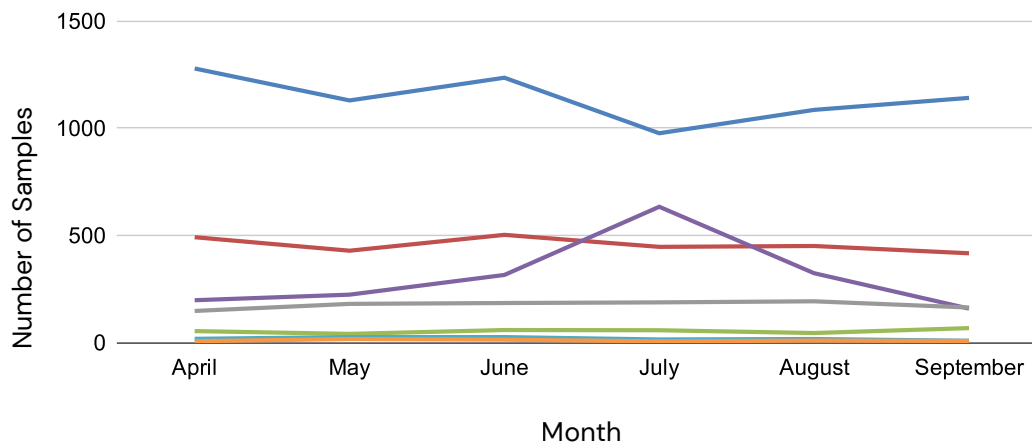




Key findings

- In September, **1,967** drug checks were performed by community FTIR drug checking sites in BC (**64** access points).
- The percentage of all opioids testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased to **43.3%**. 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 **35.3%**.
- The median concentration of fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl in unregulated opioids was **8.7%** (see page 3).
- Among opioids sent for secondary testing across BC in September ($n=224$), medetomidine was detected in **132** samples. Medetomidine concentrations ranged from **<1%** to **20%**, and the median was **4.0%**. In addition, carfentanil was detected in **10** samples, and xylazine in **7** samples.

Number of drug samples checked in the past 6 months



Number of samples by drug category in Sept.

Opioid	1142
Stimulant	417
Depressant	68
Psychedelic	159
Other	9
Polysubstance	8
Unknown	164

Total: 1,967

Number of samples tested by region

Vancouver Coastal Health region: 809 (**41%**)

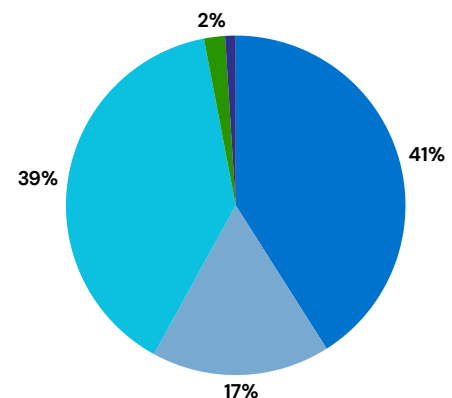
Fraser Health region: 328 (**17%**)

Interior Health region: 769 (**39%**)

Island Health region: 38 (**2%**)

Northern Health region: 23 (**1%**)

Total: 1,967*



*Does not include samples tested at Substance Drug Checking services.
Please see the Island Health report for more information.

Number of samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Opioid	1107	24	11	1142
Stimulant	401	13	3	417
Depressant	32	30	6	68
Psychedelic	148	6	5	159
Other	8	0	1	9
Polysubstance	7	1	0	8
Unknown	0	0	164	164
Total	1703	74	190	1967

