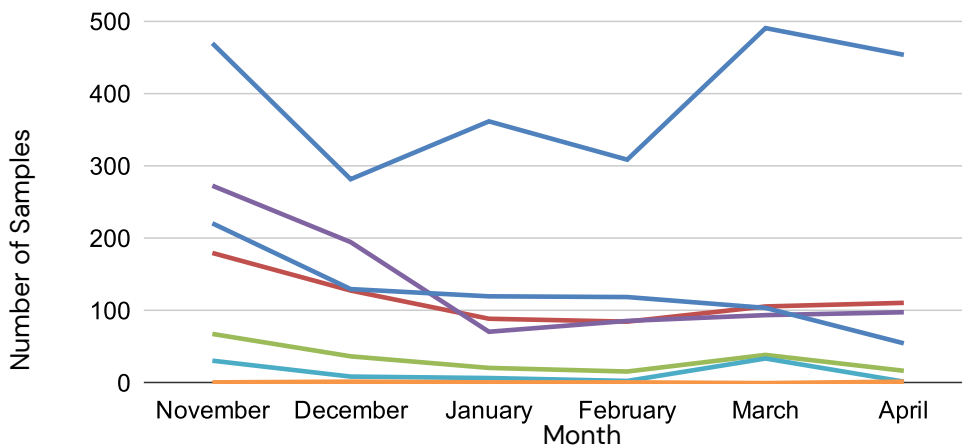




### Key findings

- In April, **739** drug checks were performed by community FTIR drug checking sites in the Vancouver Coastal region (**8 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 decreased to **26.4%**. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was most frequently identified.
- We continue to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines in unregulated opioids, which included ethylbromazolam in April.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine decreased to **16.6%**. In response to the emergence of medetomidine in the drug supply, Vancouver Coastal has implemented medetomidine test strips at all drug checking sites.
- Among opioids sent for secondary testing in April (**n=7**), medetomidine, xylazine, and carfentanil were not detected.

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



Opioid	454
Stimulant	111
Depressant	17
Psychedelic	98
Other	2
Polysubstance	2
Unknown	55
<b>Total:</b>	<b>739</b>

### Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Insite (Vancouver)	717
LIFT Community Services (Powell River)	5
Whistler Community Service Society (Squamish)	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>739</b>

### Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	426	21	7	454
Stimulant	97	14	0	111
Depressant	10	7	0	17
Psychedelic	94	4	0	98
Other	2	0	0	2
Polysubstance	1	1	0	2
Unknown	0	0	55	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>739</b>

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

## Opioids

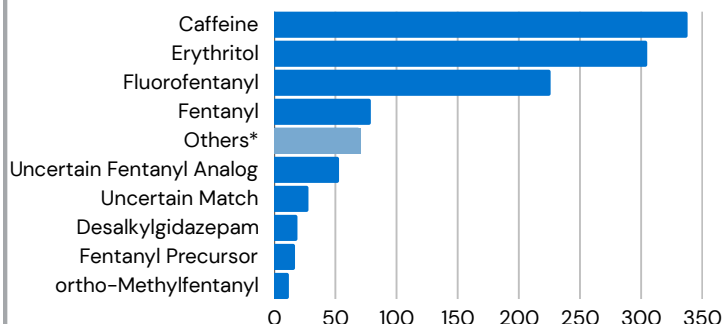
### Number of opioid samples with the expected drug present

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	28	3	0	31
Heroin	2	0	0	2
Other Opioid	1	0	0	1
Down	355	14	0	369
Pharmaceutical	38	4	7	49
Opium	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>454</b>

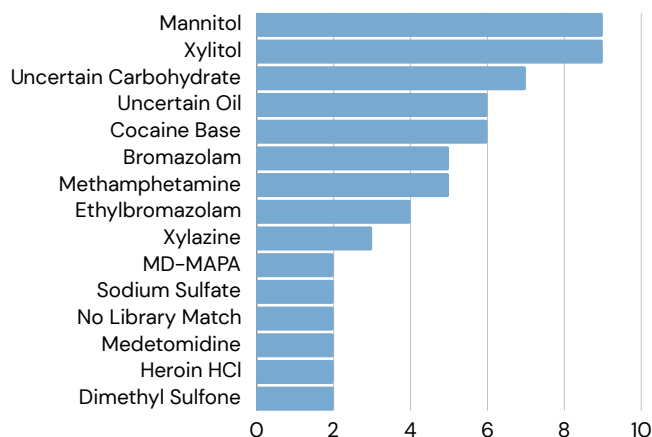
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.  
 'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

### Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=402)

