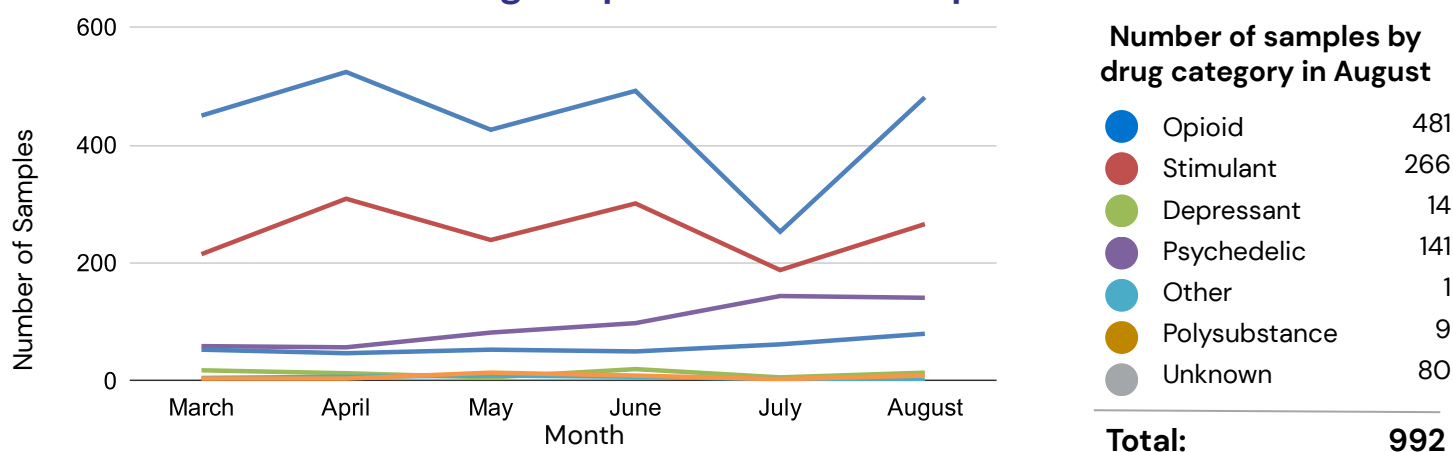




### Key findings

- In August, **992** drug checks were performed by community FTIR drug checking sites in the Interior Health region (**35** access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased to **58.4%**. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.
- For the first time, ethylflualprazolam and ethylbromazolam, novel benzodiazepines, were the most common benzodiazepines detected in unregulated opioids alongside desalkylgidazepam. Other novel benzodiazepines detected this month included 3-HO-desalkylgidazepam, clobromazolam, and meclonazepam.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **39.7%**. 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 August (**n=72**), medetomidine was detected in **44** samples, and xylazine in **3** samples.

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



### Number of drug checks at each site

| Location                  | # of Drugs Checked |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| ANKORS (Cranbrook)        | 87                 |
| ANKORS (Nelson)           | 83                 |
| ASK (Kamloops)            | 119                |
| ASK (Kelowna)             | 79                 |
| ASK (Penticton)           | 421                |
| Interior Health (Kelowna) | 152                |
| Medicine Shoppe (Vernon)  | 51                 |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>992</b>         |

### Number of samples with the expected drug detected

| Expected Drug | Detected   | Not Detected | N/A       | Total      |
|---------------|------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Opioid        | 472        | 7            | 2         | 481        |
| Stimulant     | 260        | 5            | 1         | 266        |
| Depressant    | 10         | 3            | 1         | 14         |
| Psychedelic   | 135        | 6            | 0         | 141        |
| Other         | 1          | 0            | 0         | 1          |
| Polysubstance | 8          | 1            | 0         | 9          |
| Unknown       | 0          | 0            | 80        | 80         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>886</b> | <b>22</b>    | <b>84</b> | <b>992</b> |

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

## Opioids

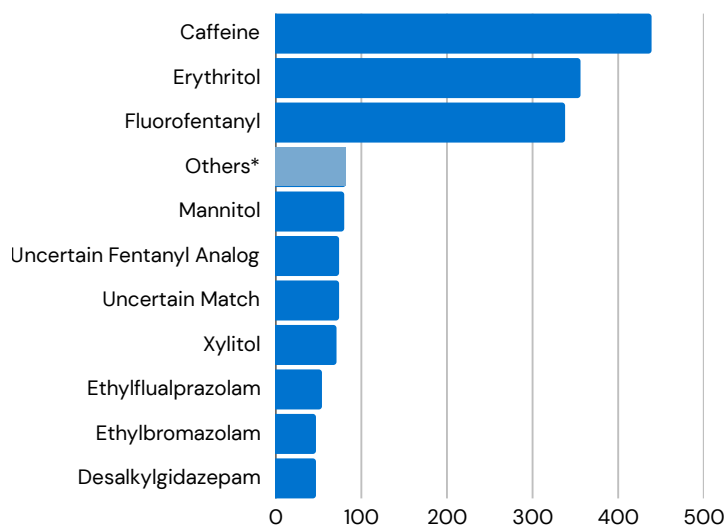
### Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

| Expected Drug  | Detected   | Not Detected | N/A      | Total      |
|----------------|------------|--------------|----------|------------|
| Fentanyl       | 16         | 0            | 0        | 16         |
| Heroin         | 1          | 1            | 0        | 2          |
| Other Opioid   | 2          | 0            | 0        | 2          |
| Down           | 449        | 4            | 0        | 453        |
| Pharmaceutical | 4          | 2            | 2        | 8          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>472</b> | <b>7</b>     | <b>2</b> | <b>481</b> |

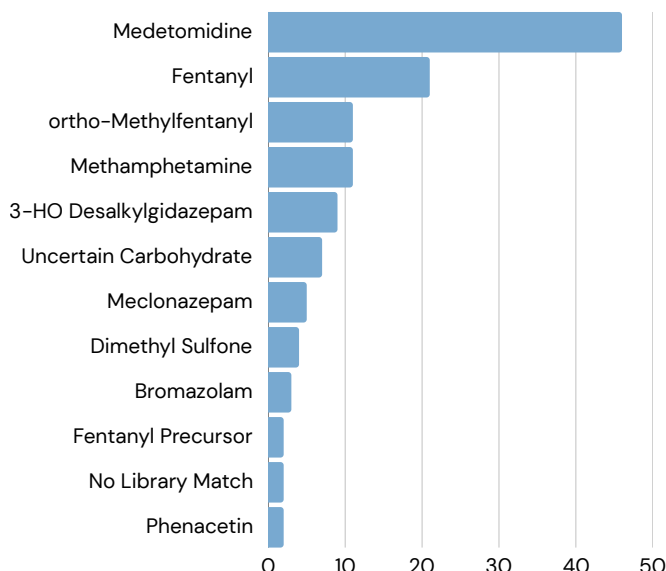
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.  
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

### Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=471)

#### Main components

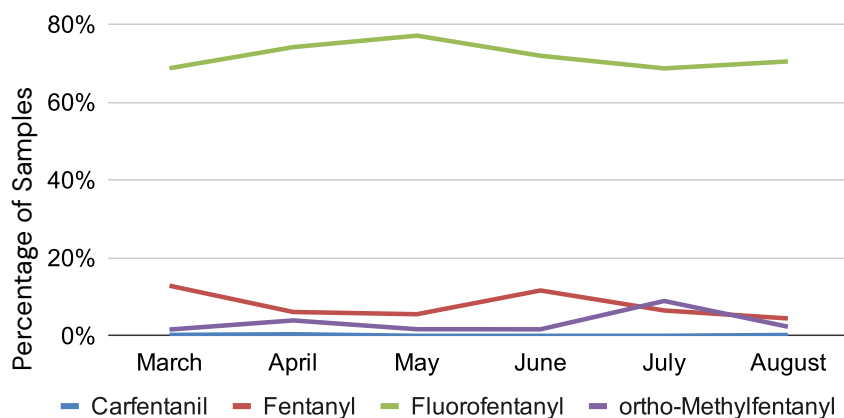


#### Other components\*



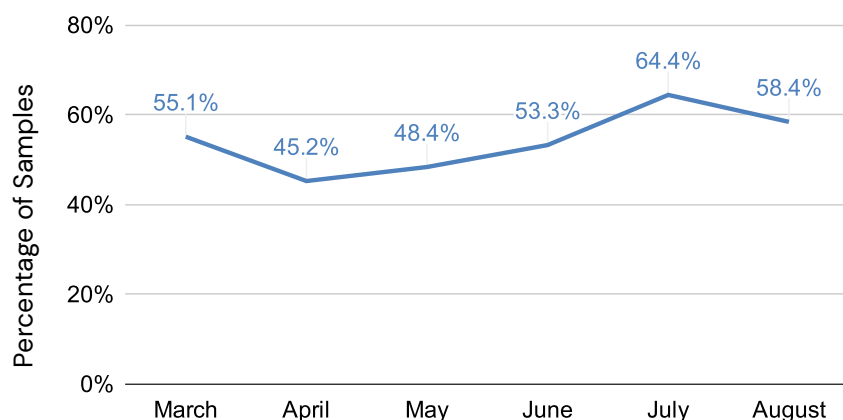
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

