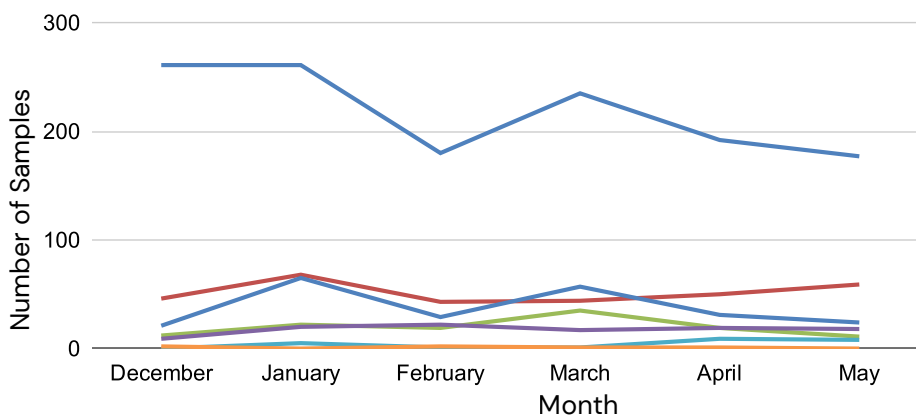




Key findings

- In May, **297** 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 slightly to **50.8%**. Ethylbromazolam, a novel benzodiazepine, remained most frequently identified.
- We continue to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines in unregulated opioids. In addition to ethylbromazolam, this included ethylflualprazolam, meclonazepam, nifoxipam, and 3-HO-desalkylgizapam in May.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine decreased to **36.8%**. In response to 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 May ($n=62$), medetomidine was detected in **28 samples**, xylazine in **1 sample**, and carfentanil in **1 sample**.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in May

Opioid	177
Stimulant	59
Depressant	11
Psychedelic	18
Other	8
Polysubstance	0
Unknown	24

Total: 297

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Foxglove Housing (Surrey)	81
SafePoint (Surrey)	11
Mountainside (Abbotsford)	43
Mountainside (Chilliwack)	86
Mountainside (Langley)	18
Mountainside (Maple Ridge)	22
Mountainside (Mission)	17
Purpose Society (New Westminster)	15
Total	297

Less than 5 samples were tested at the following locations, which are included in the total:
Mountainside (Hope), Foxglove Housing (Coquitlam)

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	161	15	1	177
Stimulant	55	4	0	59
Depressant	7	3	1	11
Psychedelic	17	0	1	18
Other	2	0	6	8
Unknown	0	0	24	24
Total	242	22	33	297

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

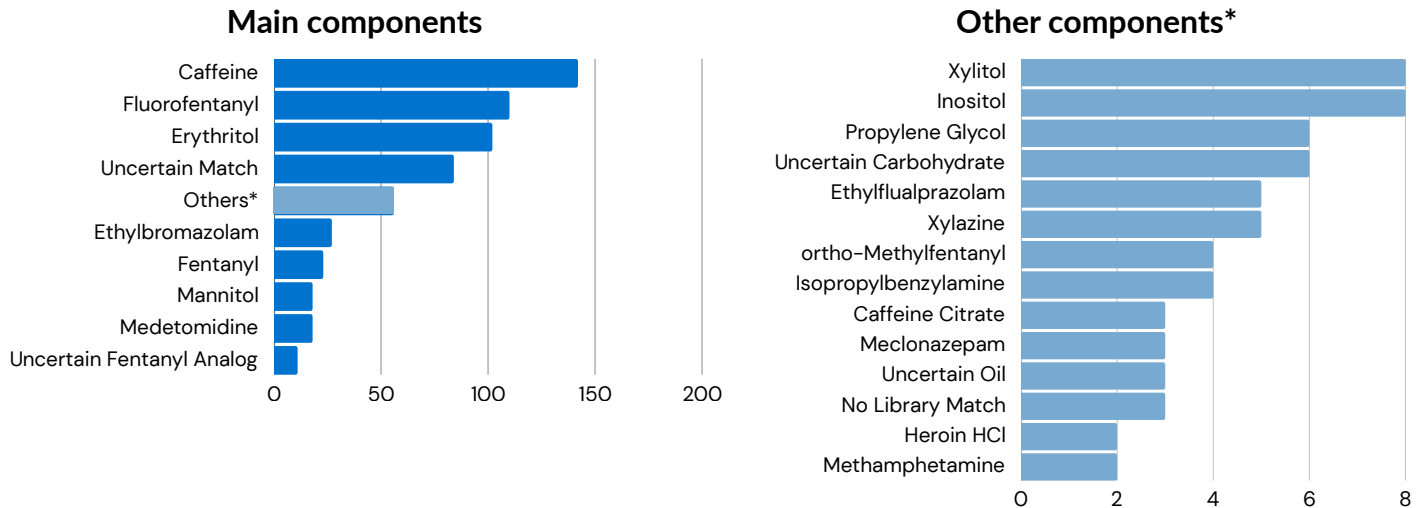
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	5	0	0	5
Heroin	2	3	0	5
Down	144	1	0	145
Pharmaceutical	9	11	1	21
Opium	1	0	0	1
Total	161	15	1	177