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

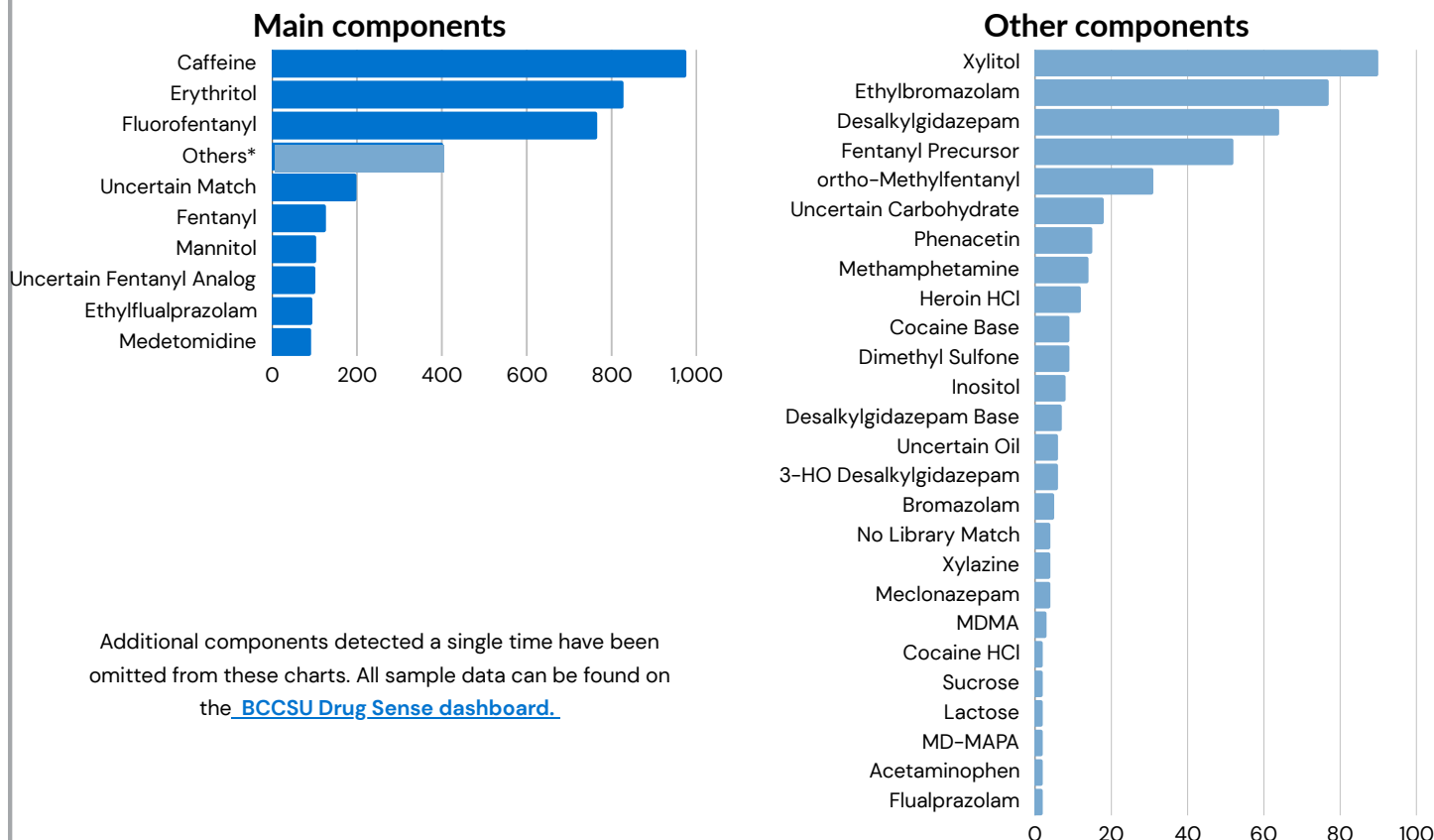
Opioids

Number of opioid samples with the expected drug detected

Expected Drug	Detected	Not Detected	N/A	Total
Fentanyl	61	2	0	63
Heroin	7	0	0	7
Other Opioid	4	1	0	5
Down	1016	16	1	1033
Pharmaceutical	16	5	10	31
Opium	3	0	0	3
Total	1107	24	11	1142

