

Substance Drug Checking

Preliminary Results for March 2026

Substance Drug Checking on Vancouver Island offers free and confidential drug checking services in Victoria, Port Alberni, Comox Valley, Campbell River, Duncan, Port Hardy, and at local events. This report presents data about the drug supply on Vancouver Island for March 2026.

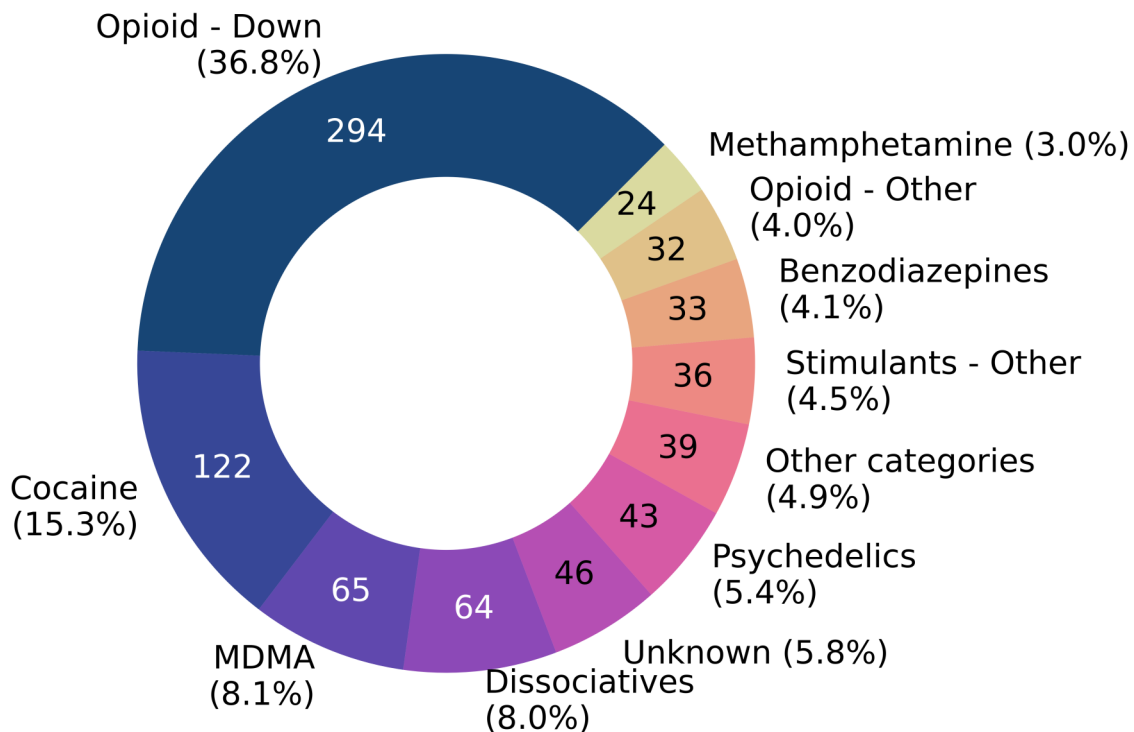
Highlighted findings:

- 50.0% (424/798) of samples were as expected with cuts or adulterants detected
- The median fentanyl concentration found across all drug categories was 7.3%
- The median fluorofentanyl concentration found across all drug categories was 6.1%
- Benzodiazepines were found in 24.1% (71/294) of expected Opioid - Down samples
 - Bromazolam was found in 26 Opioid - Down samples with a median concentration of 2.2% and maximum concentration of 25.9%
- Xylazine was found in 5 expected Opioid - Down samples with a median concentration of 3.7%
- Medetomidine was found in 47 expected Opioid - Down samples with a median concentration of 0.6% and a maximum concentration of 4.7%

798
Samples Tested
March 2026

What were people bringing to be checked?

Service users bring us a wide variety of substances that can be grouped into different drug classes. This pie chart aggregates the samples we checked by their “expected” substance (i.e. the drug category reported by the service user). The number of samples checked in each class is included inside each slice and the relative proportion of all samples checked is given in parentheses. These data are separated by collection location/method on the following page.

