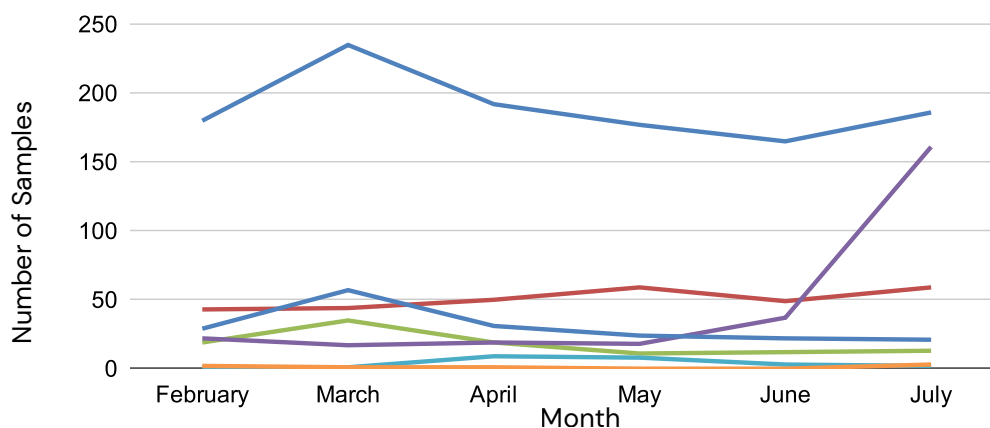




Key findings

- In July, **445** drug checks were performed by community FTIR drug checking sites in the Fraser Health region (**12** access points). The increase in samples, particularly in the psychedelic category, is typical of the summer and festival season.
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines increased to **58.1%**. Ethylbromazolam, a novel benzodiazepine, remained most frequently identified.
- We continue to monitor the emergence of novel benzodiazepines in unregulated opioids. In addition to ethylbromazolam, ethylflualprazolam was detected in July.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **55.6%**. 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 July (n=73), medetomidine was detected in **39** samples, xylazine in **4** samples, and carfentanil in **3** samples. Notably, cyclophosphamide, a novel synthetic opioid, was detected in **3** samples this month.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in July

Opioid	186
Stimulant	59
Depressant	13
Psychedelic	161
Other	2
Polysubstance	3
Unknown	21

Total: 445

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
Foxglove Housing (Surrey)	65
SafePoint (Surrey)	205
Mountainside (Abbotsford)	37
Mountainside (Chilliwack)	67
Mountainside (Langley)	33
Mountainside (Maple Ridge)	21
Purpose Society (New Westminster)	14
Total	445

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

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	181	4	1	186
Stimulant	56	3	0	59
Depressant	10	2	1	13
Psychedelic	152	9	0	161
Other	1	1	0	2
Polysubstance	2	1	0	3
Unknown	0	0	21	21
Total	402	20	23	445

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

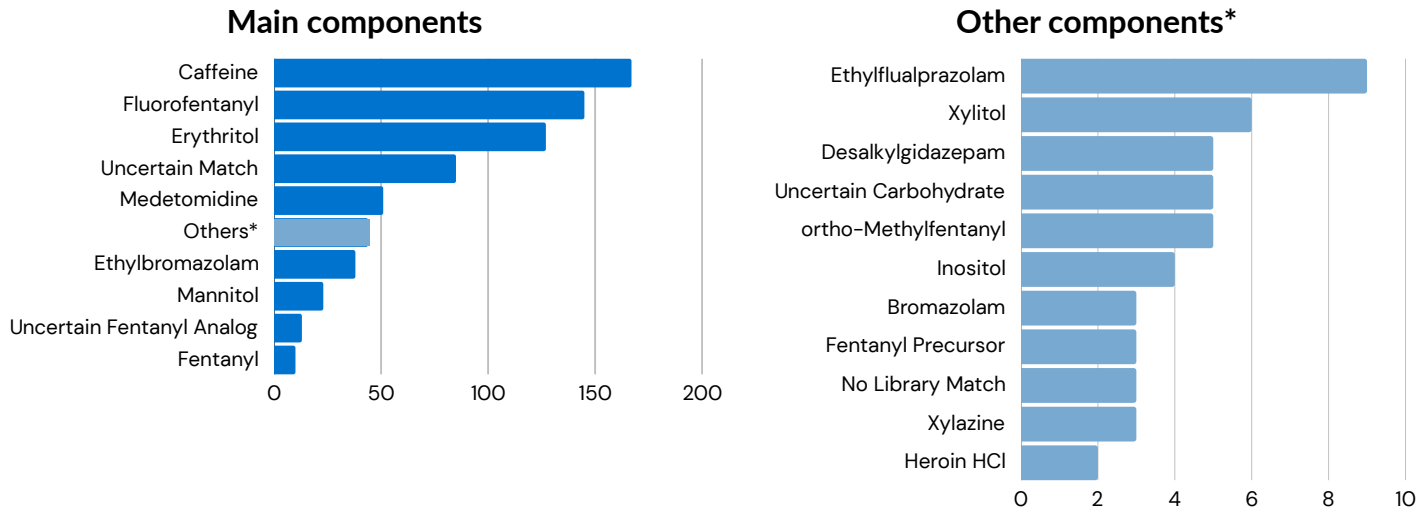
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	10	0	0	10
Heroin	0	1	0	1
Other Opioid	1	0	1	2
Down	167	2	0	169
Pharmaceutical	3	1	0	4
Total	181	4	1	186