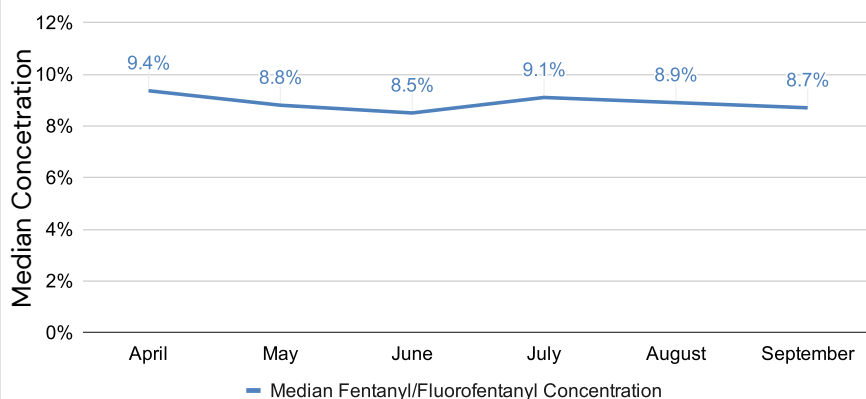
Please note that the presence of the expected substance does not imply purity, as samples frequently contain adulterating cutting agents.
'Down' can refer to any opioid drug present in any amount.

Components detected in unregulated opioids (N=1103)



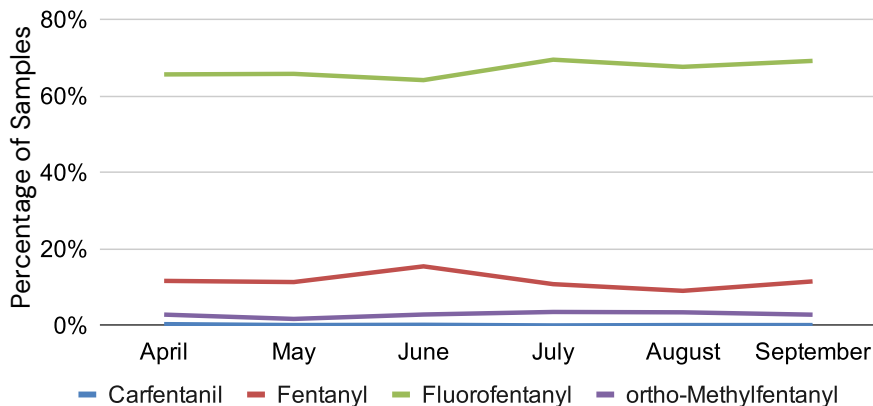
Median fentanyl concentration of unregulated opioids, past 6 months

Concentrations were estimated using a validated quantification model for the purposes of this report with aggregated data. To learn more about the QUANT3 quantification model visit [here](#).



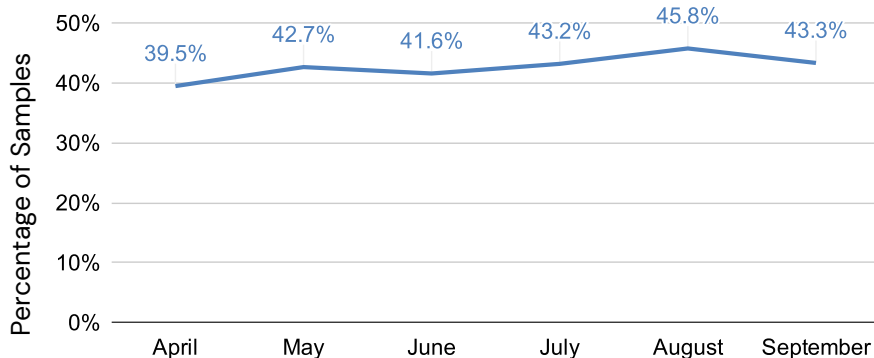
- In September, the overall median concentration of fentanyl/fluorofentanyl in unregulated opioid samples decreased to **8.7% (n=1058)**.
- Most unregulated opioids contained fentanyl and/or fluorofentanyl at concentrations between **4.9%** and **15.9%**, but concentrations can range from trace amounts to comprising most of the mixture.
- Fentanyl and fluorofentanyl are the predominate fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, and are considered to have similar potency. They are combined here to show their overall median concentration.