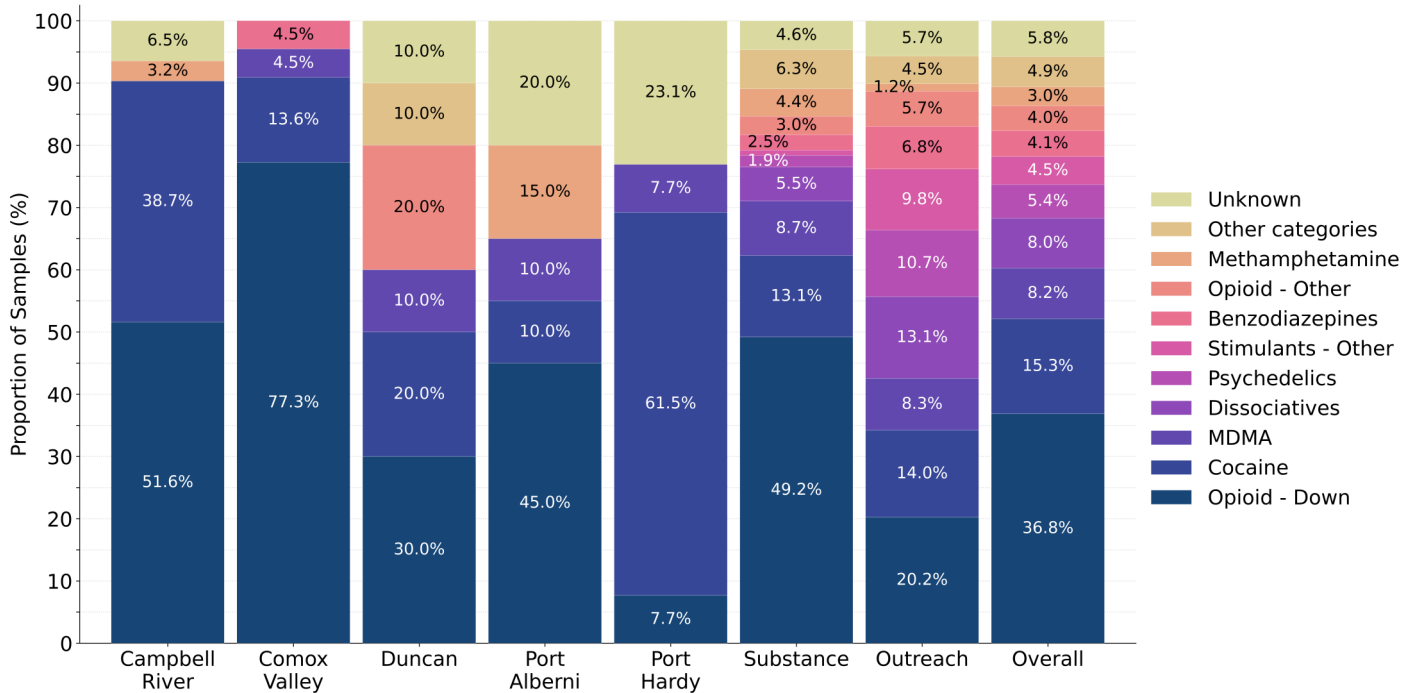


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What were people bringing to be checked by service model?

The “expected substance” data presented on the previous page can be separated by sample collection location/ method, where “Substance” samples are those brought directly to our Victoria storefront, “Campbell River”, “Comox Valley”, “Duncan”, “Port Alberni”, and “Port Hardy” are samples received through our distributed drug checking model, and “Outreach” samples are those collected at supported housing sites, at overdose prevention and supervised consumption locations, and through drop-off envelopes. The relative proportions of samples checked by expected class and location are shown in the figure below; sample counts are listed in the table at the bottom of this page.



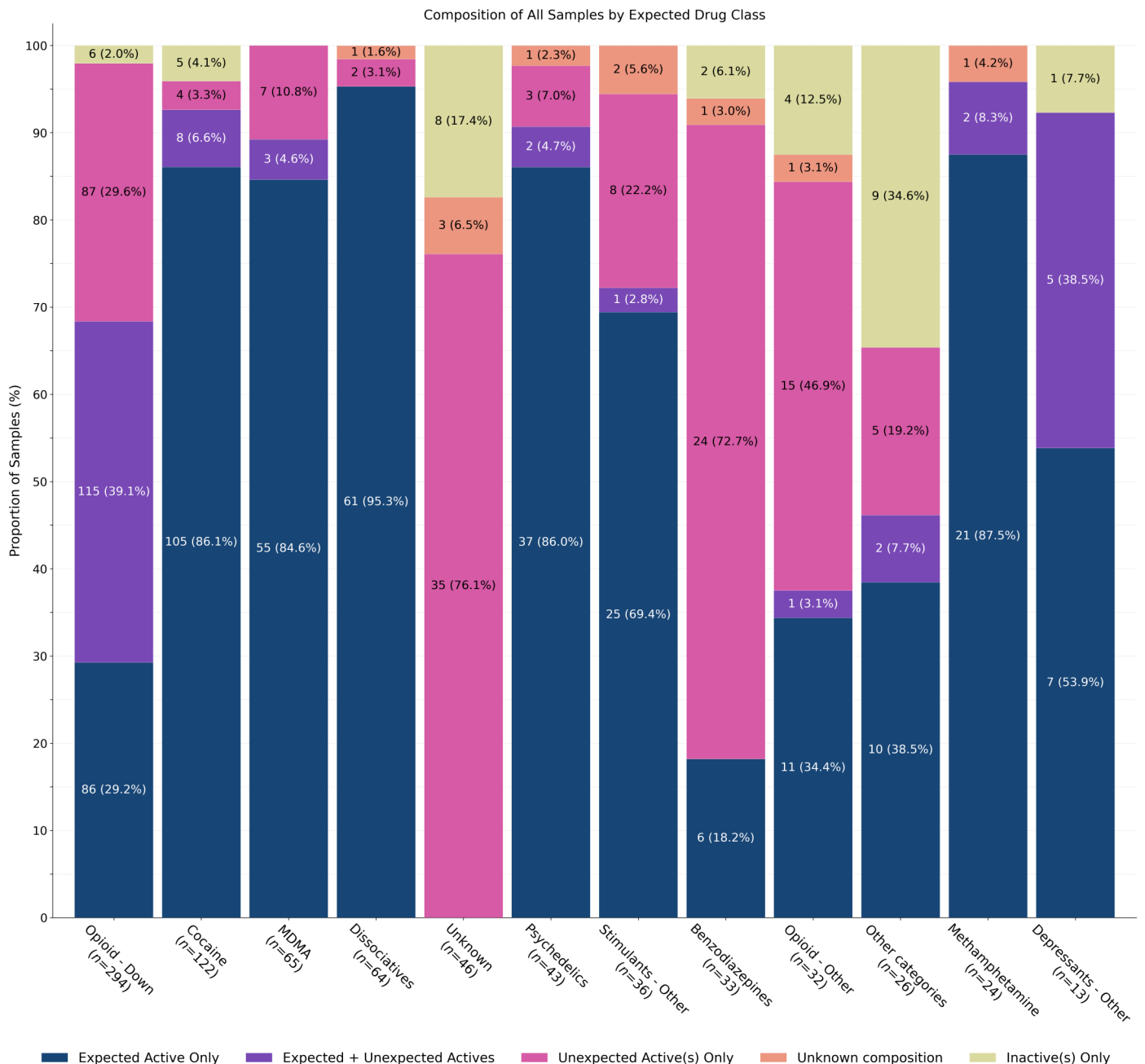
Expected Substance Class	Campbell River	Comox Valley	Duncan	Port Alberni	Port Hardy	Substance	Outreach	Overall
Opioid - Down	16	17	3	9	1	180	68	294
Cocaine	12	3	2	2	8	48	47	122
MDMA	0	1	1	2	1	32	28	65
Dissociatives	0	0	0	0	0	20	44	64
Psychedelics	0	0	0	0	0	7	36	43
Stimulants - Other	0	0	0	0	0	3	33	36
Benzodiazepines	0	1	0	0	0	9	23	33
Opioid - Other	0	0	2	0	0	11	19	32
Methamphetamine	1	0	0	3	0	16	4	24
Other categories	0	0	1	0	0	23	15	39
Unknown	2	0	1	4	3	17	19	46
Total	31	22	10	20	13	366	336	798

