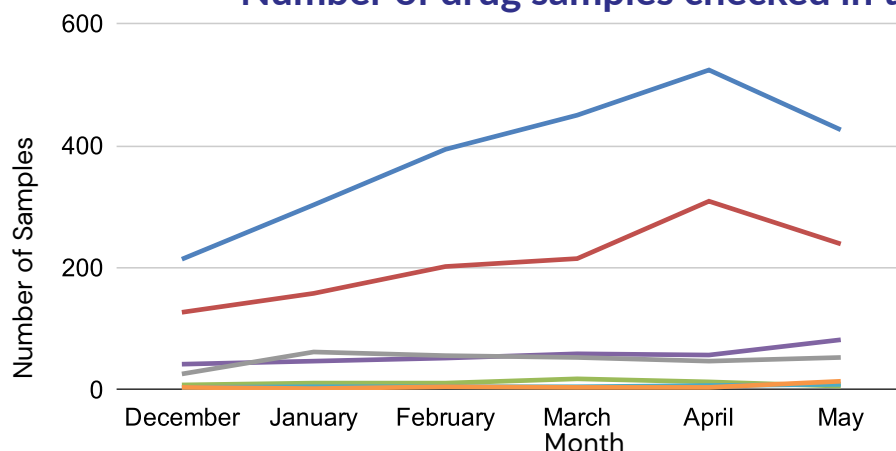




Key findings

- The number of samples checked in the Interior Health region has been rising over the past 5 months. In May, **829** drug checks were performed by community FTIR drug checking sites (**32 access points**).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines increased to **48.4%**. Of these, desalkylgidazepam was most frequently identified.
- We continue to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines in unregulated opioids which included ethylbromazolam and ethylflualprazolam in May.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **31.5%**. In response to emergence of medetomidine in the drug supply, Interior Health has implemented medetomidine test strips at all drug checking sites.
- Among opioids sent for secondary testing in May (**n=108**), medetomidine was detected in **52 samples**, xylazine in **1 sample**, and cyclophosphamide, a novel opioid, in **1 sample**.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in May

Opioid	426
Stimulant	239
Depressant	6
Psychotropic	82
Other	9
Polysubstance	14
Unknown	53

Total: 829

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	85
ANKORS (Nelson)	58
ASK (Kamloops)	98
ASK (Kelowna)	48
ASK (Penticton)	347
Interior Health (Kelowna)	150
Medicine Shoppe (Vernon)	43
Total	829

Less than 5 samples were tested at the following location, which has been included in the total:
UBCO (Kelowna).

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	418	5	3	426
Stimulant	234	5	0	239
Depressant	2	4	0	6
Psychedelic	79	3	0	82
Other	7	1	1	9
Polysubstance	10	4	0	14
Unknown	0	0	53	53
Total	750	22	57	829

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

Opioids

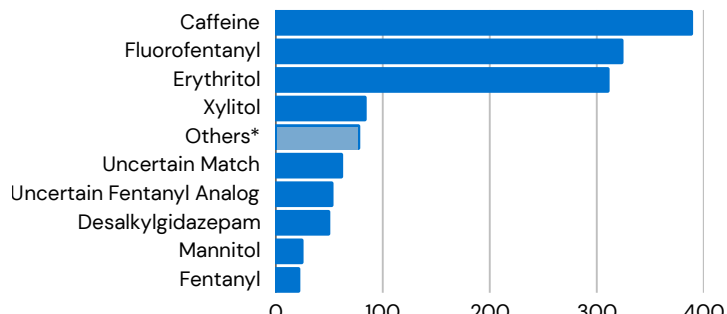
Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	22	0	0	22
Heroin	0	2	0	2
Other Opioid	2	0	0	2
Down	388	2	1	391
Pharmaceutical	6	1	2	9
Total	418	5	3	426

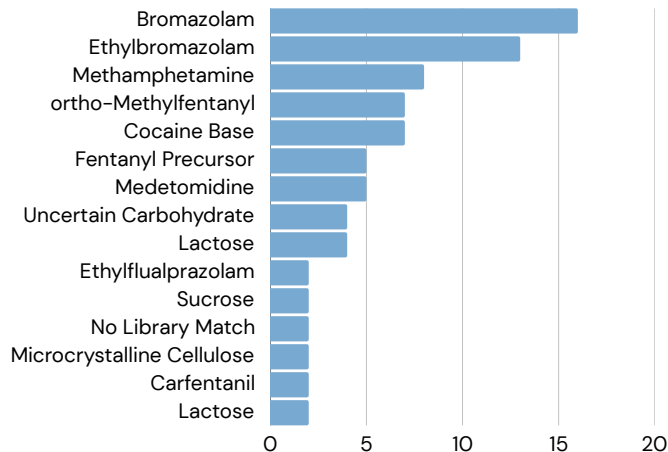
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=415)

