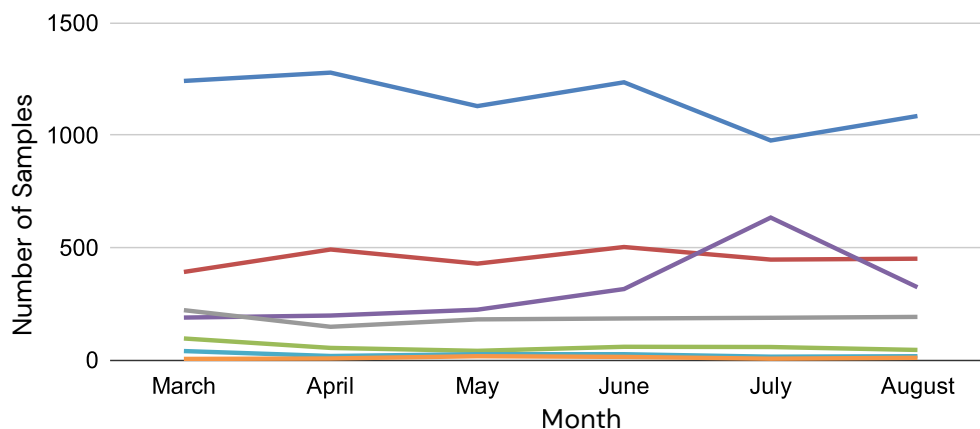




Key findings

- In August, **2,125** drug checks were performed by community FTIR drug checking sites in BC (**66** access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines increased to **45.8%**. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.
- For the first time, ethylbromazolam and ethylflualprazolam, novel benzodiazepines, were the most common benzodiazepines detected in unregulated opioids overall. Other novel benzodiazepines detected this month included 3-HO-desalkylgizapam, clobromazolam, and meclonazepam.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **31.8%**. In response to emergence of medetomidine in the drug supply, all health authorities have implemented medetomidine test strips at drug checking sites.
- The median concentration of fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl in unregulated opioids was **8.9%** (see page 3).
- Among opioids sent for secondary testing across BC in August (**n=160**), medetomidine was detected in **102** samples. Medetomidine concentrations ranged from <1% to 17%, and the median was **3.0%**. In addition, carfentanil was detected in **11** samples, and xylazine in **9** samples.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Aug.

Opioid	1086
Stimulant	451
Depressant	45
Psychodelic	324
Other	17
Polysubstance	10
Unknown	192

Total: 2,125

Number of samples tested by region

Vancouver Coastal Health region: 792 (**37%**)

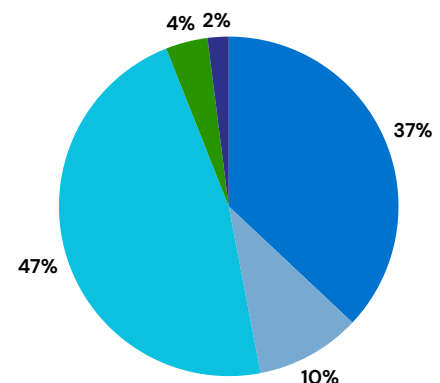
Fraser Health region: 215 (**10%**)

Interior Health region: 992 (**47%**)

Island Health region: 80 (**4%**)

Northern Health region: 46 (**2%**)

Total: 2,125*



*Does not include samples tested at Substance Drug Checking services.
Please see the Island Health report for more information.

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	1055	21	10	1086
Stimulant	430	20	1	451
Depressant	37	7	1	45
Psychedelic	312	11	1	324
Other	13	3	1	17
Polysubstance	9	1	0	10
Unknown	0	0	192	192
Total	1856	63	206	2125

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

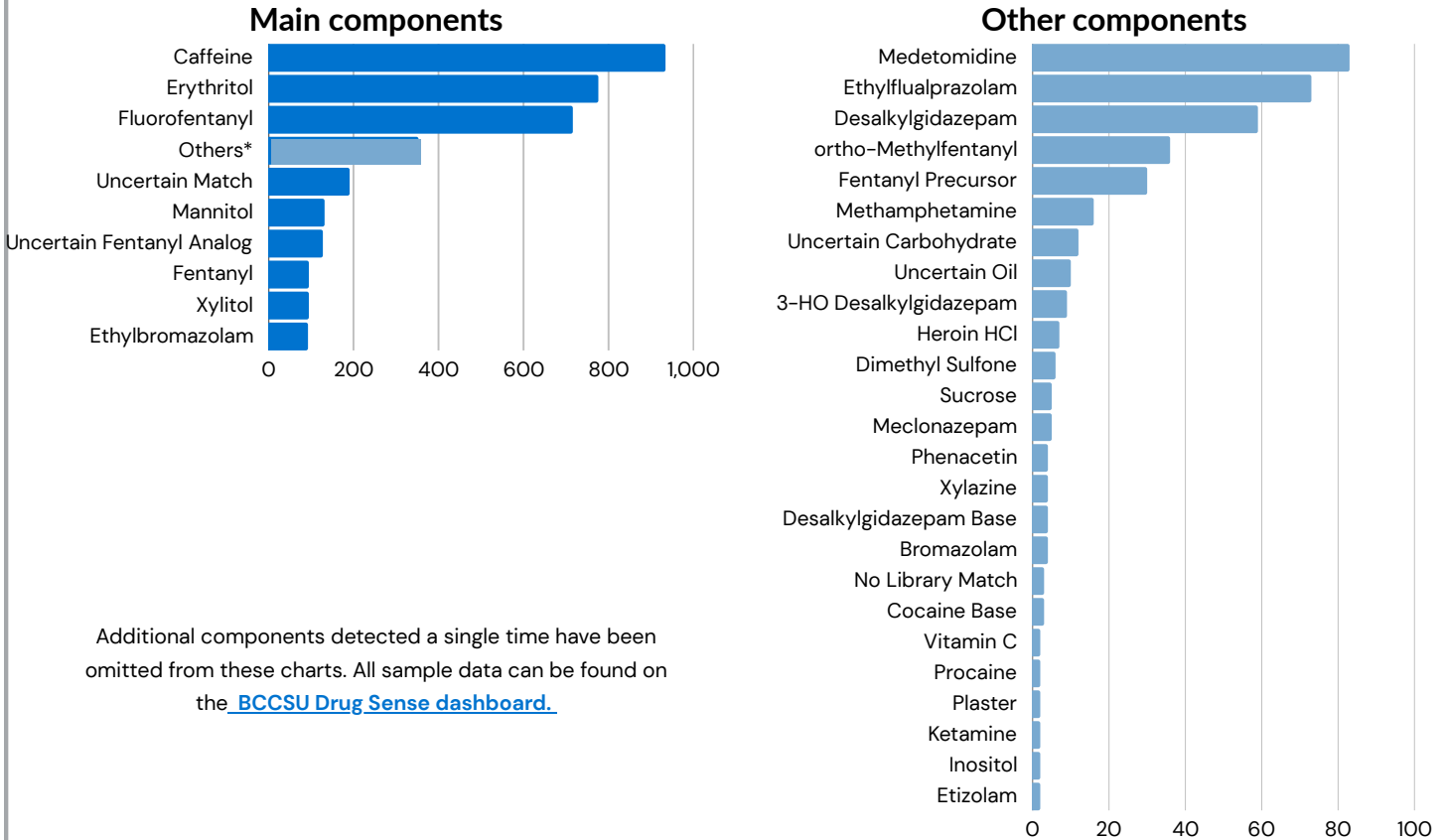
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	62	2	0	64
Heroin	7	2	0	9
Other Opioid	5	0	0	5
Down	964	13	0	977
Pharmaceutical	14	3	10	27
Opium	3	1	0	4
Total	1055	21	10	1086

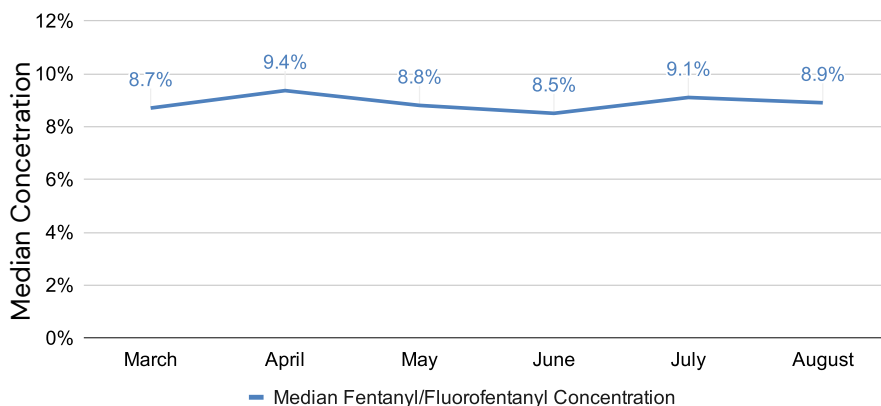
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=1050)



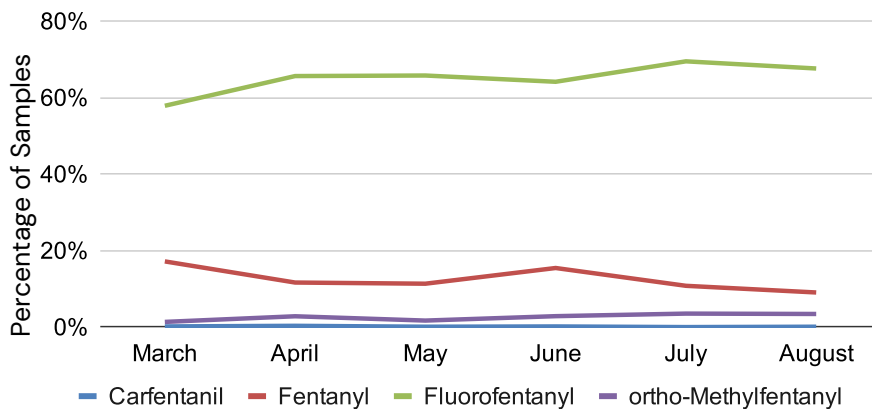
Median fentanyl concentration of unregulated opioids, past 6 months

Concentrations were estimated using a validated quantification model for the purposes of this report with aggregated data. To learn more about the QUANT3 quantification model visit [here](#).



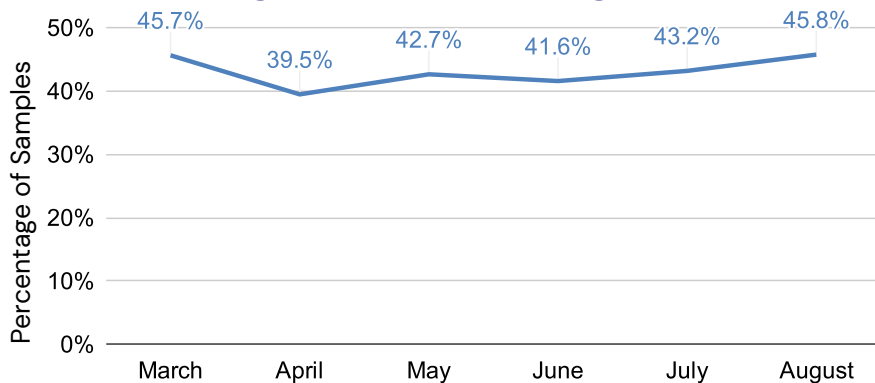
- In August, the overall median concentration of fentanyl/fluorofentanyl in unregulated opioid samples decreased to **8.9%** (n=1000).
- Most unregulated opioids contained fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl at concentrations between **4.9%** and **14.8%**, but concentrations can range from trace amounts to comprising most of the mixture.
- Fentanyl and fluorofentanyl are the predominate fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, and are considered to have similar potency. They are combined here to show their overall median concentration over the past 6 months.

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



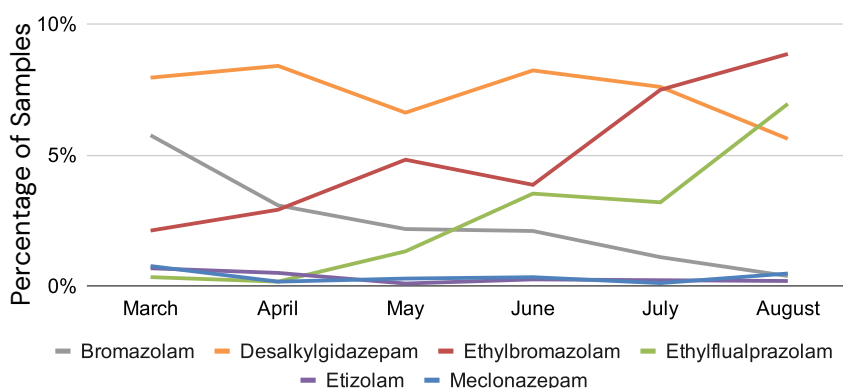
- In August, fluorofentanyl remained the most common fentanyl analog, detected by FTIR in **67.6%** of unregulated opioids checked (**716** samples).
- Fentanyl detections fell to a low of **9.0%** (**95** samples). This decline may reflect that less fentanyl is circulating in the opioid supply, and/or that it is present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).
- Carfentanil was detected in **1** sample this month. Its true prevalence is expected to be higher, as carfentanil is typically present at concentrations below the FTIR detection limit. See the **Secondary Testing** section for more information.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines, past 6 months



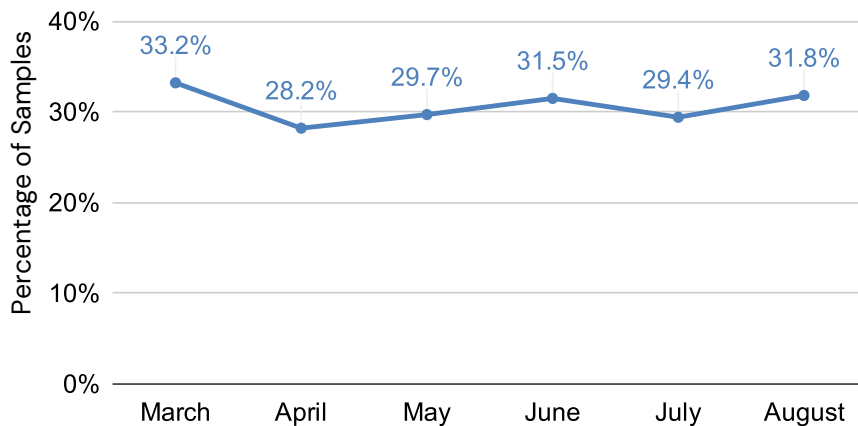
- Benzo positivity in opioid samples increased to **45.8%** (**498** of **1086** samples), the highest rate in past 6 months.
- All opioid samples are checked with BTNX Benzo test strips in combination with FTIR. True rates of positivity may be higher as some benzos (e.g. etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months



- In August, ethylbromazepam was detected in **8.9%** (**93** samples) and ethylflualprazolam detected in **7.0%** (**73** samples) of opioid samples.
- August marks a shift in type of benzos most commonly detected, surpassing desalkylgidazepam (**5.6%**; **59** samples) for the first time.
- Other novel benzos detected by FTIR in August include: 3-HO-desalkylgidazepam, clobromazepam, and meclonazepam.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

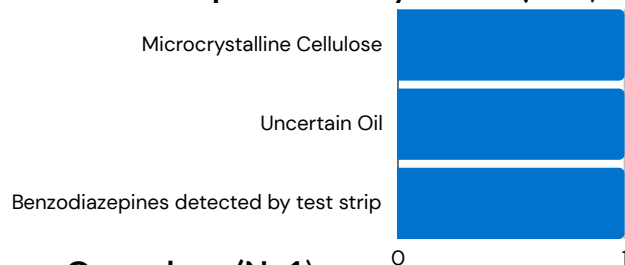


- Medetomidine positivity in opioids for August rose to **31.8% (334 of 1050)**.
- The majority of opioid samples with medetomidine were also positive for benzodiazepines (**258 of 334**)
- BTNX medetomidine test strips are used in combination with FTIR. Medetomidine is typically present in low concentrations and may be missed by FTIR.

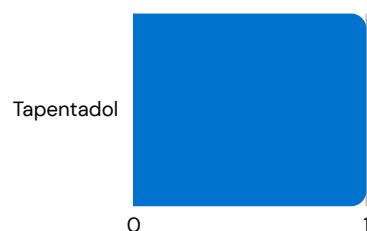
Components detected in pharmaceutical opioids

(where expected drug was not detected)

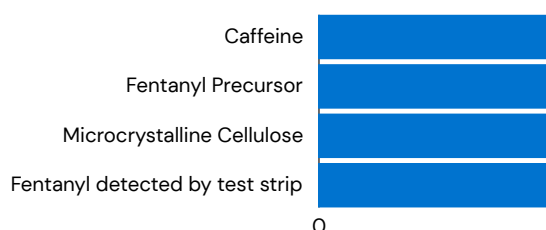
Ancetaminophen and Oxycodone (N=1)



Oxycodone (N=1)



Hydromorphone (N=1)

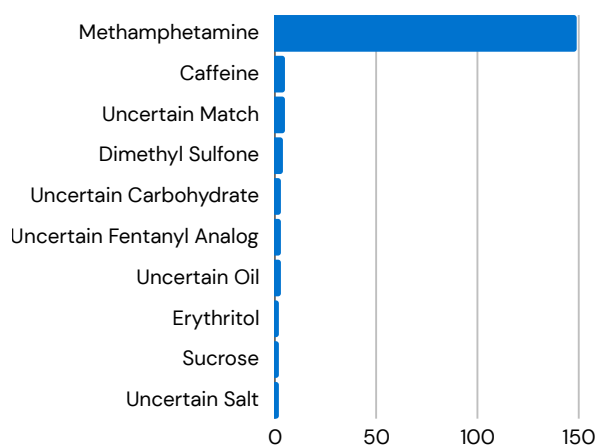


- In August, a total of **27** samples were submitted as pharmaceutical opioids. Of these, hydromorphone (Dilaudid) (n=14), oxycodone (OxyContin) (n=11), and acetaminophen + oxycodone (Percocet) (n=2) were most frequently submitted.
- Among samples expected to contain hydromorphone, **1** was determined to be counterfeit as it contained unexpected active ingredients, fentanyl/analogs and a fentanyl precursor, instead of hydromorphone.
- Of the samples expected to contain oxycodone, **1** contained tapentadol instead.
- Among samples expected to contain acetaminophen + oxycodone samples, **1** was determined to be counterfeit as it contained benzodiazepines instead.

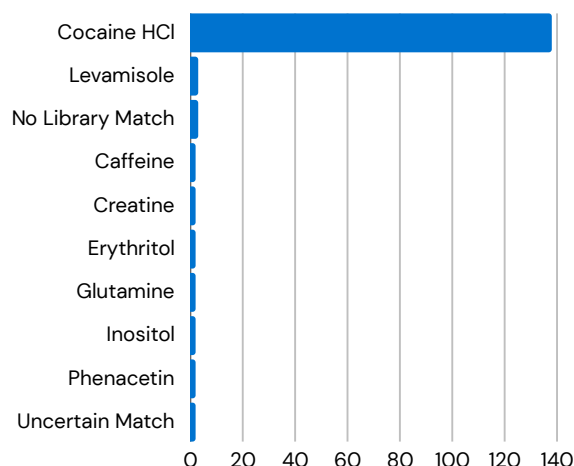
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=155)

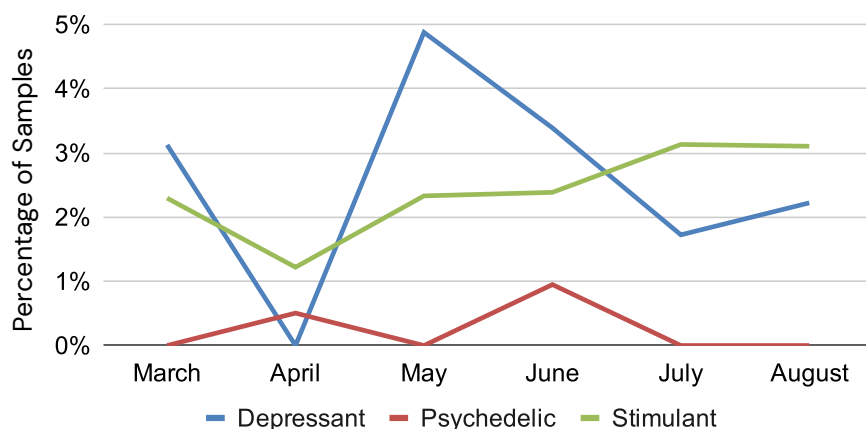


Components in cocaine (N=145)



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 August, **3.1%** of all stimulants (7 methamphetamine, 7 crack cocaine samples), and **2.2%** of all depressants (1 medetomidine sample) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.
- Of these, **8** 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.