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What did we find?

We checked each sample to determine what active compounds and cutting agents were present. While a majority of samples contained the expected active drug, we also detected a number of other notable compounds that may cause unexpected effects. The figure below illustrates the proportions and numbers of samples checked in each drug category, separated by their expected drug class and colour coded by their composition. **Dark Blue** groups samples that were “as expected” with no other notable compounds *detected*, **Purple** groups samples that contained the expected drug *and* other unexpected active(s), **Magenta** groups samples that only contained unexpected active(s) (the expected drug was not found), **Salmon** groups samples where we were unable to determine the composition, and **Lime** displays samples where no active compounds were detected.



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Opioid - Down: What Did We Find?

In this section, we cover what we found in opioid - down samples at each collection location/model. The number of samples that contained the expected active and/or other notable components are listed. Samples where no detected actives have been excluded for brevity.

Opioid - Down	Campbell River	Comox Valley	Duncan	Port Alberni	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only				1	61	24
Fentanyl				1	61	24
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)	11	9	1	3	59	32
Acetylcodeine		2			5	1
Acetylmorphine [MAM, 6-MAM]		2			17	6
Benzodiazepine (unknown type)	2	1	1		2	
Bromazolam	7	6		3	1	3
Carfentanil	1		1		1	2
Clonazepam [Klonopin]					1	
Cocaine Base [crack, rock, hard]					1	2
Cocaine HCl [powder]	1	1			3	
Codeine [T3's / T4's]						1
Desalkylgidazepam	2	2			1	
Ethylbromazolam	1				10	1
Ethylflualprazolam					1	
Fentanyl	11	7	1	3	55	31
Flubromazepam	1					
Fluorofentanyl	5	1		2	30	17
Heroin		2			24	5
Ketamine				1		
Lidocaine						1
Medetomidine	10	5		2	2	6
Methamphetamine						2
Morphine		1			4	1
Nitazene (unknown type)					1	
Phenacetin				1		1

Data are preliminary. There were missing data for some samples. Instruments may not be able to detect all ingredients and certainty of interpretations may vary. Multiple substances may be present in one sample and substances may be present in trace concentrations. *Expected active component. "Benzodiazepine (unknown type)" and "Fentanyl or analogue" results are based on a positive strip test and are unconfirmed by paper spray.

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Opioid - Down: What Did We Find? (Continued)

Opioid - Down	Campbell River	Comox Valley	Duncan	Port Alberni	Substance	Outreach
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)	7	8	1	3	57	29
Phenazolam					3	2
Unknown					5	2
Xylazine		1			1	
ortho-Methyl fentanyl	1				5	4
Unexpected Active(s) Only	5	7	2	4	59	10
3-hydroxy Desalkylgidazepam		1				1
Acetylmorphine [MAM, 6-MAM]					2	
Benzodiazepine (unknown type)	1					1
Bromazolam	2	2	1	1		
Carfentanil					1	
Desalkylgidazepam		6	2		1	
Diphenhydramine [Benadryl]						1
Ethylbromazolam		2		2	4	1
Ethylflualprazolam	1	1		1		
Fentanyl Base					2	
Fentanyl analogue (unknown type)					1	
Fentanyl or analogue					3	1
Fluorofentanyl	5	7	2	4	46	7
Furanyl UF-17					2	
Heroin					2	
Ibuprofen					1	
Ketamine				1		
Medetomidine	1	3		2	15	1
Methamphetamine					1	
Oxycodone [Oxycontin]						1
Phenacetin	1			1	1	
Phenazolam		1	1		4	
Procaine					2	
Xylazine					3	
ortho-Methyl fentanyl					4	1

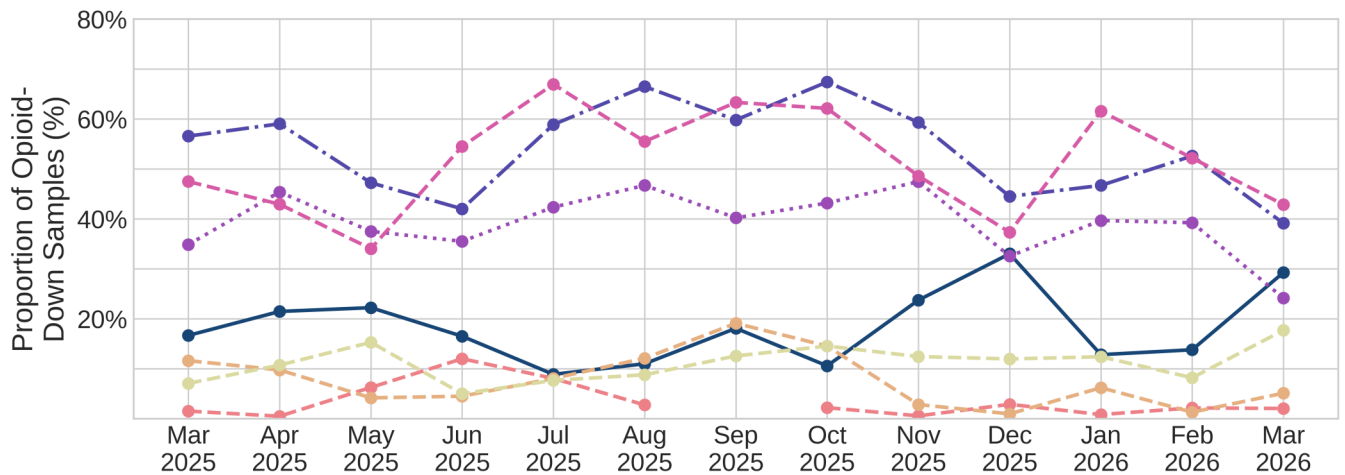
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Opioid - Down: Supply Trends

In this section we cover the opioid - down supply as a whole and take a look at the prevalence of different opioids and adulterants within the supply.

In March, 39.1% (115/294) of all opioid-down samples checked contained an additional active to the expected fentanyl/heroin. These data are shown in the figure below alongside the prevalence of benzos, fluorofentanyl, ortho-methyl fentanyl, carfentanil, and tranq (xylazine and/or medetomidine) in the down supply.



- Fentanyl/Heroin Only
- Additional active(s) detected
- Benzo(s) detected
- Fluorofentanyl detected
- Carfentanil detected
- Xylazine and/or Medetomidine detected
- ortho-Methyl Fentanyl detected

- 48.0% (141/294) of expected opioid-down samples contained fentanyl as the only active opioid
- 24.6% (70/294) of expected opioid-down samples contained fluorofentanyl as the only active opioid
- 33 samples contained heroin, 26 of which contained the related alkaloid acetylcodeine and/or acetylmorphine (MAM). In total, this represents 11.6% of all opioid - down samples.
 - 26/33 samples which contained heroin also contained fentanyl or a fentanyl analogue
- 6 expected opioid-down sample contained carfentanil
- 15 expected opioid - down samples contained ortho-methyl fentanyl
- 24.1% (71/294) of expected opioid-down samples contained a benzodiazepine
 - The most common benzodiazepine in opioid-down samples was bromazolam (26), followed by ethylbromazolam (21) and desalkylgidazepam (14). Other benzodiazepines were also detected and can be found in the [“Opioid - Down: What Did We Find?”](#) Section.
- Xylazine was detected in 5 opioid-down samples
- Medetomidine was detected in 16.0% (47/294) of opioid-down samples
- Nitazenes were not detected opioid - down samples during March

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Opioid - Down: Quantification

In March, we quantified fentanyl for 175 of the expected opioid-down samples¹ containing fentanyl and found the median concentration to be 9.0%². Though the median is a useful indicator, it doesn't capture the volatility of fentanyl concentrations present in the opioid supply, as half of fentanyl-positive down samples contained between 2.9% and 19.7% fentanyl, and any one sample might be the lowest strength (less than 0.1%) or the strongest (greater than 50%^{*}). Fluorofentanyl was quantified in 114 samples with concentrations ranging from less than 1% to greater than 50%, with a median concentration of 6.2%. Heroin, was quantified in 32 samples at a median concentration of 1.0%, with concentrations ranging from 0.3% to a maximum of greater than 50%. Medetomidine, was quantified in 41 samples and had concentrations ranging from 0.3% to 4.7%, with a median of 0.5%. Bromazolam, was quantified in 22 samples, with a median of 2.6%, and concentrations ranging from less than 0.1% to a maximum of 25.9%.

Compound	# Quant.	Median	Min	Max	IQR
Fentanyl	186	8.3%	<0.1%	>50.0%*	2.6% - 19.2%
Fluorofentanyl	119	6.1%	<0.1%	>50.0%*	2.1% - 12.0%
Medetomidine	46	0.6%	0.3%	4.7%	0.4% - 1.3%
Heroin	32	1.0%	0.3%	>50.0%*	0.8% - 1.7%
Acetylmorphine [MAM, 6-MAM]	27	0.4%	0.2%	>50.0%*	0.3% - 1.6%
Bromazolam	26	2.2%	<0.1%	25.9%	1.3% - 4.9%
Ethylbromazolam	20	2.7%	0.5%	10.0%	1.3% - 4.1%
ortho-Methyl fentanyl	14	3.5%	0.9%	>50.0%*	2.3% - 7.5%
Desalkylgizapam	14	3.8%	0.3%	19.8%	1.1% - 11.4%
Phenazepam	11	0.9%	0.4%	44.3%	0.6% - 2.8%
Acetylcodeine	8	1.4%	0.2%	3.4%	1.3% - 1.9%
Carfentanil	6	0.9%	0.1%	16.8%	0.2% - 2.2%
Morphine	6	8.4%	0.5%	12.3%	7.3% - 10.2%
Phenacetin	5	43.5%	3.5%	>50.0%*	29.2% - >50.0%
Xylazine	5	3.7%	2.0%	5.3%	2.0% - 4.9%
Fentanyl Base	2		10.1%	13.8%	
Furanyl UF-17	2		0.1%	0.3%	
Diphenhydramine [Benadryl]	1			>50.0%*	

¹Not all opioid down samples brought to our service can be quantified. This is primarily due to too limited sample collected for our instruments to report a reliable mass percentage. Nevertheless, qualitative detection is still possible.

²This number is specific to fentanyl quantified in opioid-down samples. The median concentration listed in the Key Findings at the beginning of this blog is inclusive of all samples checked, across all drug classes and unknown samples, that contained fentanyl.

*There is a maximum concentration limit that the PS-MS can quantify for each compound of interest. If a sample contains a higher percentage of a compound than the PS-MS's limits, then only the upper limit will be reported. Not all samples can be quantified.

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Opioid - Down: Quantification by Service Model

Here we examine the regional variability in the unregulated market. The table below expands on the data presented on the previous page and focuses only on select actives within *expected opioid-down samples*, separated by collection site. Weight percentage is reported; “IQR” is the interquartile range: the range that contains half of the quantified samples.

Service Model	Compound	# Quant.	Median	Min	Max	IQR
Campbell River 16 total down samples 81% (13/16) benzo-positive	Bromazolam	9	1.8%	0.6%	4.4%	1.4% - 2.1%
	Carfentanil	1		2.6%		
	Desalkylgidazepam	2		9.9%	11.9%	
	Ethylbromazolam	1		2.8%		
	Fentanyl	11	3.0%	1.1%	12.1%	1.9% - 4.6%
	Fluorofentanyl	8	8.5%	4.1%	39.2%	5.8% - 17.1%
	Medetomidine	10	0.6%	0.3%	1.2%	0.4% - 0.7%
Comox Valley 17 total down samples 82% (14/17) benzo-positive	ortho-Methyl fentanyl	1		7.6%		
	Bromazolam	8	13.6%	1.2%	22.1%	3.3% - 17.2%
	Desalkylgidazepam	8	3.4%	0.3%	12.3%	0.4% - 4.6%
	Ethylbromazolam	2		0.8%	2.2%	
	Fentanyl	7	23.7%	3.7%	30.6%	14.2% - 24.3%
	Fluorofentanyl	8	7.1%	1.2%	25.0%	2.4% - 9.8%
	Medetomidine	8	2.8%	0.3%	4.0%	1.6% - 3.6%
Duncan 3 total down samples 100% (3/3) benzo-positive	Xylazine	1		4.9%		
	Bromazolam	1		0.4%		
	Carfentanil	1		0.1%		
	Desalkylgidazepam	2		0.9%	1.7%	
	Fentanyl	1		1.3%		
Port Alberni 9 total down samples 67% (6/9) benzo-positive	Fluorofentanyl	2		3.3%	6.5%	
	Bromazolam	4	1.4%	0.6%	4.9%	0.9% - 2.5%
	Ethylbromazolam	2		1.7%	4.1%	
	Fentanyl	4	2.6%	1.3%	3.6%	2.2% - 2.9%
	Fluorofentanyl	6	10.9%	1.4%	36.8%	5.7% - 11.9%
Port Hardy 1 total down samples 0% (0/1) benzo-positive	Medetomidine	4	0.6%	0.4%	0.7%	0.6% - 0.6%
	No down samples were quantified this month					

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Opioid - Down: Quantification by Service Model (Continued)

Service Model	Compound	# Quant.	Median	Min	Max	IQR
Substance 180 total down samples 15% (27/180) benzo-positive	Bromazolam	1		4.9%		
	Carfentanil	2		0.5%	16.8%	
	Desalkylgidazepam	2		19.6%	19.8%	19.6% - 19.7%
	Ethylbromazolam	13	2.8%	0.5%	10.0%	1.4% - 6.5%
	Fentanyl	112	9.1%	0.2%	50.0%	3.5% - 18.8%
	Fluorofentanyl	71	5.0%	0.2%	38.2%	1.9% - 11.6%
	Medetomidine	17	0.4%	0.3%	3.6%	0.3% - 0.5%
	Xylazine	4	2.8%	2.0%	5.3%	2.0% - 4.1%
Outreach 68 total down samples 12% (8/68) benzo-positive	ortho-Methyl fentanyl	9	6.2%	1.1%	50.0%	2.4% - 13.0%
	Bromazolam	3	2.9%	0.0%	25.9%	
	Carfentanil	2		0.1%	1.3%	
	Ethylbromazolam	2		0.9%	2.6%	
	Fentanyl	51	8.8%	0.0%	50.0%	1.4% - 20.5%
	Fluorofentanyl	24	5.9%	0.0%	50.0%	1.6% - 14.4%
	Medetomidine	7	1.4%	0.4%	4.7%	1.2% - 2.2%
	ortho-Methyl fentanyl	4	2.0%	0.9%	4.1%	1.1% - 3.2%

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What did we find?