Main components

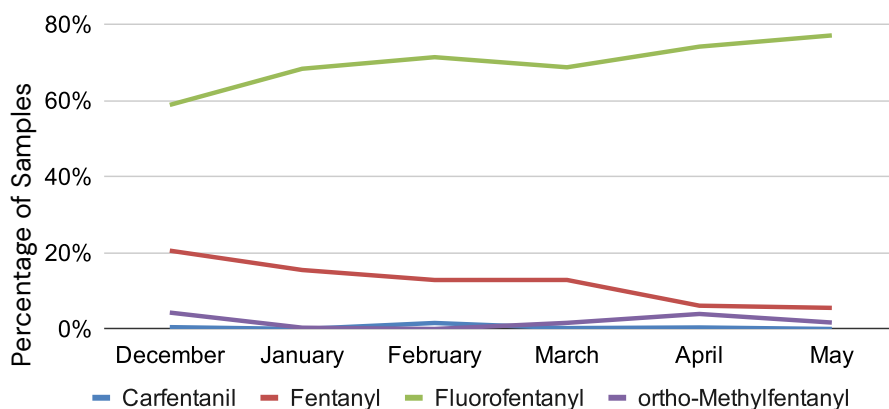


Other components*



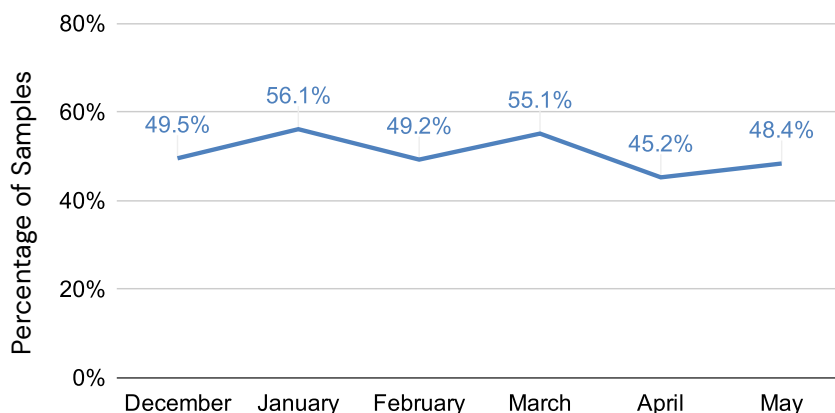
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



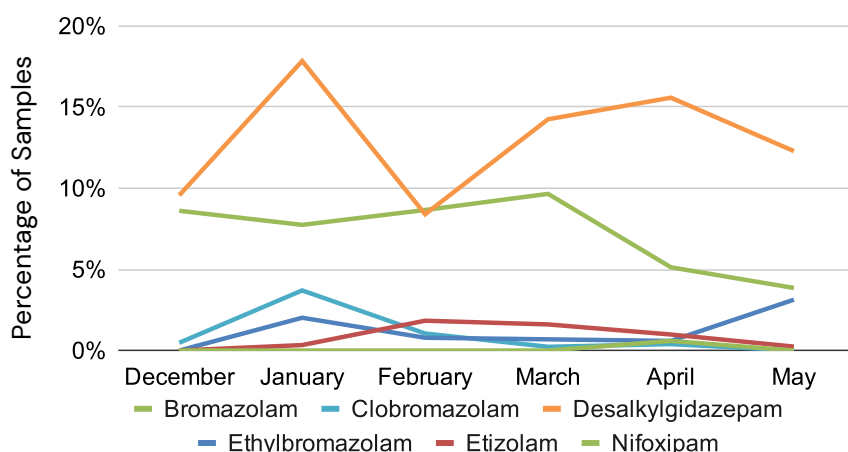
- In May, fluorofentanyl remained the most common fentanyl analog, detected by FTIR in **77.1%** of unregulated opioids (**325 of 415**), the highest level of detection to-date.
- Conversely, fentanyl was detected in **5.5% (23 samples)**, the lowest level of detection to-date. Declining fentanyl detections 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 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



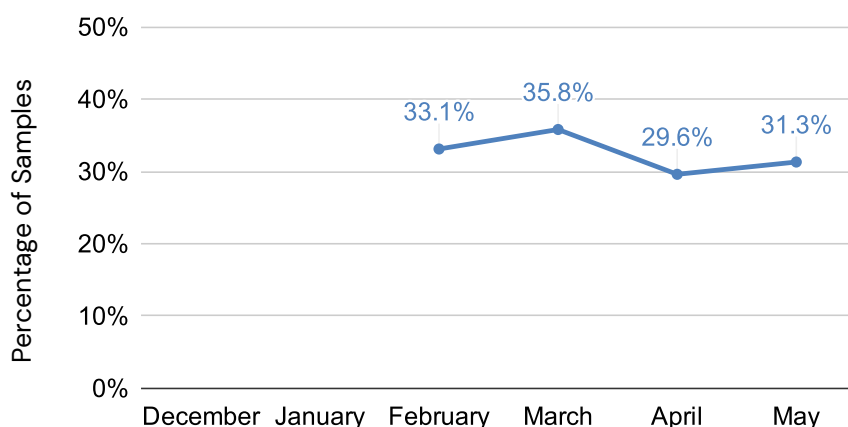
- During the month of May, the percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines increased to **48.4% (206 samples of 426 checked)**.
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months