Fentanyl analogs detected in unregulated opioids, past 6 months



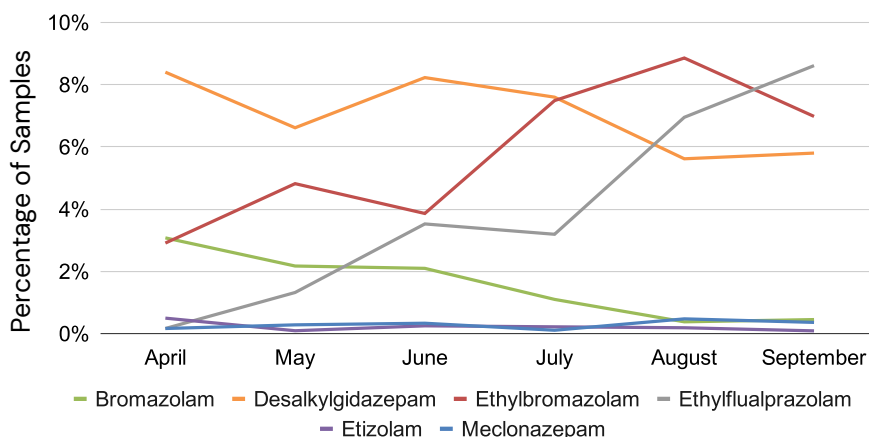
- In September, fluorofentanyl remained the most common fentanyl analog, detected by FTIR in **69.2%** of unregulated opioids checked (**766** samples).
- Conversely, fentanyl was detected **11.5%** (**127** samples). This decline may reflect that less fentanyl is circulating in the opioid supply, and/or that it is present in concentrations below the FTIR detection limit (<5%).
- Carfentanil was detected in **1** sample this month. Its true prevalence is expected to be higher, as carfentanil 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



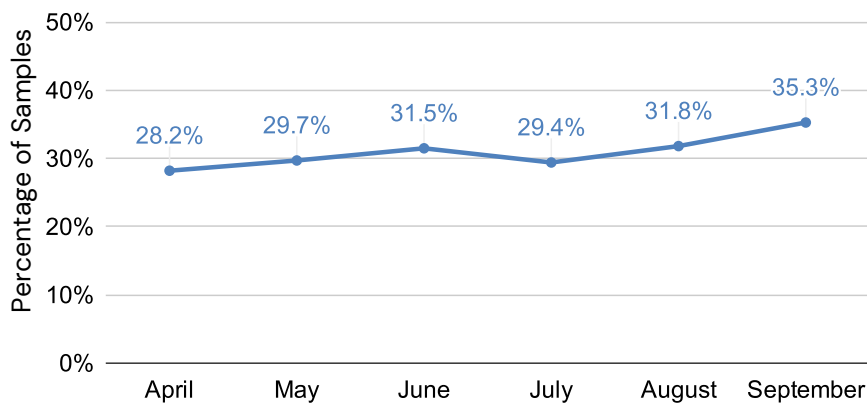
- During the month of September, the percentage of opioid samples testing positive for benzodiazepines decreased to **43.3%** (**495** samples of **1142** checked).
- Opioid samples are checked for benzodiazepine-positivity using BTNX test strips and the FTIR spectrometer. The true percentage may be 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 was the most common benzodiazepine detected by FTIR, found in **8.6%** of unregulated opioids checked (**95** samples), followed by ethylbromazepam (**7.0%**; **77** samples).
- The increase in novel benzodiazepines marks a shift from previous months as bromazepam and desalkylgidazepam detections have declined.
- Other novel benzodiazepines detected in September include 3-HO-desalkylgidazepam and meclonazepam.

Percentage of opioids testing positive for medetomidine, past 6 months

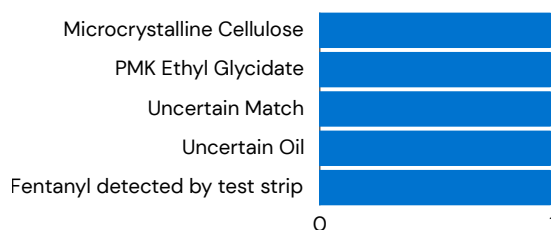


- In September, the percentage of unregulated opioids testing positive for medetomidine increased to **35.3% (389 of 1103)**.
- The majority of samples containing medetomidine were also positive for benzodiazepines (**261 of 389**).
- Unregulated opioids are checked for medetomidine-positivity using 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%).