In this section, we cover what we found in samples from the remaining expected drug classes at each collection location/model. The number of samples that contained the expected active and/or other notable components are listed. Samples where no detected actives have been excluded for brevity.

Cocaine	Campbell River	Comox Valley	Duncan	Port Alberni	Port Hardy	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only	10	2	2	2	8	41	40
Cocaine Base	5	1	2			9	4
Cocaine HCl	5	1		2	8	32	36
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)	1					2	5
Cocaine Base* + Phenacetin	1						1
Cocaine HCl* + Levamisole						1	3
Cocaine HCl* + Phenacetin						1	
Cocaine HCl* + Tetramisole							1
Unexpected Active(s) Only						2	2
Fentanyl							1
Fluorofentanyl							1
Ketamine						1	
Nefopam						1	
Phenazolam							1
ortho-Methyl fentanyl							1

Methamphetamine	Campbell River	Port Alberni	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only	1	2	14	4
Methamphetamine	1	2	14	4
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)		1	1	
Methamphetamine* + Fentanyl or analogue			1	
Methamphetamine* + Fluorofentanyl		1		
Unknown Composition			1	
Unknown			1	

Data are preliminary. There were missing data for some samples. Instruments may not be able to detect all ingredients and certainty of interpretations may vary. Multiple substances may be present in one sample and substances may be present in trace concentrations. *Expected active component. "Benzodiazepine (unknown type)" and "Fentanyl or analogue" results are based on a positive strip test and are unconfirmed by paper spray.

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What did we find? (Continued)

MDMA	Comox Valley	Duncan	Port Alberni	Port Hardy	Substance	Out-reach
Expected Active Only	1	1	1		29	23
MDA						1
MDMA	1	1	1		29	22
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)					2	1
MDA* + MDMA					1	
MDMA* + MDA					1	1
Unexpected Active(s) Only			1	1	1	4
2C-B					1	
Fluorofentanyl			1			
MDA				1		3
MDMA						1

Dissociatives	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only	20	41
2-FXiPr		1
3-HO-PCP		1
DMXE [Deoxymethoxetamine]		3
Deschloroketamine [DXE, DCK, 2-O-PCM]		1
Fluorexetamine [FXE]		2
Ketamine	20	29
MXPCP		1
O-PCE [Deschloro-N-ethyl-ketamine]		3
Unexpected Active(s) Only		2
2-fluoro-2-oxo-PCE [2F-NENDCK, CanKet]* + Arylcyclohexylamine (unknown type)		1
Unknown Composition		1
Unknown		1

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What did we find? (Continued)

Psychedelics	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only	5	32
2C-B	3	8
2C-C		1
2C-D		2
2C-E		2
2C-I		2
4-AcO-DMT [O-Acetylpsilocin]		1
4-HO-MET [Metocin, Colour]		1
4-PrO-DMT		1
5-MeO-DMT		1
5-MeO-MALT		1
Tucibi (Cocaine HCl [powder], Ketamine, MDMA)		1
DMT [Dimethyltryptamine]		1
LSD [acid]	2	6
Mescaline		2
Methallylescaline		1
Tryptamine (unknown type)		1
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)		2
2C-B* + Unknown		1
Tucibi* (Cocaine HCl + Ketamine + MDMA +Methamphetamine)		1
Unexpected Active(s) Only	2	1
4-HO-MiPT [Miprocin]		1
MDA	1	
MDMA	1	
Unknown Composition		1
Unknown		1

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What did we find? (Continued)

Benzodiazepines	Comox Valley	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only	1		5
Alprazolam [Xanax]			2
Deschloroetizolam			1
Diazepam [Valium]			1
Ethylflualprazolam			1
Phenazolam	1		
Unexpected Active(s) Only		9	15
Benzodiazepine (unknown type)			2
Bromazolam			3
Citalopram			1
Desalkylgizapam		3	1
Ethylbromazolam		1	2
Ethylflualprazolam		2	1
Fentanyl		2	
Fentanyl or analogue		2	2
Flualprazolam			2
Phenazolam		3	3
Unknown		2	1
ortho-Methyl fentanyl		2	
Unknown Composition			1
Unknown			1

Data are preliminary. There were missing data for some samples. Instruments may not be able to detect all ingredients and certainty of interpretations may vary. Multiple substances may be present in one sample and substances may be present in trace concentrations. *Expected active component. "Benzodiazepine (unknown type)" and "Fentanyl or analogue" results are based on a positive strip test and are unconfirmed by paper spray.

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What did we find? (Continued)

Opioid - Other	Duncan	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only		5	6
Acetaminophen [Paracetamol, Tylenol]			1
Hydromorphone [Dilaudid, Dillies]		3	2
Morphine		1	1
Oxycodone [Oxycontin]		1	3
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)		1	
Codeine* + Diclofenac		1	
Unexpected Active(s) Only	2	4	9
Benzodiazepine (unknown type)	2		
Codeine [T3's / T4's]		1	
Diclofenac [Voltaren]		1	
Diphenhydramine [Benadryl]		2	
Fentanyl	2		1
Fentanyl analogue (unknown type)			1
Fentanyl or analogue			2
Fluorofentanyl		1	1
Medetomidine		1	
N-Pyrrolidino Ethylene Isotonitazene			2
N-desethyl etonitazene			1
Nitazene (unknown type)			2
Unknown Composition			1
Unknown			1

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What did we find? (Continued)

