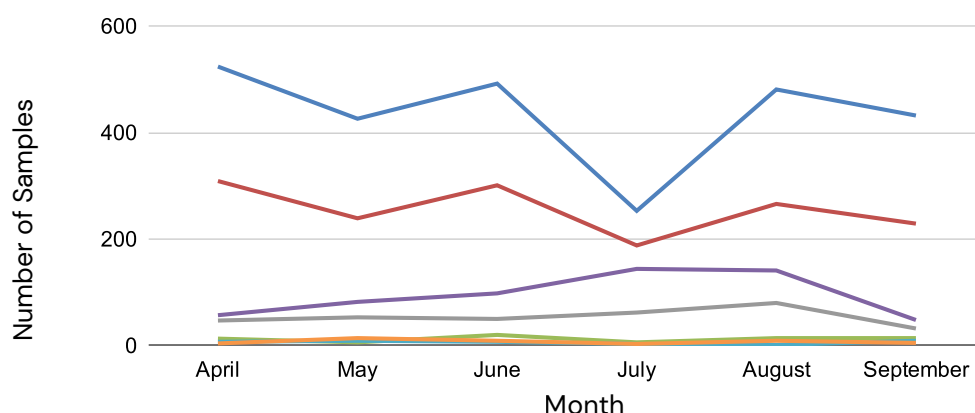




Key findings

- In September, **769** 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 **50.9%**. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.
- Ethylflualprazolam and ethylbromazolam, novel benzodiazepines, were the most common benzodiazepines detected by FTIR in unregulated opioids overall.
- The percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **42.4%**.
- Among opioids sent for secondary testing in September (**n=116**), medetomidine was detected in **63** samples, and xylazine in **2** samples.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Sept.

Opioid	432
Stimulant	229
Depressant	14
Psychedelic	48
Other	9
Polysubstance	5
Unknown	32

Total: 769

Number of drug checks at each site

Location	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS (Cranbrook)	17
ANKORS (Nelson)	40
ASK (Kamloops)	73
ASK (Kelowna)	128
ASK (Penticton)	318
Interior Health (Kelowna)	158
Medicine Shoppe (Vernon)	35
Total	769

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	422	6	4	432
Stimulant	223	4	2	229
Depressant	2	7	5	14
Psychedelic	44	2	2	48
Other	8	0	1	9
Polysubstance	5	0	0	5
Unknown	0	0	32	32
Total	704	19	46	769

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

Opioids

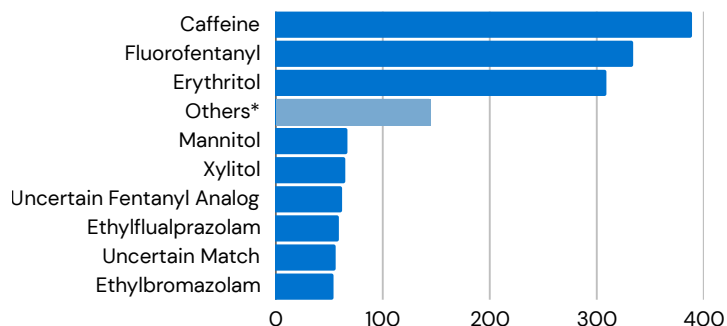
Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	20	0	0	20
Other Opioid	3	1	0	4
Down	394	5	1	400
Pharmaceutical	5	0	3	8
Total	422	6	4	432

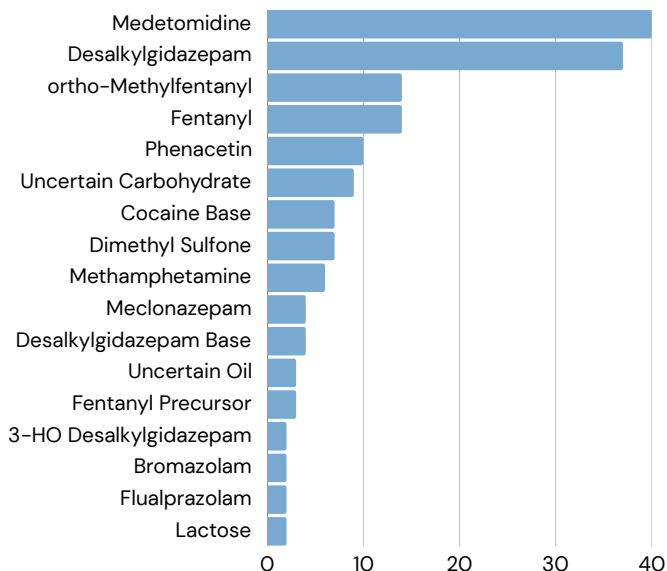
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=420)