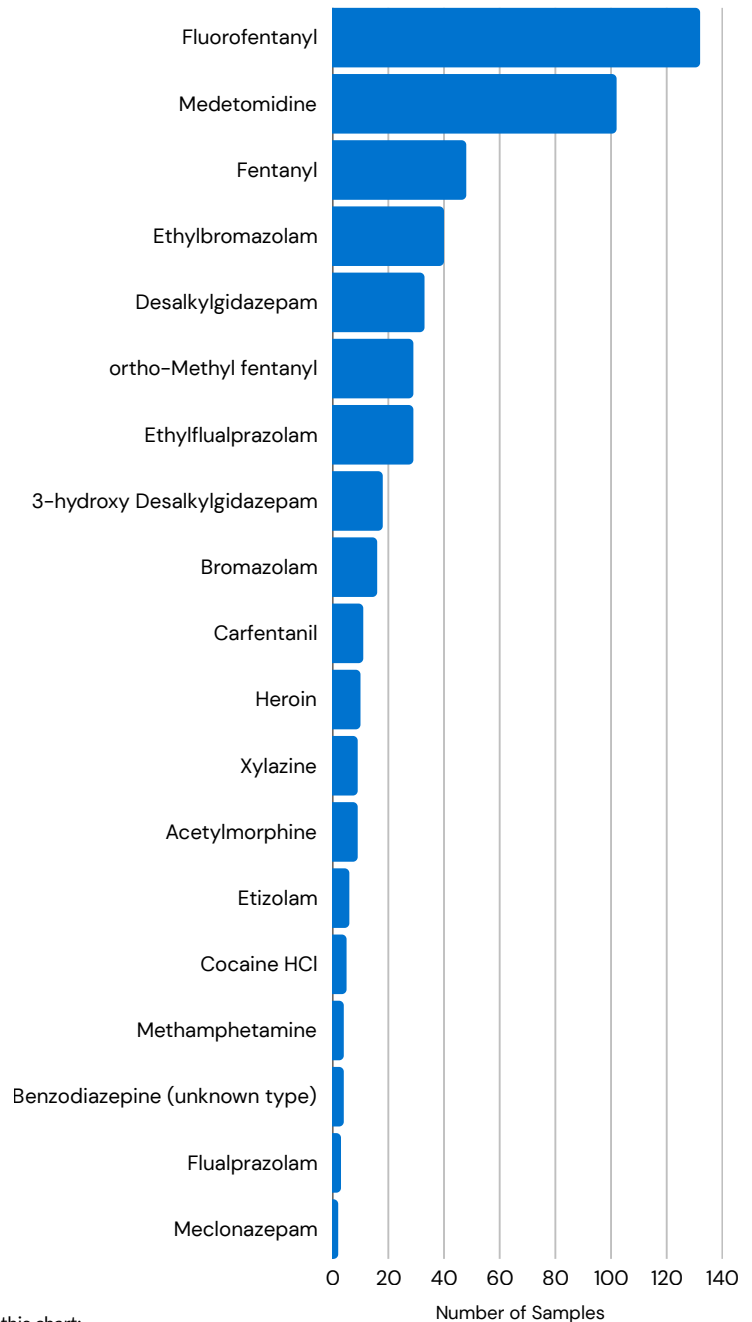
PSMS Secondary Testing Results Summary

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](#).

Total opioids sent to Substance

Health Authority	Number of Samples
Interior Health	72
Fraser Health	51
Northern Health	28
Island Health	9
Total	160

Active components detected (n=160)



To save space, additional components detected a single time have been omitted from this chart: Morphine, Acetylcodeine, Procaine, Unknown, Fentanyl or analogue.

Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Alert Message
August 6, 2026 Cranbrook	Down	Pink chunks/pebbles sold as down tested positive for high amounts of medetomidine and fentanyl.
August 12, 2026 Maple Ridge	Down	Brown chunks sold as down tested positive for high concentrations of carfentanil.
August 14, 2026 Northern Health Region	Hydromorphone	Recent drug samples of white Hydromorphone pills, sold as "Dilaudid" have tested positive for their new synthetic opioid Cyclophrine.
August 20, 2026 Merritt	Down	Down sample tested positive for cyclophrine, medetomidine, benzodiazepines and fluorofentanyl.
August 26, 2026 Vancouver	Down	Yellow powder seized in Vancouver tested positive for 4'-chlorodeschloroalprazolam, a novel benzodiazepine analog.
August 27, 2026 Vancouver	Xanax	White rectangular tri-scored counterfeit 2mg alprazolam (Xanax) tablet with imprints "XANAX" and "2" seized in Vancouver tested positive for ethylflualprazolam and phenazolam, two novel benzodiazepine analogs.

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](#).