Other categories	Substance	Outreach
Expected Active Only	10	29
2-FMA		1
2-MMC		1
3-FPM		1
3-MMC [Metaphedrone]		8
4-MMC [Mephedrone]	2	5
5-APB		1
Dextroamphetamine [Dexedrine]	1	
Gabapentin	1	
MDPM		1
Medetomidine	1	
Methaqualone [Quaaludes]	1	1
Modafinil		1
Oxandrolone	1	
Phenobarbital		1
Pregabalin		2
Sildenafil [Viagra]		2
Stanozolol	1	
THCA		1
Tadalafil [Cialis]		3
Trenbolone	1	
Trenbolone enanthate	1	
Expected* + Unexpected Active(s)	7	1
3-MMC [Metaphedrone]* + Cathinone (unknown type)		1
Boldenone* + Trenbolone enanthate	1	
Trenbolone* + Trenbolone enanthate	1	
GHB* + GBL	1	
Medetomidine* + Benzodiazepine (unknown type), Fentanyl or analogue	1	
Medetomidine* + Benzodiazepine (unknown type)	1	
Medetomidine* + Fentanyl or analogue	1	
Medetomidine* + Benzodiazepine (unknown type), Fentanyl	1	

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What did we find? (Continued)

Other Categories (Continued)	Substance	Outreach
Unexpected Active(s) Only	4	9
2-MMC		1
Acetaminophen [Paracetamol, Tylenol]	1	
Chlorodehydromethyltestosterone	1	
Clomiphene	1	
LSD [acid]	1	
MDMA	1	
Methamphetamine		7
Naproxen		1
Sildenafil [Viagra]	1	
Unknown Composition		2
Unknown		2

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What did we find? (Continued)

Unknown	Campbell River	Comox Valley	Duncan	Port Alberni	Port Hardy	Substance	Outreach
Unexpected Active(s) Only	1		1	4		12	17
2-MMC							1
3-MMC [Metaphedrone]							1
4-CMC [Clephedrone]							1
4-MMC [Mephedrone]							2
Acetylcodeine							1
Acetylmorphine [MAM, 6-MAM]							2
Aspirin						1	
Bromazolam			1				
Carfentanil				1			
Celecoxib [Celebrex]				2			
Desalkylgidazepam							2
Ethylbromazolam						1	1
Ethylflualprazolam				2			
Fentanyl	1		1				3
Fentanyl or analogue							1
Flubromazolam							1
Fluorofentanyl	1			1		1	5
Fluorofentanyl Base				1			
Heroin							2
Ketamine						5	2
MDA						1	
MDMA						1	
Medetomidine	1		1				1
Methamphetamine						2	2
Morphine							1
Phenazolam							3
Stanozolol						1	
Tramadol						1	
Unknown Composition					1	1	1
Unknown					1	1	1

Substance Drug Checking

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Opioid-Positivity in Non-opioid-down Samples

In March, we checked 458 samples that were not expected to contain fentanyl or other “unexpected” opioids¹. Since the opioid-down supply is no longer “just heroin” or “just fentanyl” and is instead a complex, potent, and ever-changing polysubstance market containing other synthetic opioids like fluorofentanyl or nitazenes, here we will examine the prevalence of *any* unexpected opioid, not just fentanyl, detected in non-opioid-down samples.

Expected Substance Class	Total Samples	Total Opioid Positive (% of total expected)	Samples Containing Expected Active (% of Total Samples in Class)	Contains Expected Active & Opioid Positive (% of Confirmed Expected in Class)
Cocaine	122	2 (1.6%)	113 (92.6%)	0 (0.0%)
MDMA	65	1 (1.5%)	58 (89.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Dissociatives	64	0 (0.0%)	61 (95.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Psychedelics	43	0 (0.0%)	39 (90.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Stimulants - Other	36	0 (0.0%)	26 (72.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Benzodiazepines	33	6 (18.2%)	6 (18.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Opioid - Other	32	12 (37.5%)	12 (37.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Other	26	0 (0.0%)	12 (46.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Methamphetamine	24	2 (8.3%)	23 (95.8%)	2 (8.7%)
Depressants - Other	13	3 (23.1%)	12 (92.3%)	3 (25.0%)
Total	458	26 (5.7%)	362 (79.0%)	5 (1.4%)

Examining the above table, we find that 26 samples tested positive for unexpected opioids in March, representing 5.7% of all non-opioid-down samples checked. To see which samples contained unexpected opioids, please see the tables in the respective subsections of the [“What Did We Find?”](#) Section.

In March, no unexpected opioids were detected in samples expected to be dissociatives, psychedelics, stimulants - other, or other.

¹Specifically, we are excluding samples that were expected to be “opioid-down” or samples that had an “unknown/missing” expected composition. In the case of “opioid-other” samples, e.g. hydromorphone tablets and oxycodone pills, “unexpected opioids” are defined as any opioid that is not the expected opioid.