- In May, **20.0%** of unregulated opioids (**83 of 415**) contained benzodiazepines at concentrations detectable by FTIR (>5%). Of these, desalkylgidazepam remained the most common (**12.3%; 51 samples**).
- Detection of bromazolam and ethylbromazolam, a novel benzodiazepine, were nearly on par (**3.1%** vs. **3.9%**, respectively). This reflects a shift from previous months, with bromazolam detections declining as ethylbromazolam continues to increase.
- We are continuing to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines. In addition to ethylbromazolam, ethylflualprazolam was detected by FTIR, and others were detected via secondary testing.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

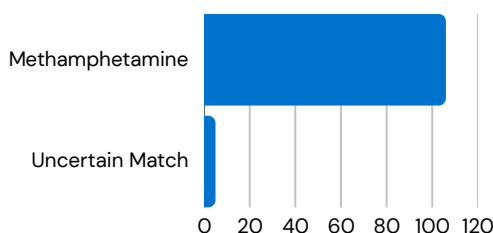


- During the month of May, the percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **31.3% (130 of 415)**. The majority were also positive for benzodiazepines (**100 samples**).
- Unregulated opioids are checked for medetomidine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. As of February, 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%).

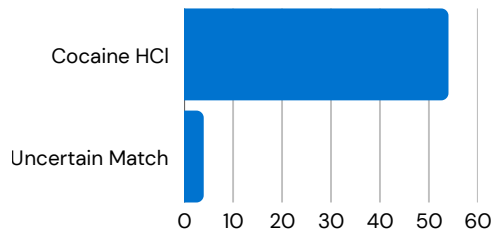
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=106)

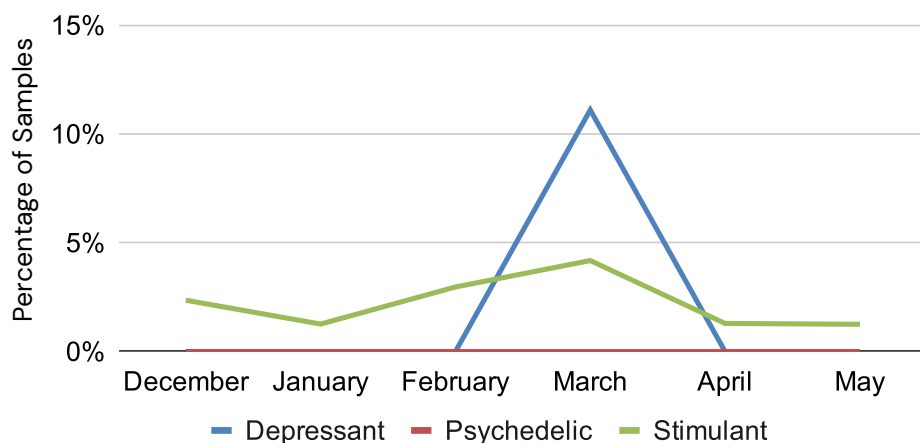


Components in cocaine (N=57)



Additional components detected a single time of samples have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on our [dashboard](#).

Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months



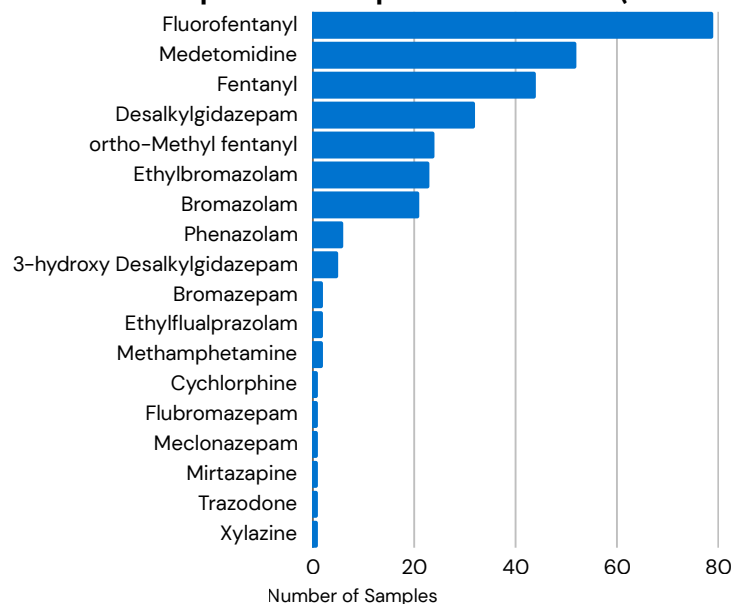
In May, **1.3%** of all stimulants (**3 methamphetamine samples**) checked tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip.

Of these, **2 samples** were expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user due to sample storage/handling with opioids prior to submitting the sample 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](#).

Active components in opioids submitted (N = 108)



Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Spectrometry Results
May 19, 2026 Kamloops	Down	Purple/pink chunks/pebbles sold as 'Down' were found to contain high amounts of medetomidine (16%) and fentanyl (29%).

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](#).