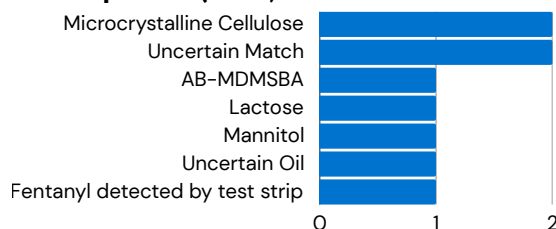
Components detected in pharmaceutical opioids

(where expected drug was not detected)

Oxycodone (N=2)



Hydromorphone (N=2)

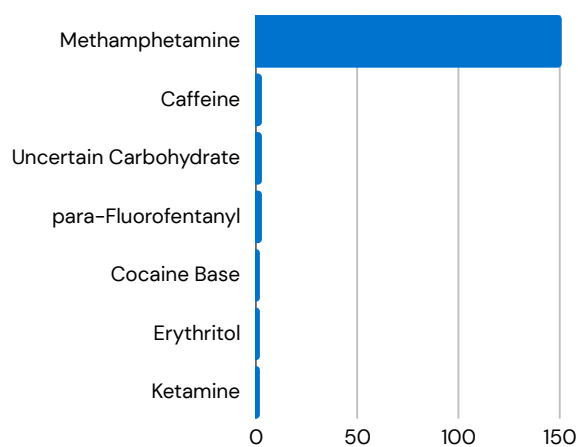


- In September, a total of **31** samples were submitted as pharmaceutical opioids. Of these, hydromorphone (Dilaudid) (**n=12**), oxycodone (OxyContin) (**n=12**), and acetaminophen + oxycodone (Percocet) (**n=5**) were most frequently submitted.
- Among samples expected to contain hydromorphone, **2** were determined to be counterfeit as they contained unexpected active ingredients: fentanyl/analogs detected by test strip, and AB-MDMSBA, a synthetic cannabinoid.
- Of the samples expected to contain oxycodone, **2** were determined to be counterfeit as they contained unexpected active ingredients: fentanyl/analogs detected by test strip, and PMK ethyl glycidate, an MDMA precursor.

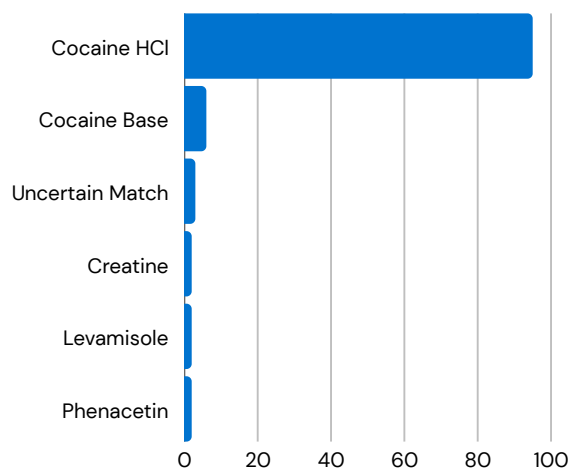
Non-Opioids

Components detected in stimulants

Components in methamphetamine (N=156)

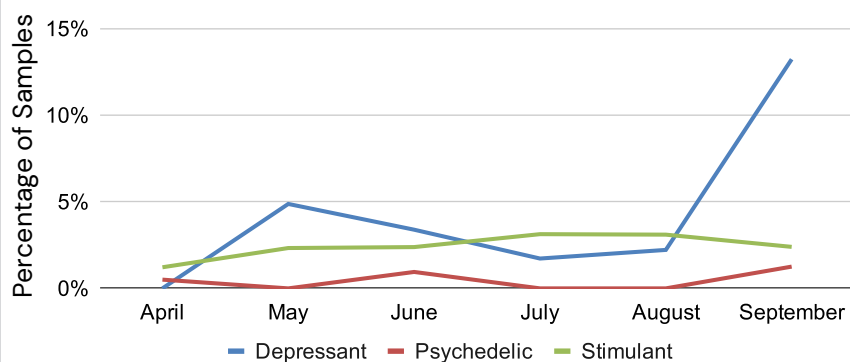


Components in cocaine (N=103)



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, **13.2%** of all depressants (**4** unknown benzodiazepines, **2** etizolam, **2** medetomidine, and **1** alprazolam sample) tested positive for fentanyl by FTIR and/or test strip.
- Additionally, **2.4%** of all stimulants (**6** methamphetamine, **3** crack cocaine, and **1** cocaine sample), and 1.3% of all psychedelic samples (**1** MDMA, **1** ketamine) also tested positive for fentanyl.
- Of these, **6** 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.