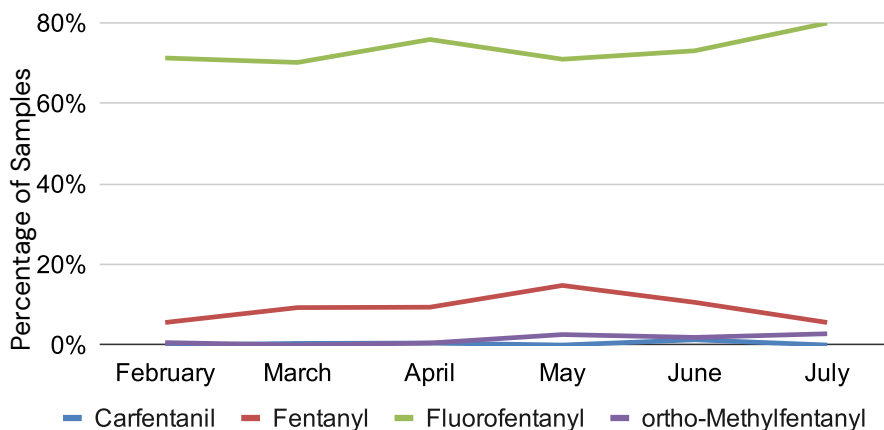
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=180)



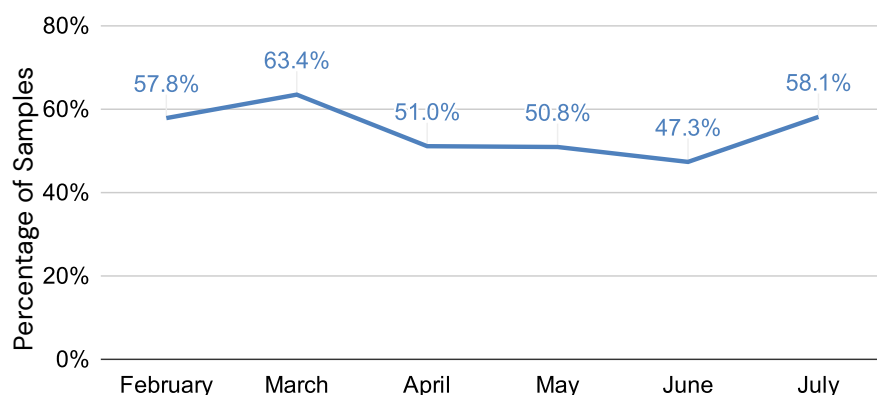
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



