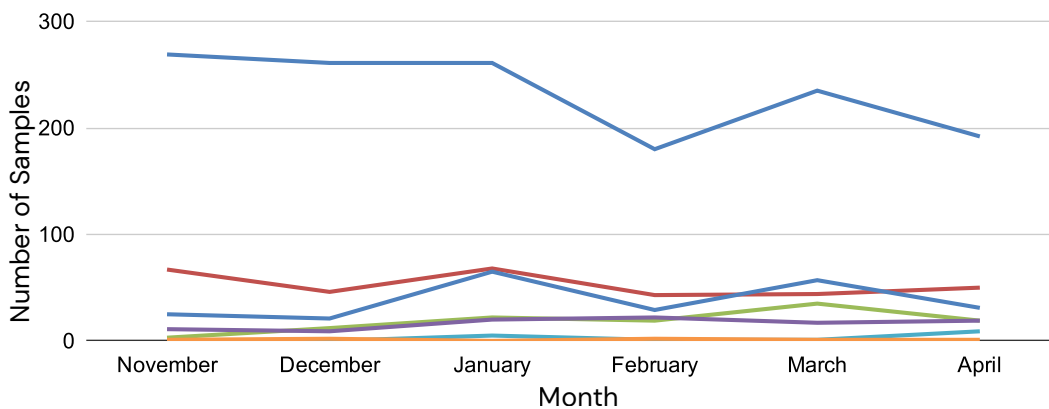




Key findings

- In April, **321** drug checks were performed by community FTIR drug checking sites in the Fraser Health region (**13 access points**).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased to **51.0%**. For the third month in a row, ethylbromazolam was most frequently identified.
- We continue to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines in unregulated opioids. In addition to ethylbromazolam, this included 3-HO desalkylgidazepam, ethylflualprazolam, and meclonazepam in April.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine decreased to **41.9%**. In response to the emergence of medetomidine in the drug supply, Fraser Health has implemented medetomidine test strips at all drug checking sites.
- Among opioids sent for secondary testing in April (n=80), medetomidine was detected in **27 samples**, xylazine in **12 samples**, and carfentanil in **3 samples**.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Apr.

Opioid	192
Stimulant	50
Depressant	19
Psychedelic	19
Other	9
Polysubstance	1
Unknown	31

Total: 321

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Foxglove Housing (Surrey)	65
Foxglove Housing (Coquitlam)	16
SafePoint (Surrey)	51
Mountainside (Abbotsford)	33
Mountainside (Chilliwack)	80
Mountainside (Langley)	10
Mountainside (Maple Ridge)	16
Mountainside (Mission)	22
Progressive Housing (Burnaby)	7
Purpose Society (New Westminster)	21
Total	321

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	185	6	1	192
Stimulant	48	2	0	50
Depressant	7	12	0	19
Psychedelic	17	2	0	19
Other	2	0	7	9
Polysubstance	1	0	0	1
Unknown	0	0	31	31
Total	260	22	39	321

