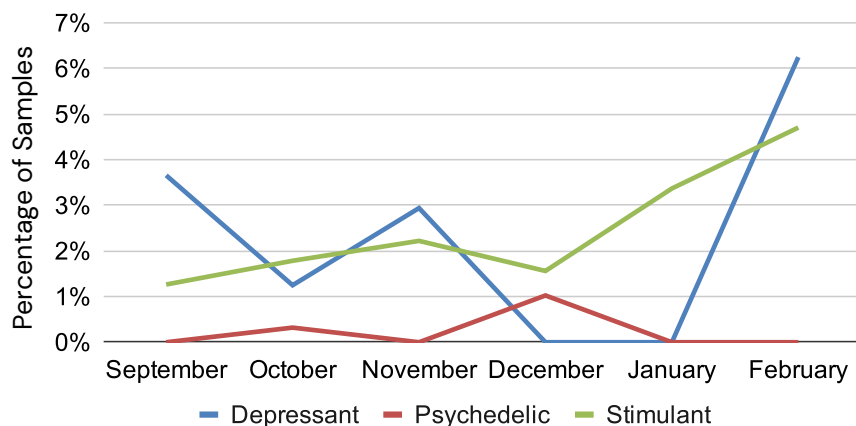


Components in cocaine (N=42)



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 February, a total of **4 stimulant samples** (3 methamphetamine, 1 cocaine) and **1 depressant sample** (unknown benzodazepine) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.
- Of these, **3 samples (60.0%)** were expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user, noting they had been stored with opioids prior to submitting the samples 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](#).

No samples were sent for secondary testing within the Vancouver Coastal Health region in February.

Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
February 6, 2026 Powell River	Down	Fentanyl, Etizolam, Medetomidine*	N/A	N/A	Pink chunk sold as down in Powell River tested positive for fentanyl, etizolam, a benzo analogue, and medetomidine, a non-opioid tranquilizer. May cause overdose, low heart rate, and prolonged sedation.

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](#).