#### Main components

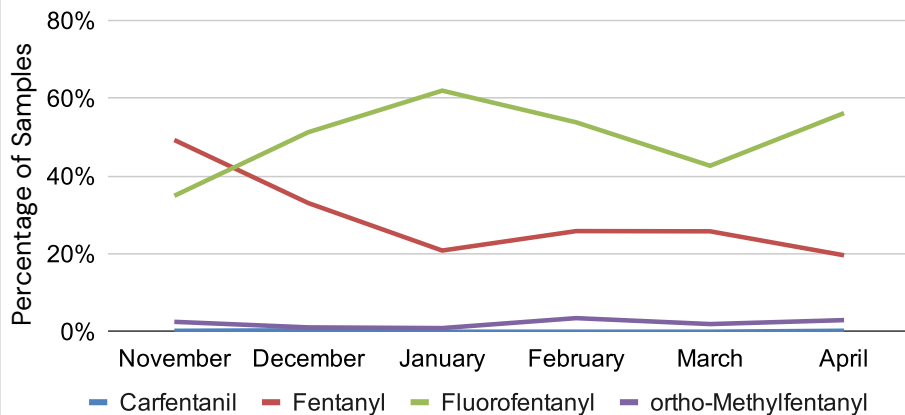


#### Other components\*



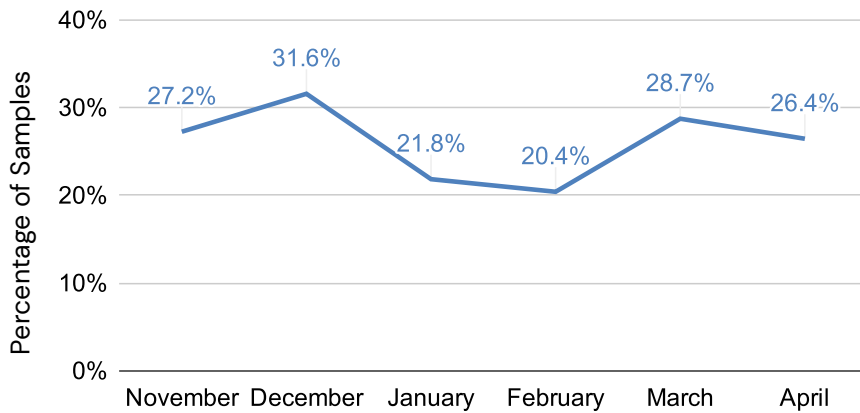
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

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



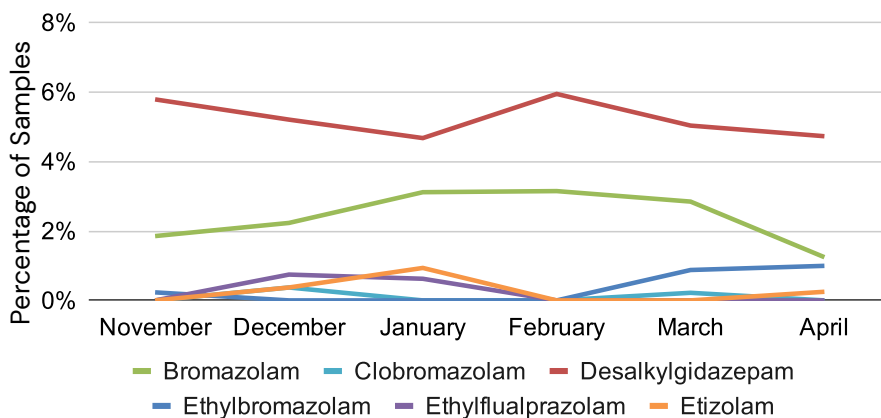
- In April, fluorofentanyl remained the most common fentanyl analog, detected in **56.2%** of unregulated opioids checked (**226 of 402**).
- Conversely, fentanyl was detected in **19.7%** of opioids (**79 samples**), the lowest level of detection to-date. The declining number of fentanyl detections 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 **26.4% (120 samples of 454 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, **7.5% of unregulated opioids (36 of 402 samples)** contained benzodiazepines at concentrations detectable by FTIR (>5%). Of these, desalkylgidazepam remained the most common (**4.7%; 19 samples**).
- Detection of bromazolam and ethylbromazolam, a novel benzodiazepine, were nearly on par this month (**1.2% vs. 1.0%**, respectively). This reflects a shift from previous months, with bromazolam detections declining as ethylbromazolam continues to increase.

### Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

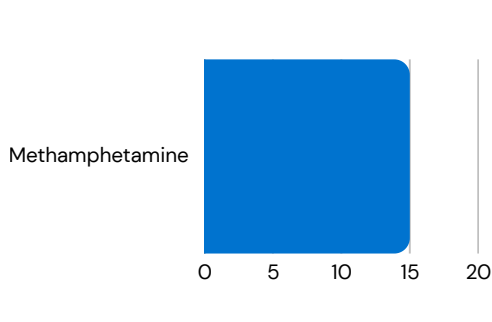


- During the month of April, the percentage of unregulated opioid samples testing positive for medetomidine decreased to **16.6% (63 of 380 samples checked)**.
- Unregulated opioids are checked for medetomidine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. In response to the emergence of medetomidine, test strips have been implemented at all drug checking sites, as it is typically present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).