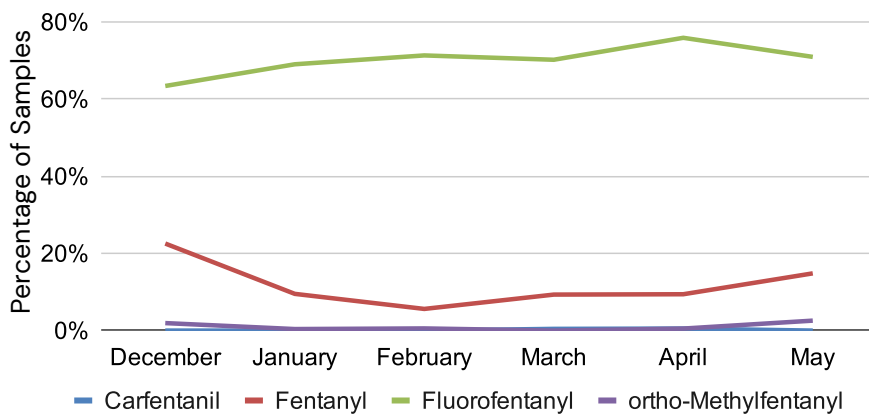
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=155)



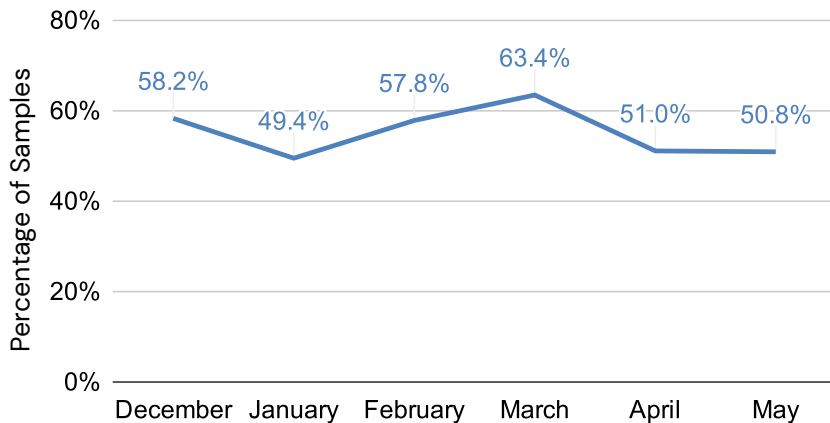
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