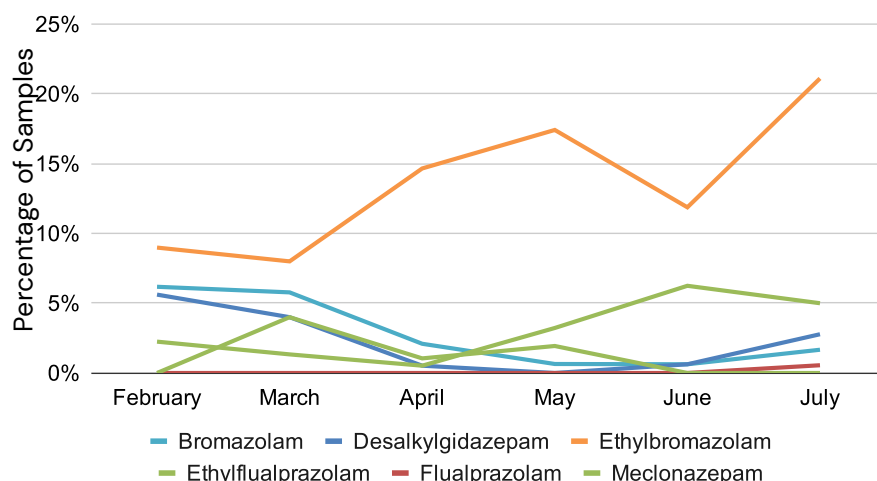
- In July, fentanyl detections by FTIR fell to a low of **5.6% (10 of 180 unregulated opioids checked)**. This decline may reflect that less fentanyl is circulating in the opioid supply, and/or that it is present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).
- Conversely, fluorofentanyl detections rose to **80.0% (145 samples)**, the highest proportion to date. Ortho-methylfentanyl detections also increased, found in **2.8%** of unregulated opioid samples in July.
- Carfentanyl was not detected by FTIR this month. Its true prevalence is expected to be higher, as carfentanyl 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



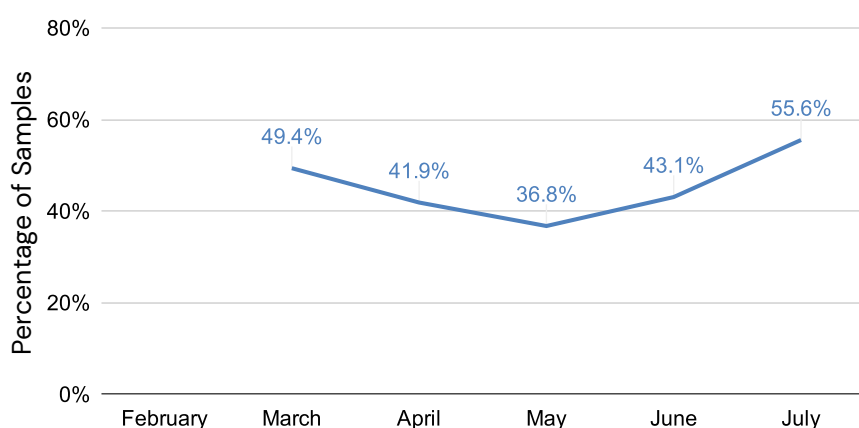
- During the month of July, the percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines increased to **58.1% (108 samples of 186 checked)**.
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months



- In July, ethylbromazolam remained the most common benzodiazepine detected by FTIR, rising to **21.1%** of unregulated opioids checked (**38 samples**), followed by ethylflualprazolam (**5.0%**; **9 samples**).
- The increase in novel benzodiazepines marks a shift over the past 6 months, with desalkylgidazepam and bromazolam no longer being the predominant benzodiazepines in the region.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

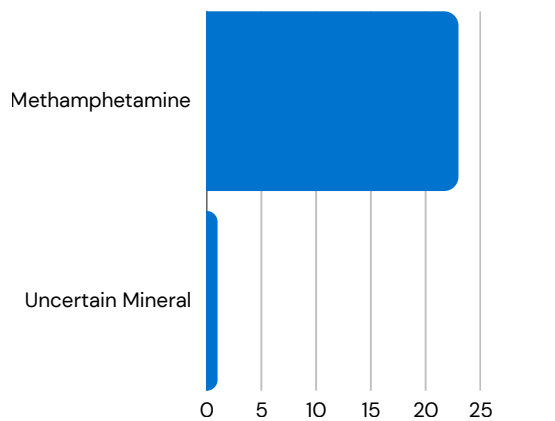


- In July, the percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **55.6% (100 of 180)**. The majority were also positive for benzodiazepines (**79 samples**).
- Unregulated opioids are checked for medetomidine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. 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%).

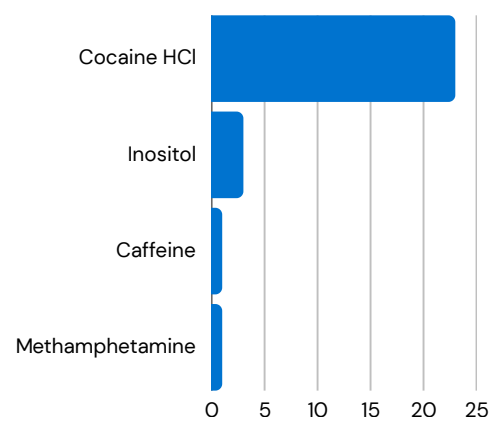
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

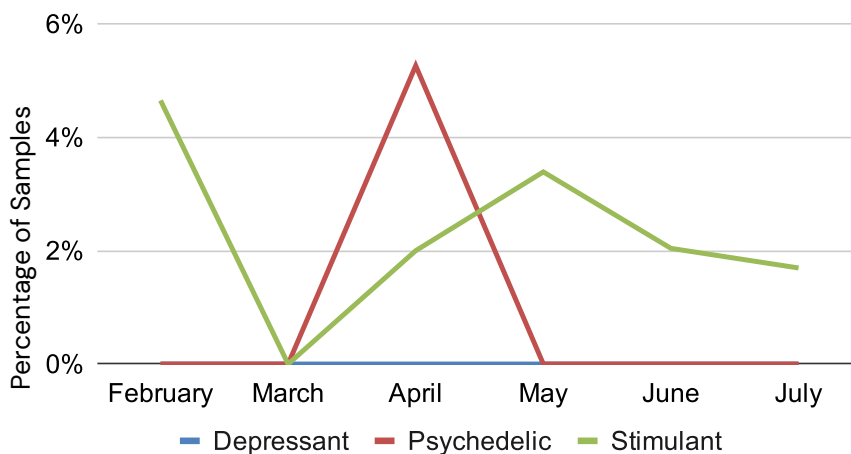
Components in methamphetamine (N=24)



Components in cocaine (N=23)



Fentanyl detected in non-opioids, past 6 months

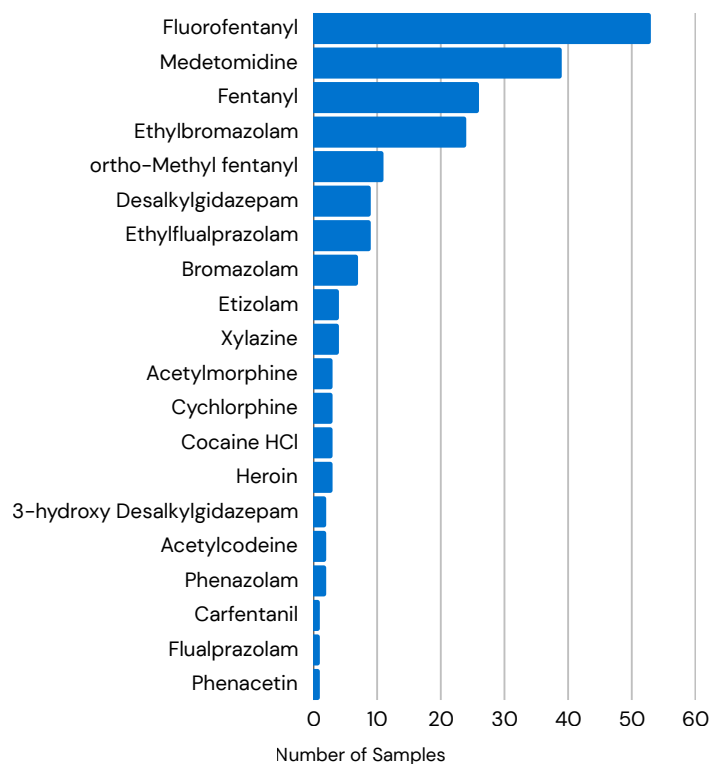


- In July, 1.7% of all stimulants (1 crack cocaine sample) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip.

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=73)



Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Alert Message
In July, 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](#).