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

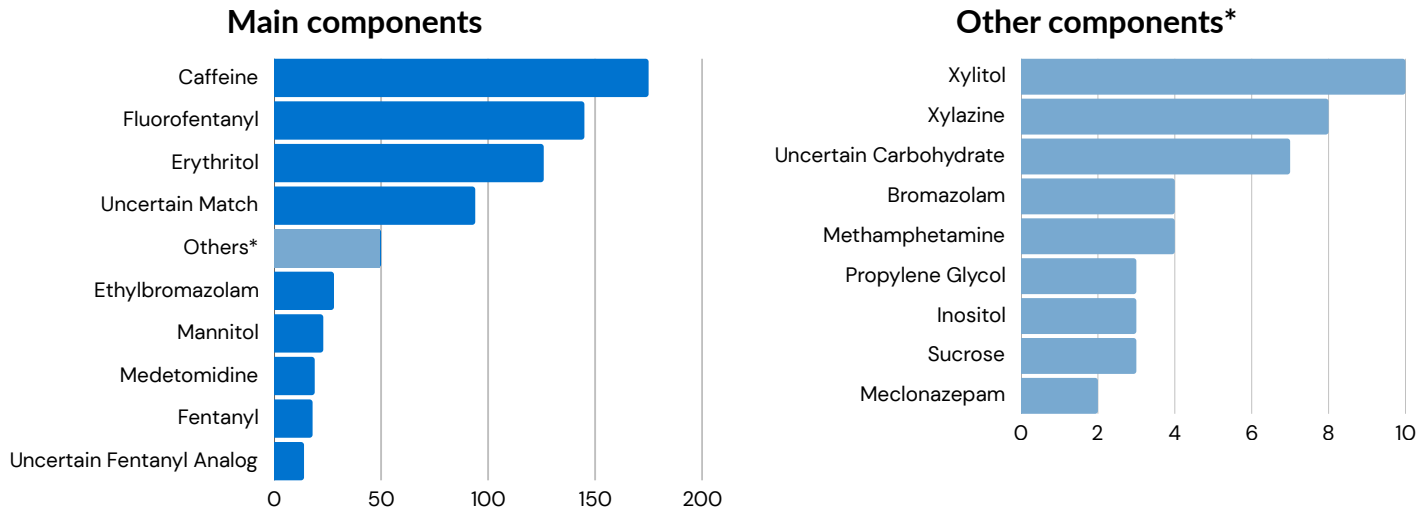
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	4	1	0	5
Heroin	0	0	1	1
Down	181	4	0	185
Pharmaceutical	0	1	0	1
Total	185	6	1	192

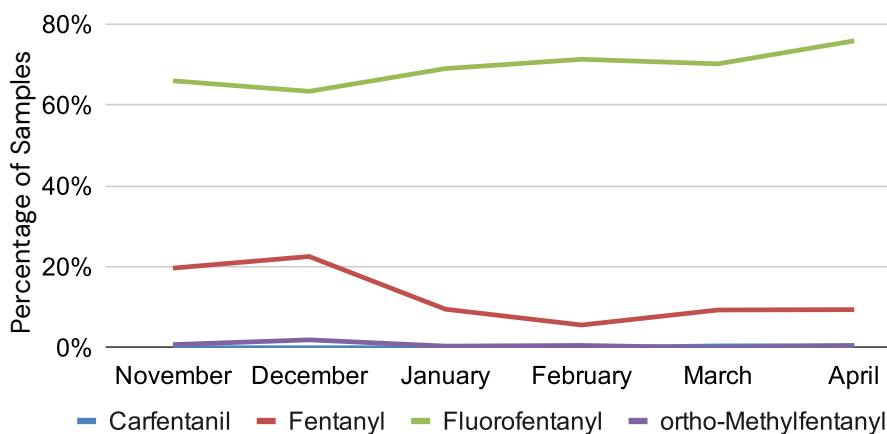
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents. 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=191)



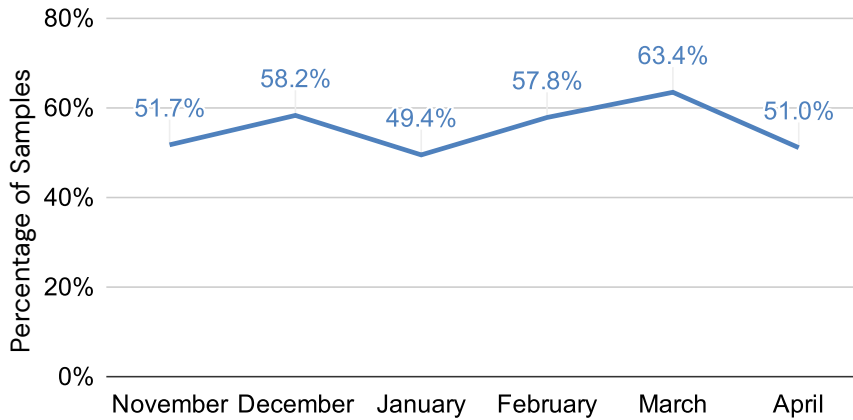
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



