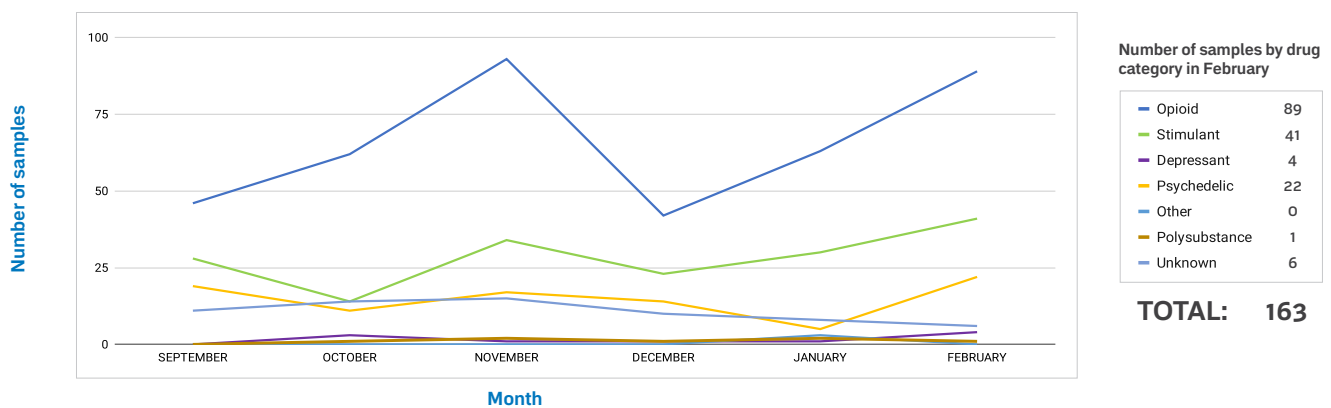


Key Findings

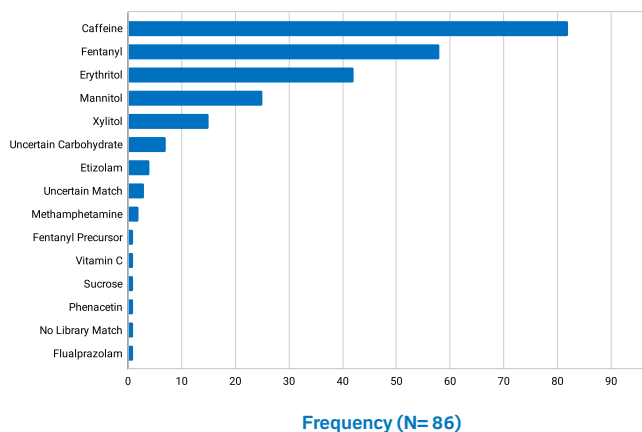
- The percentage of opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines in the region fell slightly (68.5%, 61 of 89 samples) from last month, but trends may be hard to infer due to the small number of samples over a large region. Etizolam, the predominant benzodiazepine in expected opioids, may be missed by drug checking technologies. This means that the true rate may be higher than reported here.
- 2 samples of crack cocaine, 1 sample of methamphetamine, and 1 sample of flualprazolam tested positive for fentanyl this month.
- Drug checking is available in many different communities in the Interior Health region. For updated times and locations, visit our [website](#).