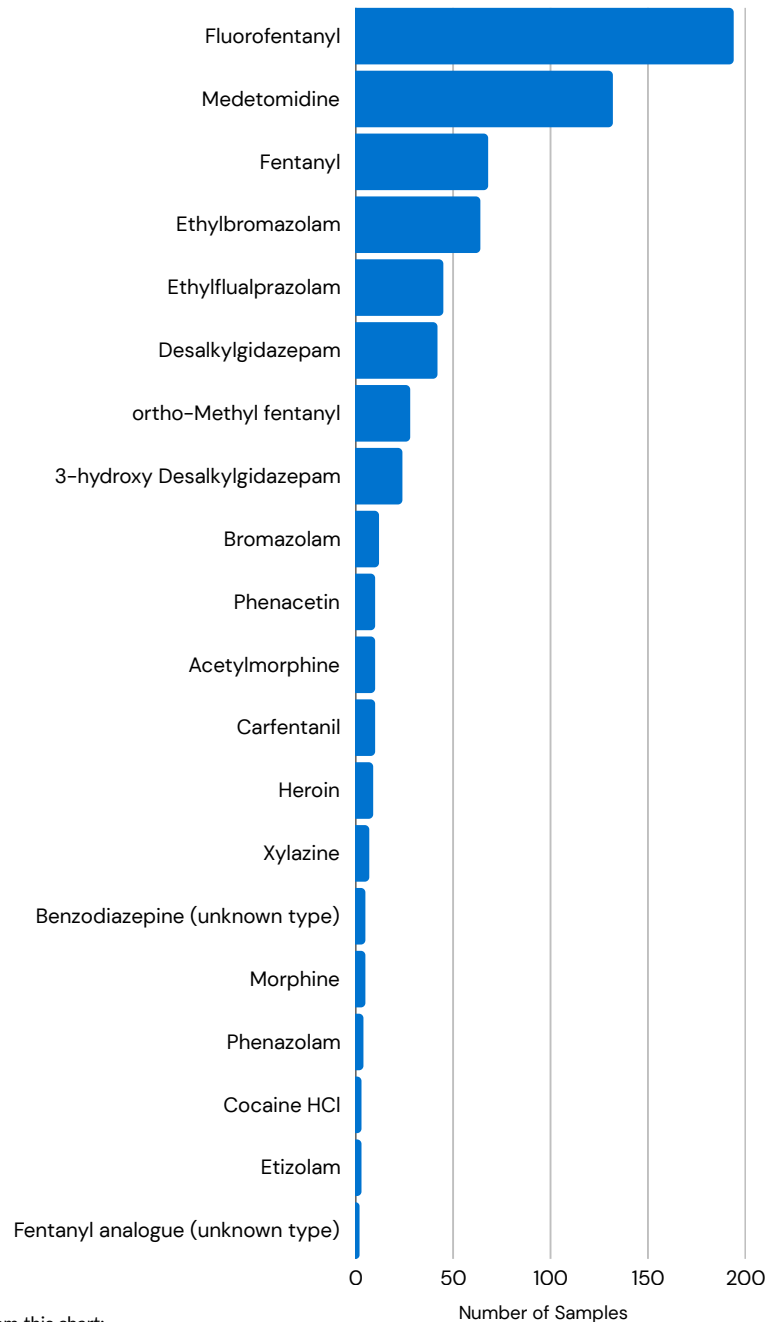
PSMS Secondary Testing Results Summary

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](#).

Total opioids sent to Substance

Health Authority	Number of Samples
Interior Health	116
Fraser Health	81
Northern Health	13
Island Health	12
Vancouver Coastal Health	2
Total	224

Active components detected (n=224)



To save space, additional components detected a single time have been omitted from this chart: Morphine, Acetylcodeine, Procaine, Unknown, Fentanyl or analogue.

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 15, 2026 Vancouver	Unknown	White powder in Vancouver tested positive for N-propionitrile 5-chloro desmethyl buporphine, a novel orphine analog.
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](#).