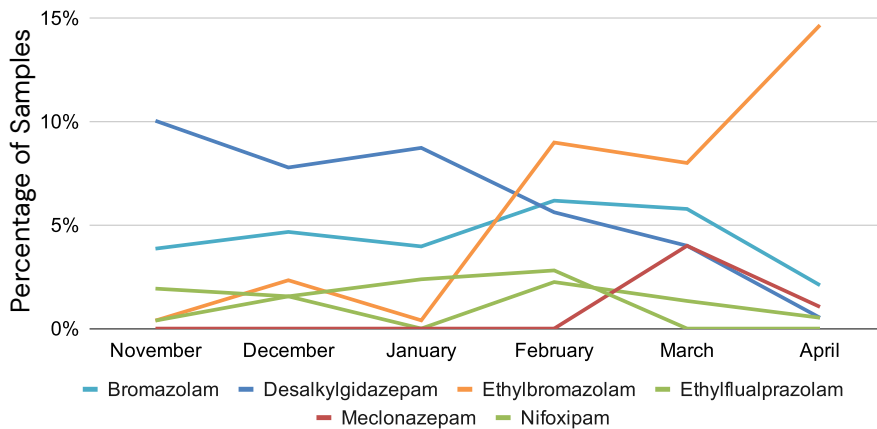
- In April, fluorofentanyl was detected in **75.9%** of samples (**145 of 191 checked**), the highest level of detection by FTIR to-date.
- Conversely, fentanyl was detected in **9.4%** of opioids (**18 samples**). The declining number of fentanyl detections may indicate that less is circulating in the opioid supply, and/or that it is present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).
- Carfentanil was detected by FTIR in **1 sample** this month. The true number is expected to be higher, as carfentanil is usually contained in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%). See the **Secondary Testing section** of this report for more information.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines, past 6 months



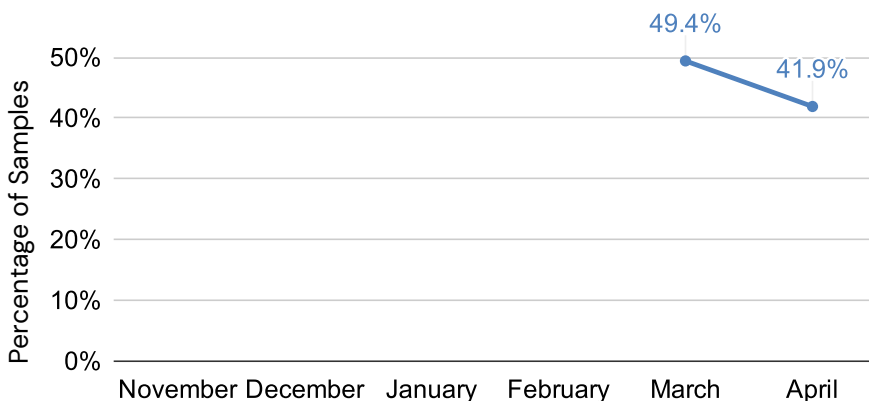
- During the month of April, the percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased to **51.0% (98 samples of 192 checked)**.
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months



- In April, **19.4%** of unregulated opioids (**37 of 191 samples**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations detectable by FTIR (>5%). Of these, ethylbromazolam was most frequently identified (**14.7%, 28 samples**).
- The increase in ethylbromazolam marks a shift over the past three months, surpassing both desalkylgidazepam and bromazolam as the predominant benzodiazepine in the region.
- We are continuing to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines. In addition to ethylbromazolam, 3-HO desalkylgidazepam, ethylflualprazolam, and meclonazepam were detected by FTIR, and others were detected via secondary testing.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

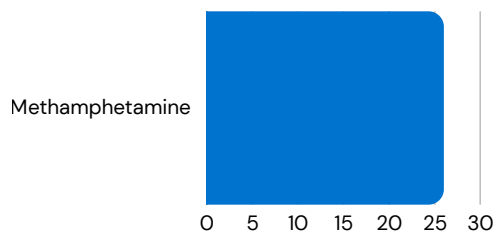


- During the month of April, the percentage of unregulated opioid samples testing positive for medetomidine decreased to **41.9% (70 of 167 samples checked)**.
- Unregulated opioids are checked for medetomidine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. Medetomidine test strips have been implemented at all drug checking sites, as medetomidine is typically present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).

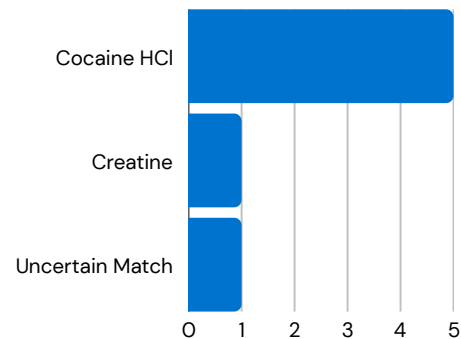
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

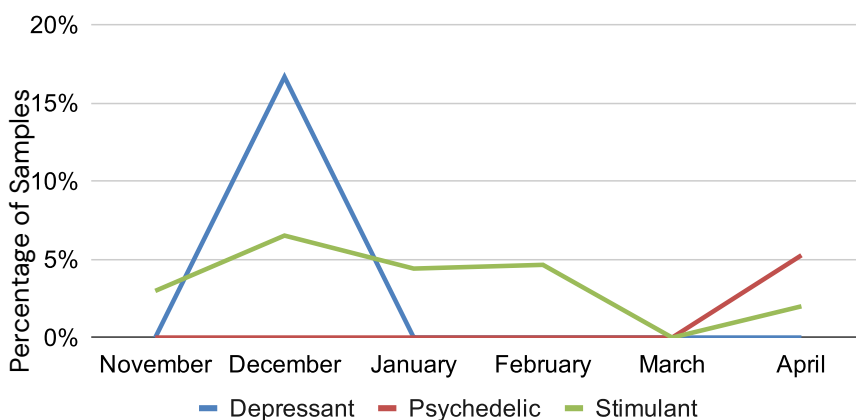
Components in methamphetamine (N=26)



Components in cocaine (N=5)



Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months

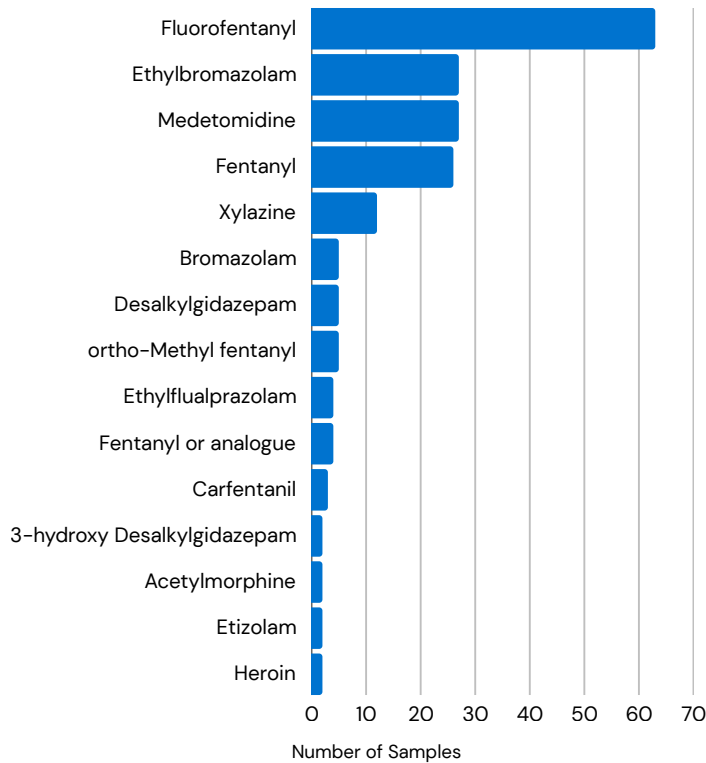


- In April, 5.3% of all psychedelics (1 ketamine sample), and 2.0% of all stimulants (1 methamphetamine sample), tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip. We note the ketamine sample was expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user prior to testing.

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=80)



To save space, additional components detected a single time have been omitted from this chart: Benzodiazepine (unknown type), Fentanyl analogue (unknown type), Flualprazolam, Meclonazepam, Methocarbamol, Phenazolam, Procaine.

Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
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In April, there were no alerts issued within the Fraser Health region pertaining to samples submitted for drug checking.

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](#).