Main components

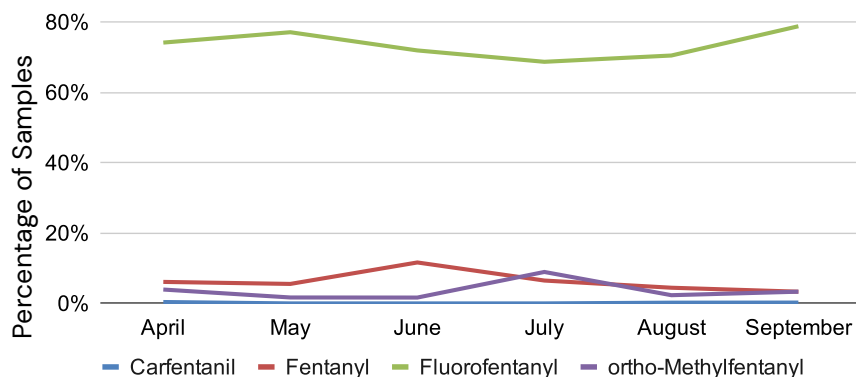


Other components*



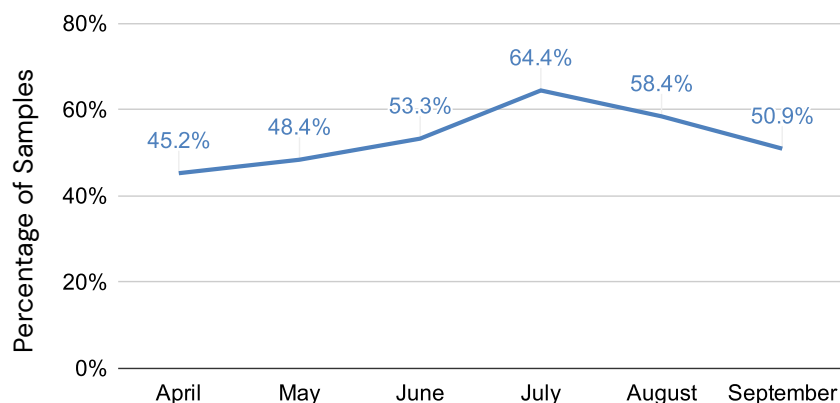
Additional components detected a single time have been omitted from these charts. All sample data can be found on the [BCCSU Drug Sense dashboard](#).

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



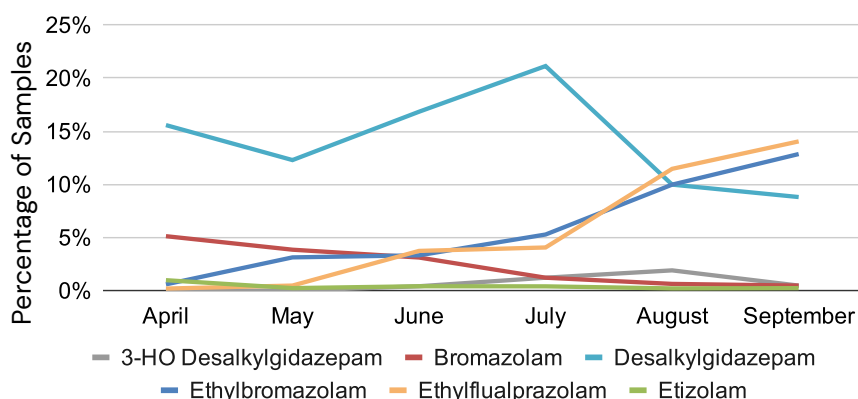
- In September, fluorofentanyl was detected by FTIR in **78.8%** of unregulated opioids (**334 of 420**), the highest level of detection to-date.
- Conversely, fentanyl detections decreased to a low of **3.3% (14 samples)**. The declining number of fentanyl detections may reflect that less fentanyl is 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



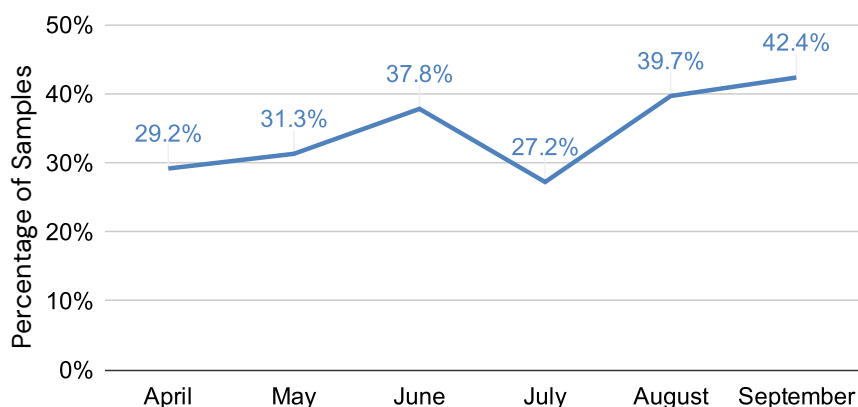
- During the month of September, the percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased to **50.9%** (220 samples of 432 checked).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true percentage may be higher, as some benzodiazepines (e.g., etizolam, ethylflualprazolam) may be missed by test strip.