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Overall Quantification

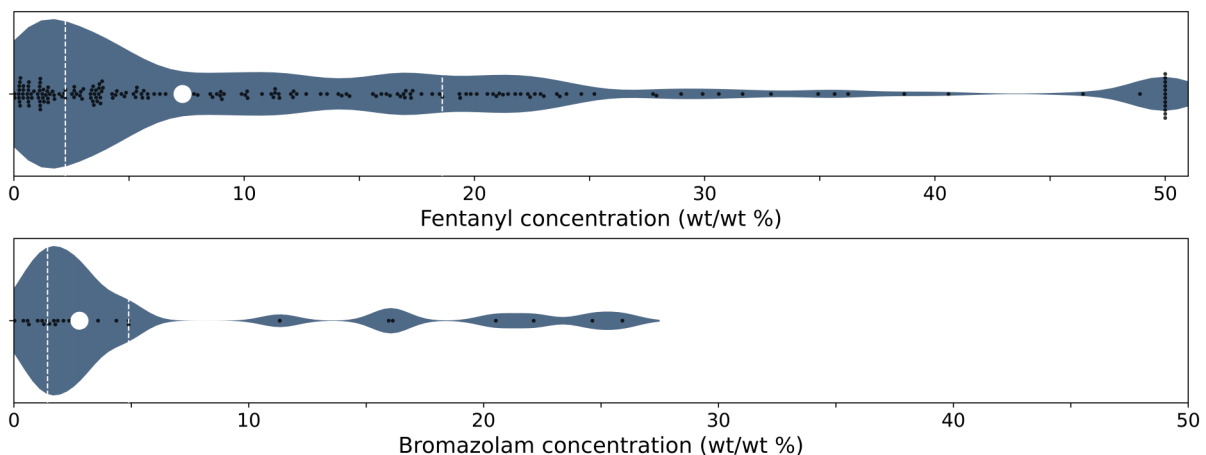
Using paper spray mass spectrometry (PS-MS) data, we were able to quantify low concentration compounds. These aggregate values are *inclusive to all expected drug categories* in which the active drugs are found. Weight percentage is reported below. "IQR" is the interquartile range: the concentration range that contains half of the quantified samples.

Compound	# Quant.	Median	Min	Max	IQR
Fentanyl	186	8.3%	<0.1%	>50.0%*	2.6% - 19.2%
Fluorofentanyl	119	6.1%	<0.1%	>50.0%*	2.1% - 12.0%
Medetomidine	46	0.6%	0.3%	4.7%	0.4% - 1.3%
Heroin	32	1.0%	0.3%	>50.0%*	0.8% - 1.7%
Acetylmorphine [MAM, 6-MAM]	27	0.4%	0.2%	>50.0%*	0.3% - 1.6%
Bromazolam	26	2.2%	<0.1%	25.9%	1.3% - 4.9%
Ethylbromazolam	20	2.7%	0.5%	10.0%	1.3% - 4.1%
ortho-Methyl fentanyl	14	3.5%	0.9%	>50.0%*	2.3% - 7.5%
Desalkylgidazepam	14	3.8%	0.3%	19.8%	1.1% - 11.4%
Phenazolam	11	0.9%	0.4%	44.3%	0.6% - 2.8%
Acetylcodeine	8	1.4%	0.2%	3.4%	1.3% - 1.9%
Carfentanil	6	0.9%	0.1%	16.8%	0.2% - 2.2%
Morphine	6	8.4%	0.5%	12.3%	7.3% - 10.2%

*There is a maximum concentration limit that the PS-MS can quantify for each compound of interest. If a sample contains a higher percentage of a compound than the PS-MS's limits, then only the upper limit will be reported. Not all samples can be quantified.

Distribution of Fentanyl and Bromazolam Concentrations

The concentrations of fentanyl and bromazolam for every sample quantified across *all expected drug categories and service models* are illustrated below to highlight the variability in the unregulated drug market. **Black Dots** are individual samples, the large **white dot** marks the median concentration, the **dashed white lines** bound half of the quantified samples (IQR), and the **width** of the coloured region is proportional to the number of samples in a concentration range.



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Additional Services

At Substance we provide access to other services in addition to drug checking. These include but are not limited to access to harm reduction supplies (bubble pipes, naloxone, test strip kits, etc.), general support, referrals to substance use programs and to other agencies. During the month of March, our staff handled 896 of these interactions, in addition to, checking 798 samples.

Substance Drug Checking is based out of the University of Victoria and operates community-wide drug checking services within Campbell River, the Comox Valley, Duncan, Port Alberni, Port Hardy, and Victoria, BC. We are continuing to offer drug checking services in response to the dual public health emergencies, and exploring new ways to better reach those who may benefit from this service. We have partnered with Dr. Chris Gill and the team at Vancouver Island University to improve detection and reporting using their methods for the paper spray - mass spectrometer.

Our project works on Indigenous land. We provide drug checking, harm reduction education and support across many territories on what is colonially known as 'Vancouver Island.' We also act as a resource for these services across the province colonially known as 'British Columbia.' We honour and offer respect to many nations for their stewardship, care and leadership on these lands.

Our project originated on the territories of the ləkʷəŋən speaking peoples, including the Songhees and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nations, and the W̱SÁNEĆ (Saanich) Nations on whose land the University of Victoria is located. Some of the territories we are honoured to work across specifically include: Halalt, Lyackson, Meluxulh (Malahat), Puneluxutth', Quw'utsun, Stz-uminus, and Ts'uubaa-asatx; Hupačasath and Tshesahht; K'ómoks; and Laich-kwil-tach.

We acknowledge the inextricable links between research, colonization and racism against Indigenous peoples, which continue to this date. Ending the violence faced by people who use drugs cannot be achieved without actively working on decolonization.

For more information please visit: substance.uvic.ca

We gratefully acknowledge our partners on this project



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BC Ministry of Health



BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions



BC SUPPORT Unit Vancouver Island Centre



Canadian Institute for Health Research



Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research



Digital Research Alliance of Canada



Island Health Authority



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SOLID Outreach



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