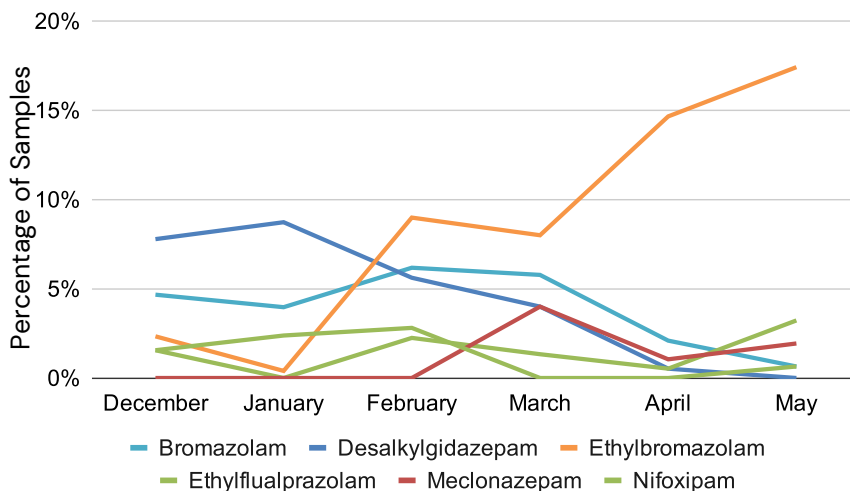
- In May, fluorofentanyl remained the most common fentanyl analog, detected by FTIR in **71.0%** of unregulated opioids (**110 of 155**).
- Conversely, fentanyl was detected in **14.8% (23 samples)**. Declining fentanyl detections may indicate that less is circulating in the unregulated opioid supply, and/or that it is present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).
- Carfentanil was not detected by FTIR 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** for more information.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines, past 6 months



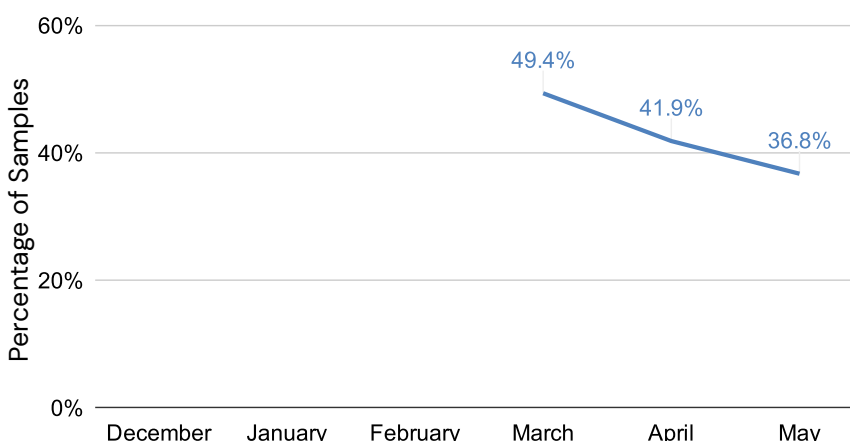
- During the month of May, the percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines was **50.8% (90 samples of 177 checked)**.
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months



- In May, **24.5%** of unregulated opioids (**38 of 155**) contained benzodiazepines in concentrations detectable by FTIR (>5%). Of these, ethylbromazolam remained most frequently detected (**17.4%; 27 samples**), followed by ethylflualprazolam and meclonazepam (**3.2% and 1.9%**, respectively).
- The increase novel benzodiazepines marks a shift over the past 4 months, with desalkylgidazepam and bromazolam no longer being the predominant benzodiazepines in the region. Other novel benzodiazepines detected this month included 3-HO desalkylgidazepam and nifoxipam.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

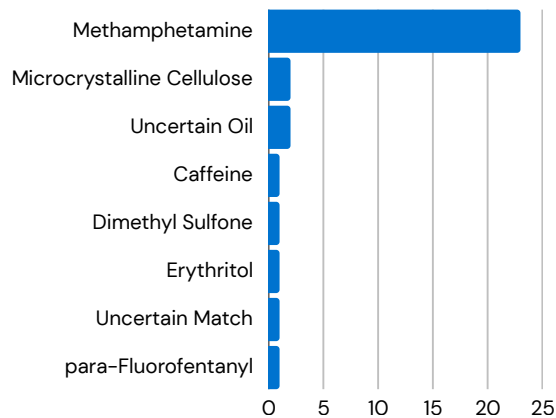


- During the month of May, the percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine decreased to **36.8% (57 of 155)**. The majority were also positive for benzodiazepines (**42 samples**).
- Unregulated opioids are checked for medetomidine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. As of March, test strips have been implemented at all drug checking sites in response to the emergence of medetomidine, as it is typically present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).