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months

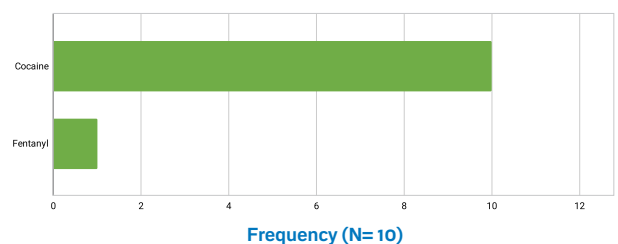


Components found in drug samples in February

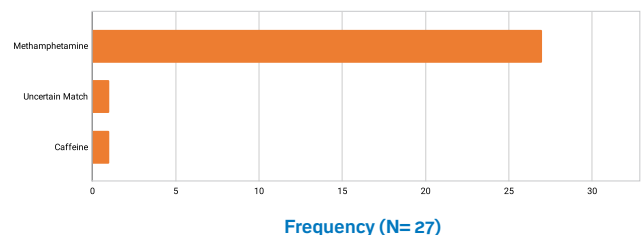
Components in opioids



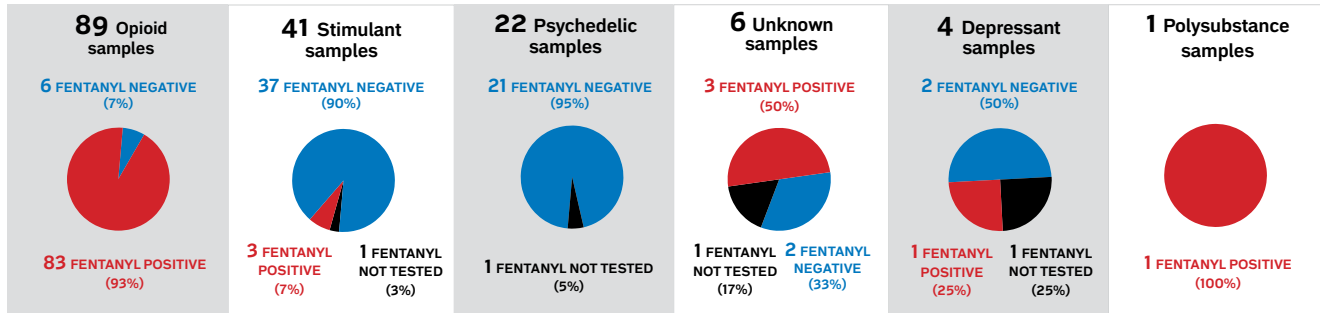
Components in cocaine



Components in methamphetamine



Number of samples tested with fentanyl present

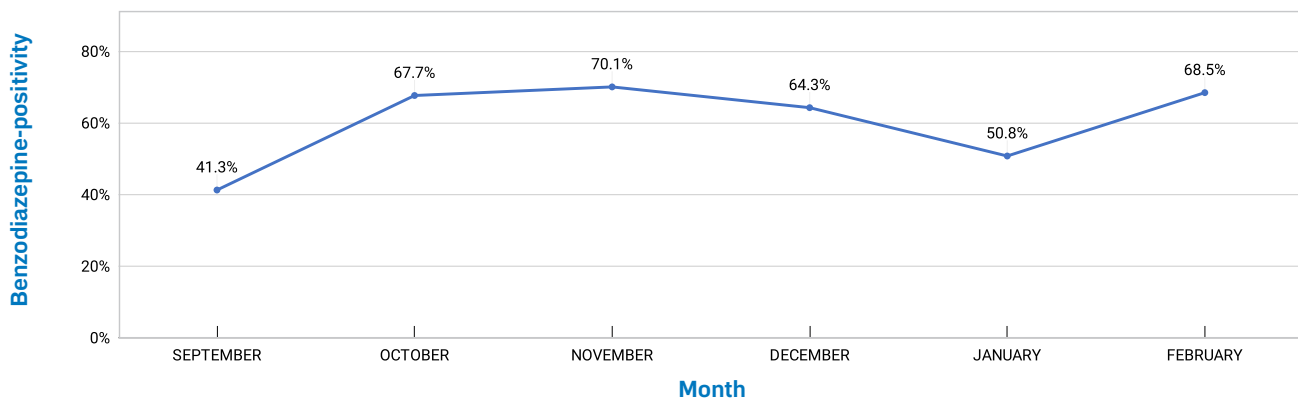


PUBLIC HEALTH NOTIFICATIONS

| Date & Location | Expected Drug | Drugs Detected | Fentanyl Strip | Benzo Strip | Area Purchased | Alert Message |
|--|---|--|----------------|-------------|----------------|---|
| February 11 2022 ASK Wellness Merritt | Crack cocaine White granules with coloured flecks | Cocaine base, Caffeine, Erythritol, Fentanyl | Positive | Negative | Merritt | There is a risk of opioid toxicity when stimulants are contaminated with fentanyl. |
| February 15 2022 ASK Wellness Kamloops | Down or Fentanyl Purple pebbles | Caffeine, Fentanyl, Erythritol | Positive | Negative | Kamloops | Higher than normal concentration of fentanyl in a sample poses a risk of opioid toxicity. |

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






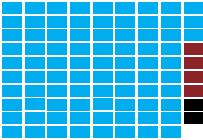


During the month of February, **68.5%** of expected opioid samples tested positive for benzodiazepines using test strips in our partner sites in Interior Health (**61 samples of 89 checked**). Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The results presented here are derived from both of these technologies and are presumptive until confirmed by a laboratory.

Number of drugs checks at each site

| Organization | City/Town | # of Drugs Checked |
|--------------|-------------|--------------------|
| ANKORS | Nelson | 33 |
| | Trail | 13 |
| | Castlegar | 2 |
| | Grand Forks | 22 |
| ASK Wellness | Kamloops | 16 |
| | Penticton | 31 |
| | Meritt | 3 |
| UBCO Hart | Kelowna | 16 |
| | Vernon | 27 |
| Total | | 163 |

Number of samples that matched expectation

using FTIR/test strip drug checking

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>EXPECTED DRUG: Psychedelic</p> <p>22 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 17 Did not match: 5</p> | <p>EXPECTED DRUG: Stimulant</p> <p>41 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 39 Did not match: 2</p> | <p>EXPECTED DRUG: Polysubstance</p> <p>1 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1</p> |
| <p>EXPECTED DRUG: Opioid</p> <p>89 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 83 Did not match: 4 Match not determined: 2</p> | <p>EXPECTED DRUG: Unknown</p> <p>6 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Match not determined: 6</p> | <p>EXPECTED DRUG: Depressant</p> <p>4 Samples Tested</p>  <p>Matched: 1 Did not match: 3</p> |

Total

163 Samples Tested



Matched: 141
Did not match: 14
Match not determined: 8

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

48 Samples Tested



Matched: 44

Did not match: 4

EXPECTED DRUG:

Other Opioid

1 Samples Tested



Matched: 1

EXPECTED DRUG:

Down

38 Samples Tested



Matched: 38

EXPECTED DRUG:

Pharmaceutical

2 Samples Tested



Match not determined: 2

Total

89 Samples Tested



Matched: 83

Did not match: 4

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: