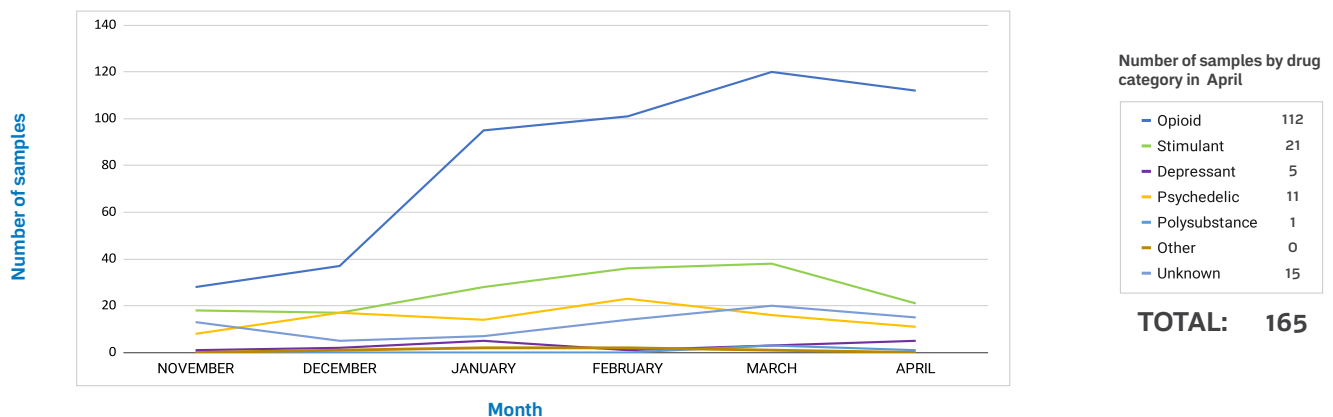


Key Findings

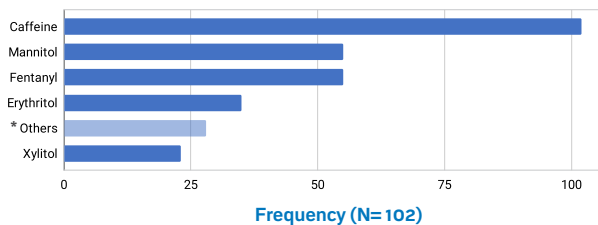
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region (51%) has dramatically increased since last month (35%), and has consistently been on an upward trend since September (6%). Etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies. This means that the true rate may be higher than reported here.
- Two samples of expected crack cocaine tested positive for fentanyl in Penticton and both were checked after being linked to an overdose. Only one contained cocaine, the other was mannitol and fentanyl.
- One sample of expected cocaine contained only gabapentin, a commonly prescribed painkiller, and no cocaine.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

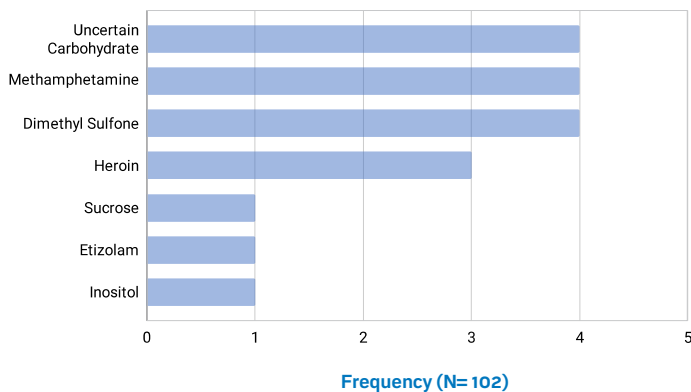


Components found in drug samples in April

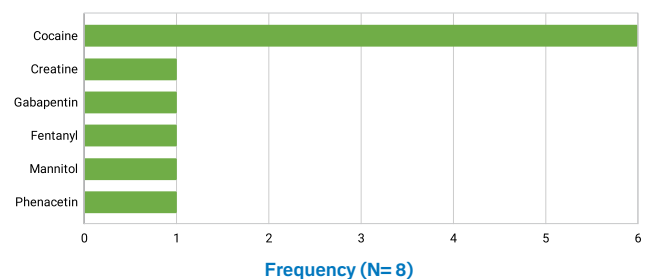
Components in opioids



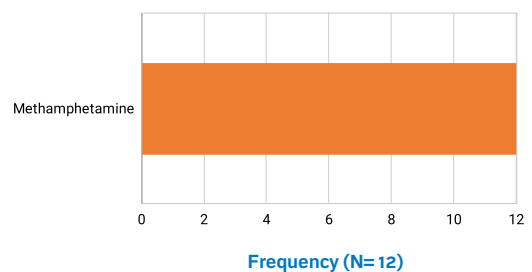
* Other components found in opioids



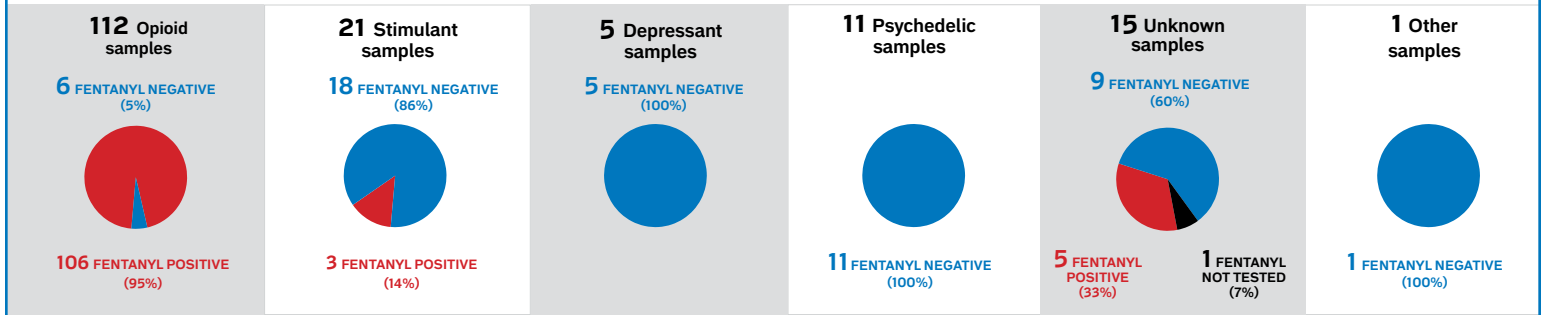
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with **fentanyl** present

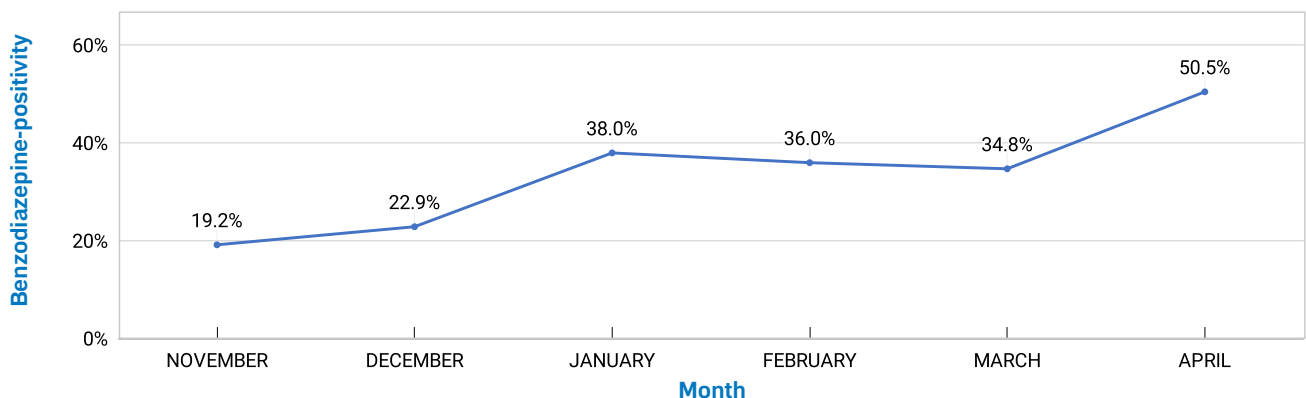


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

Date & Location	Expected Drug	Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Benzo Strip	Area Purchased	Alert Message
24 April 2021 UBCO Harm Reduction (HaRT) Penticton	Crack cocaine	Cocaine base, Phenacetin	Positive	N/A	Penticton	Unexpected fentanyl presence can lead to overdose, even when smoking.
18 April 2021 UBCO Harm Reduction (HaRT) Penticton	Crack cocaine	Mannitol, Fentanyl	Positive	Negative	Penticton	Drugs may not contain any of the drug they are sold as. Drug checking can help confirm you have what you think you have!

For information about public health alerts in the Interior Health region, please visit:
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Leadership/MHQ/Pages/PHEmergency.aspx>

Percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the past 6 months



During the month of April, **50.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in the Interior Health region (**53 samples of 105 tested**).