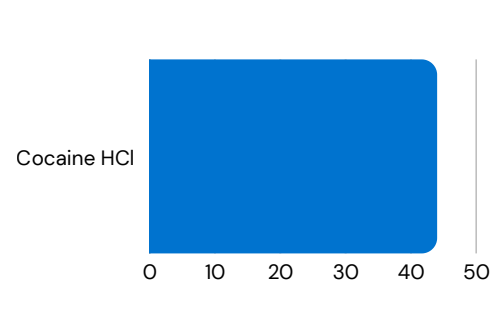
## Non-Opioids

### Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=16)

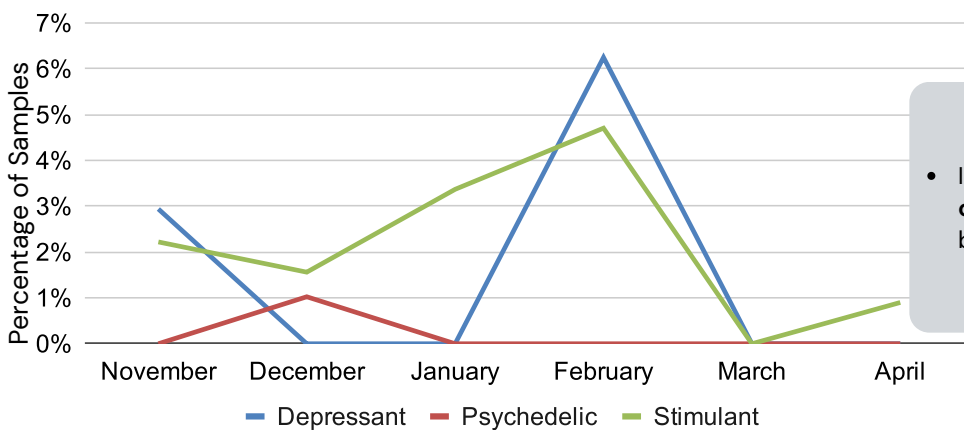


Components in cocaine (N=44)



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

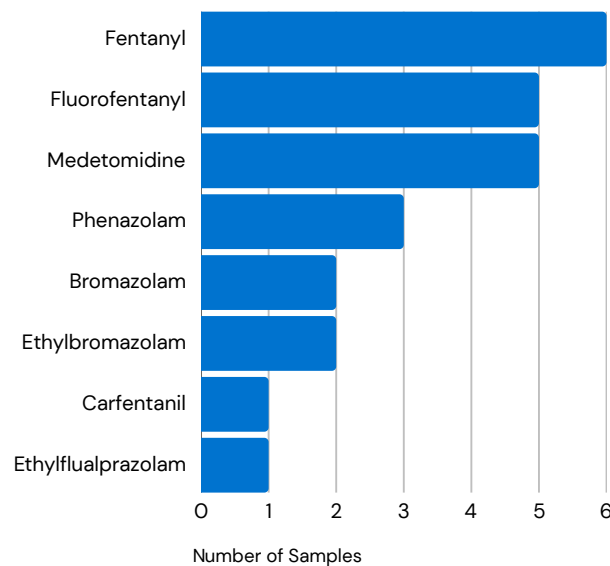


- In April, **0.9%** of all stimulants (**1 crack cocaine sample**), tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip

## 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 = 7)



## Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Alert Message
April 11, 2026 Squamish	Down	Dark green chunk sold as down in Squamish tested positive for fentanyl and phenazolam, a novel benzodiazepine analog.
April 17, 2026 Vancouver	Down	Brown chunks sold as down in East Vancouver tested positive for carfentanil, a very toxic fentanyl analog.

### Public Health Notifications Cont'd.

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Alert Message
April 22, 2026 Squamish	Down	Multiple substances (green/yellow, red) sold as down in Squamish have tested positive for fentanyl, benzos and medetomidine. Substances have caused overdose.
April 27, 2026 Vancouver	Down	White powder sold as down in southeast Vancouver tested negative for fentanyl and positive for medetomidine, a toxic veterinary tranquilizer.
April 30, 2026 Vancouver	Down	Multiple nitazene analogs detected in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, including a white powder testing positive for ethylene etonitazene and a purple powder testing positive for furanyl-UF-17. Nitazenes are toxic synthetic opioids that respond to naloxone but test negative using fentanyl test strips.

Alerts are issued based on FTIR and test strip results determined at point-of-care, or results from samples sent for further secondary testing by [Substance](#), or [Health Canada Drug Analysis Service](#)

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](#).