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



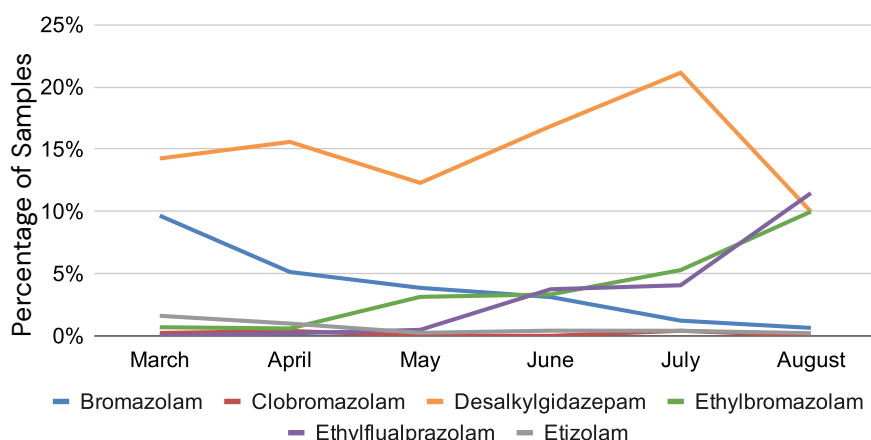
- In August, fluorofentanyl remained the most common fentanyl analog detected by FTIR, found in **70.5%** of unregulated opioids (**338** of **471**).
- Fentanyl detections decreased to **4.5%** (**21** samples), the lowest level to-date. The declining number of fentanyl detections may reflect that less 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 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



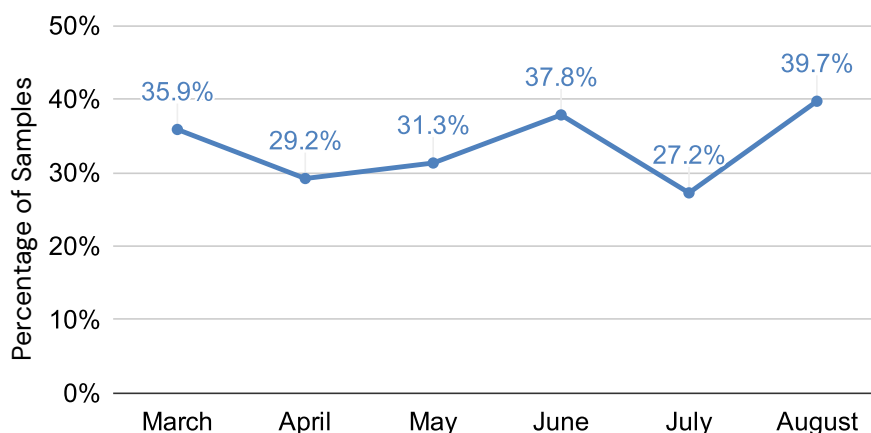
- During the month of August, the percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased to **58.4%** (281 samples of 481 checked).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

### Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months



- In August, ethylflualprazolam, a novel benzodiazepine, surpassed desalkylgidazepam as the common benzodiazepine detected by FTIR for the first time, found in **11.5%** of unregulated opioids checked (54 of 471 samples).
- Ethylbromazolam detection also increased, with detection par with desalkylgidazepam at **10.0%** (47 samples each). The increase in novel benzodiazepines marks a shift over the past 6 months as desalkylgidazepam and bromazolam detections continue to decline.
- Other novel benzodiazepines detected in August include 3-HO-desalkylgidazepam, clobromazolam, and meclonazepam.