Types of benzodiazepines detected by FTIR, past 6 months



- In September, ethylflualprazolam remained the most common benzodiazepine detected by FTIR, found in **14.0%** of unregulated opioids checked (54 of 420 samples).
- Ethylbromazolam detections increased to **12.9%** (47 samples), surpassing desalkylgizapam for the first time.
- This increase in novel benzodiazepines marks a shift from previous months as bromazolam and desalkylgizapam detections have declined.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

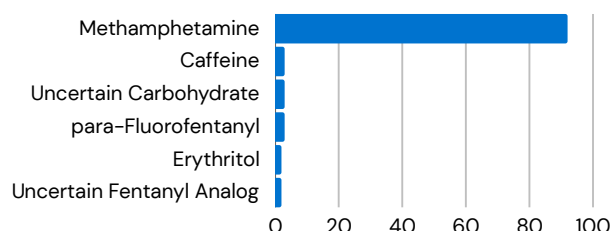


- In September, the percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **42.4%** (178 of 420).
- The majority of samples containing medetomidine were also positive for benzodiazepines (126 of 178 samples).
- Unregulated opioids are checked for medetomidine-positivity using 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%).

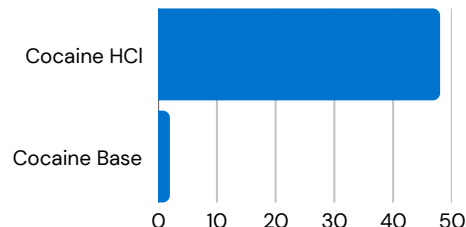
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=94)

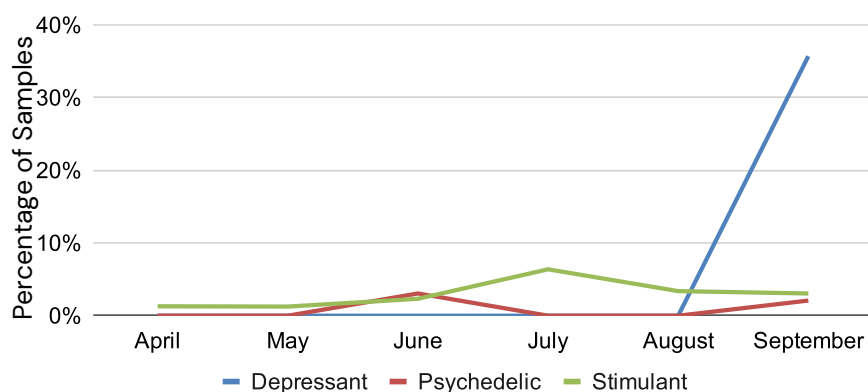


Components in cocaine (N=50)



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

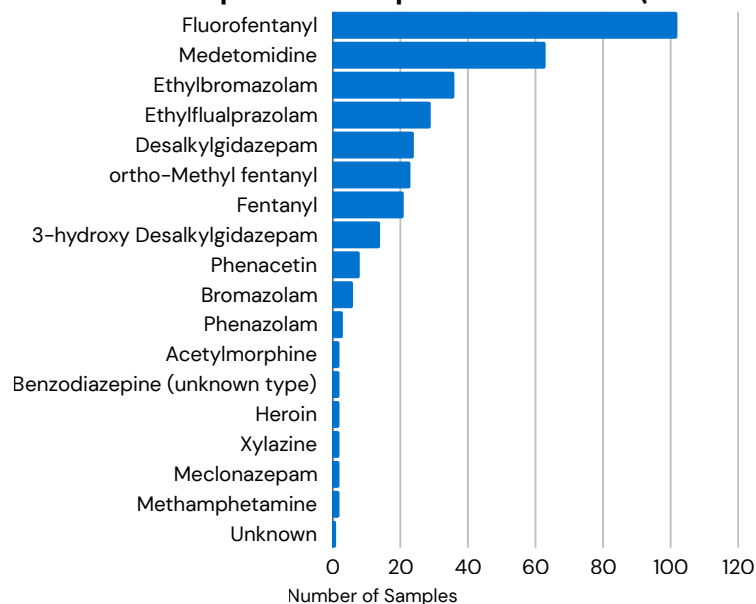


- In September, **35.7%** of all depressants (**3** unknown benzodiazepines, **2** etizolam samples) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR/test strip.
- Additionally, **3.1%** of all stimulants (**5** methamphetamine, **1** crack cocaine, and **1** cocaine HCl sample), and **2.1%** of all psychedelics (**1** MDMA sample) tested positive for fentanyl.
- Of these, **4** 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 = 116)



To save space, additional components detected a single time have been omitted from this chart: Bromazepam, Etizolam, Fentanyl analogue (unknown type), Meclonazepam, Methamphetamine, Metonitazene, Procaine.

Public Health Notifications

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Alert Message
September 11, 2026 Penticton	Down	Multiple samples of 'down' in a variety of colors sold in Penticton contain high amounts of fluorofentanyl, medetomidine and benzodiazepine.
September 17, 2026 Kamloops	Methamphetamine	White powder sold as 'methamphetamine/side/crystal meth' tested positive for MDMA.

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.
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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](#).