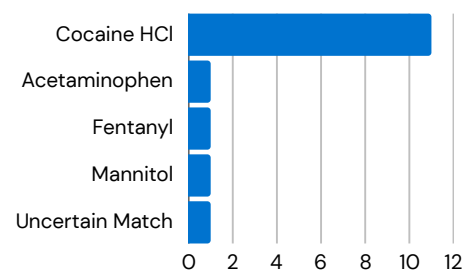
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

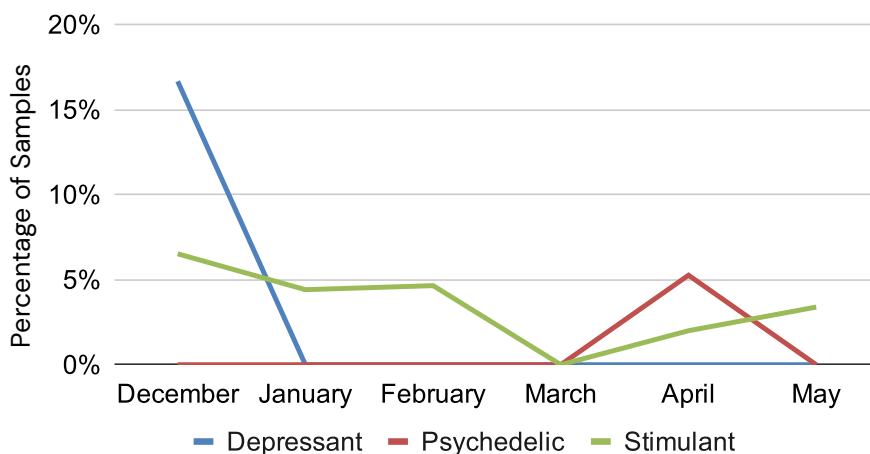
Components in methamphetamine (N=24)



Components in cocaine (N=13)



Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months

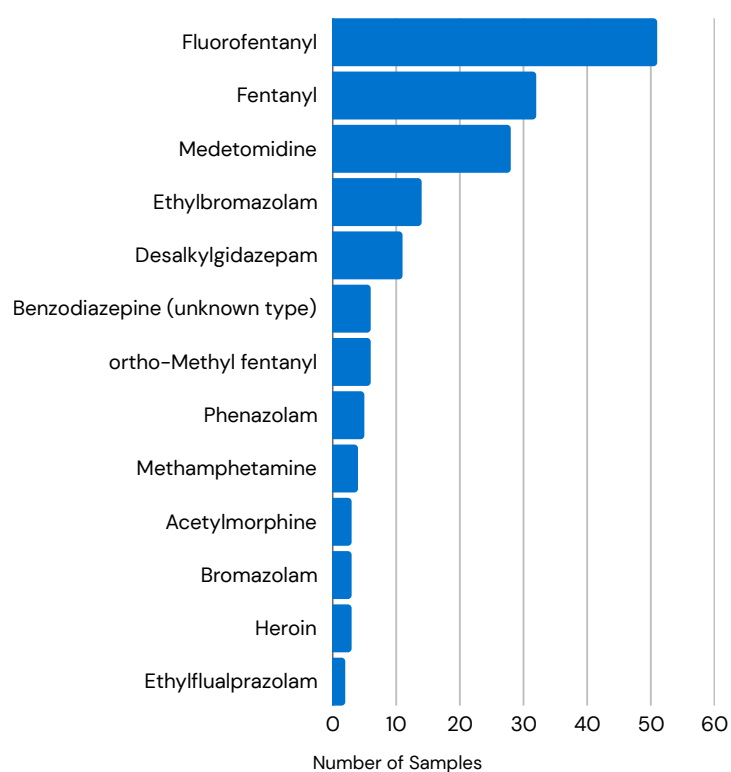


- In May, **3.4%** of all stimulants (**1 methamphetamine, 1 cocaine sample**) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip.

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=62)



To save space, additional components detected a single time have been omitted from this chart: 3-hydroxy Desalkylgizapam, Acetylcodeine, Carfentanil, Codeine + Diclofenac, Fentanyl or analogue, Morphine, Oxycodone, Xylazine.

Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Alert Message
In May, 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.
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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](#).