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

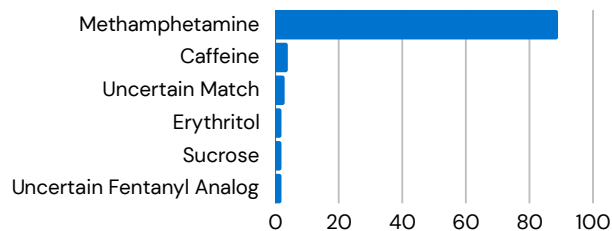


- Medetomidine positivity in opioids for August increased to **39.7%** (187 of 471).
- The majority of of opioid samples with medetomidine were also positive for benzodiazepines (157 of 187).
- BTNX medetomidine test strips are used in combination with FTIR. Medetomidine is typically present in low concentrations and may be missed by FTIR.

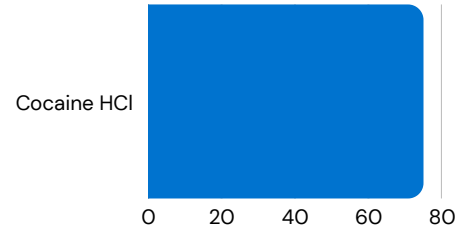
### Non-Opioids

#### Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=91)

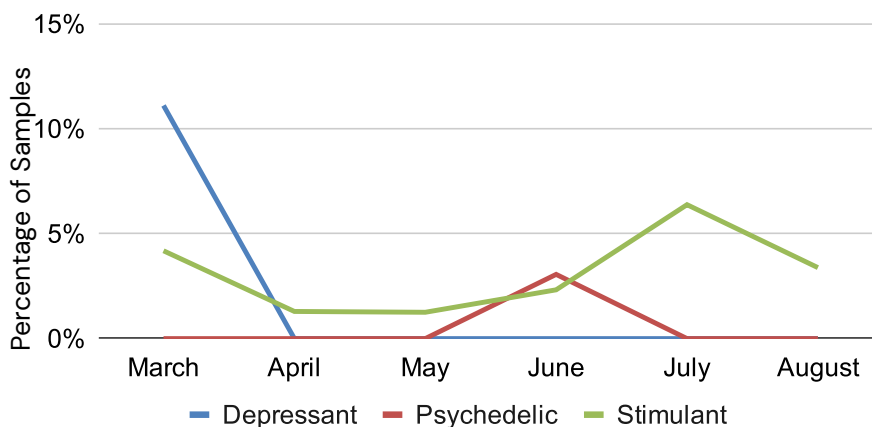


Components in cocaine (N=77)



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

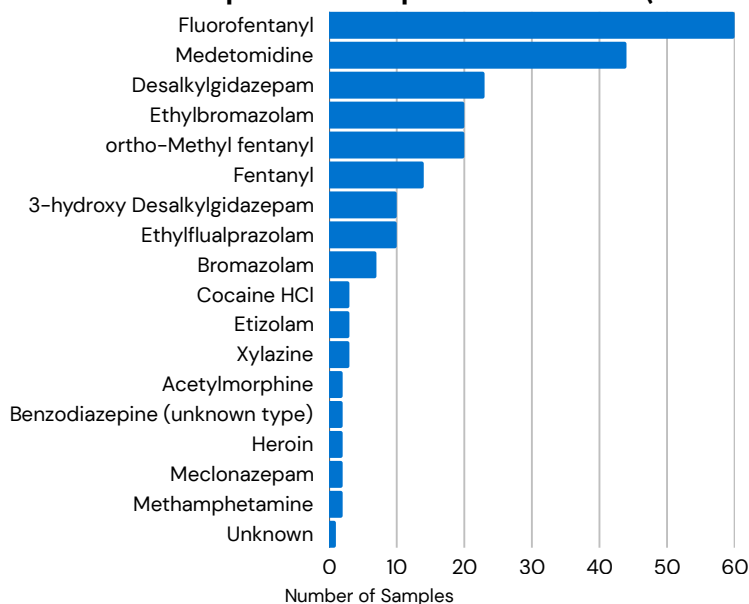


- In August, **3.4%** of all stimulant samples (**5** methamphetamine, **4** crack cocaine) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip.
- Of these, **5** samples were expected to be cross-contaminated by the service user due to sample storage/handling with opioids prior to submitting the sample 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 = 72)



### Public Health Notifications

| Date & Location             | Expected Drug | Alert Message                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| August 6, 2026<br>Cranbrook | Down          | Pink chunks/pebbles sold as down tested positive for high amounts of medetomidine and fentanyl. |
| August 20, 2026<br>Merritt  | Down          | Down sample tested positive for cychlorphine, medetomidine, benzodiazepines and fluorofentanyl. |

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](#).