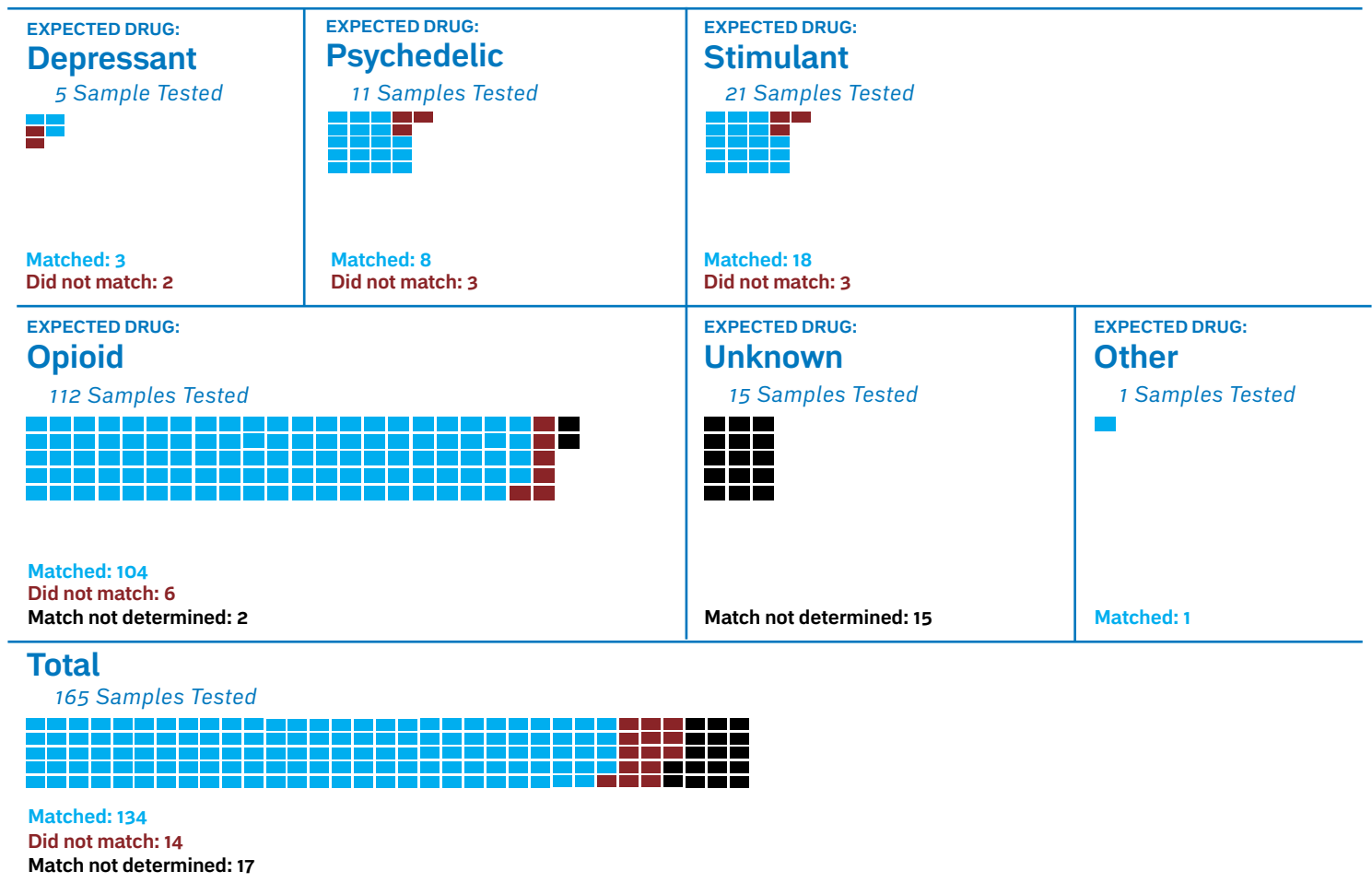
Opioid samples are tested for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips. The results presented above are presumptive and tentative until confirmed by a laboratory.

Number of drugs checks at each site

Organization	City/Town	# of Drugs Checked
ANKORS	Cranbrook	18
	Nelson	5
ASK Wellness	Kamloops	1
	Merritt	6
	Mobile Bus	18
UBC Okanagan (HaRT)	Kelowna	26
	Penticton	11
	Vernon	22
Total		165

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking



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

Depressant may include:
benzodiazepines, etizolam,
GHB, hypnotics

Opioid may include:
"down," heroin, fentanyl,
pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes:
cross-category mixtures

Psychedelic may include:
MDMA and related,
2C-family, tryptamines,
ketamine, LSD

Stimulant may include:
methamphetamine,
"speed," cocaine and crack
cocaine, cathinones

Unknown includes:
samples where the individual
was unable to identify an
expected substance - this
includes found samples.

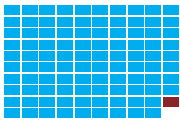
Number of opioid samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

EXPECTED DRUG:

Fentanyl

99 Samples Tested



Matched: 98
Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Heroin

4 Samples Tested



Matched: 2
Did not match: 2

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

3 Samples Tested



Matched: 2
Did not match: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

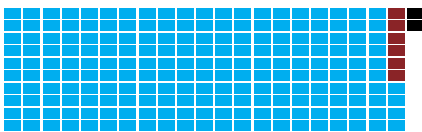
6 Samples Tested



Matched: 2
Did not match: 2
Match not determined: 2

Total

112 Samples Tested



Matched: 104
Did not match: 6
Match not determined: 2

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.

Data represented here are collected from our partner sites across the province. Drug samples are tested using the Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) spectrometer in combination with fentanyl test strips and benzodiazepine test strips.

There is 5% fentanyl detection limit on the FTIR spectrometer (McCrae, 2019), and a drug check on any given sample consists of both the FTIR and BTNX fentanyl immunoassay test strip testing done in combination. When applicable, BTNX benzodiazepine immunoassay test strips are also used.

BCCSU gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following partners: