

Drug Checking in Vancouver Coastal Health April 2019

This report summarizes key indicators for Fourier Transform Infrared (FT-IR)/fentanyl test strip combination drug checking done in Vancouver Coastal Health in April 2019.

As the FT-IR spectrometer has a detection limit of 3-4% by weight (Sherman et al., 2018), unless otherwise stated, a drug check on any given sample consists of both Bruker ALPHA Fourier-Transform Infrared (FT-IR) spectrometer and BTNX fentanyl immunoassay test strip testing done in combination. When applicable, BTNX benzodiazepine or lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) immunoassay test strips are also used.

Please note that these data are not finalized and are subject to change.

Vancouver Coastal Health and the BCCSU gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the following partners:

- *Portland Hotel Society*
- *Molson Overdose Prevention Site*
- *SisterSpace*
- *Overdose Prevention Society*
- *Lookout Society*
- *St. Paul's Overdose Prevention Site*
- *Karmik*

- In April 2019, 503 drug checks were completed on samples in Vancouver Coastal Health
- The majority of samples tested were expected by clients to be either opioids (295 or 58.6%), psychedelics (105 or 20.9%), or stimulants (70 or 13.9%)

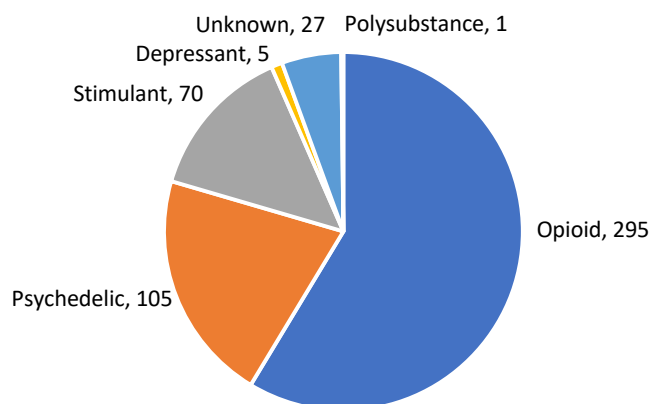


Figure 1. Number of drug checks performed in VCH in April 2019, by expected drug category



Table 1. Number of drugs checks and hours at each respective site in VCH

Location	Number of Drug Checks	Hours
Insite	201	43
Molson OPS	164	32
Overdose Prevention Society	42	24
St. Paul's OPS	19	21
SisterSpace	6	6
Powell Street Getaway	9	10
Robert and Lily Lee Family CHC	62	12
Total	503	148

Depressant may include: benzodiazepines, GHB, zopiclone

Opioid may include: “down,” heroin, fentanyl, fentanyl analogues, pharmaceutical opioids

Polysubstance includes: cross-category mixtures

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

Stimulant may include: “speed”, crystal meth, cocaine, cathinones

Unknown includes: all samples in which the client could not identify the expected substance

Table 2. Number of samples that matched client expectation using FTIR/test strip drug checking in Vancouver Coastal Health in April 2019, by expected drug category

	Depressant	Opioid	Psychedelic	Stimulant	Polysubstance	Unknown	Total
True	3	266	95	69	1	0	434
False	1	29	8	0	0	0	38
N/A	1	0	2	1	0	27	31
Total	5	295	105	70	1	27	503

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

Table 3. Number of opioid samples that matched client expectation using FTIR/test strip drug checking in Vancouver Coastal Health in April 2019, by expected drug

	Fentanyl	Heroin	Fentanyl & Heroin	Fentanyl analogue	Opium	Pharmaceutical	'Down'*	Total
True	225	15	4	1	0	0	21	266
False	18	3	3	0	0	0	5	29
N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	243	18	7	1	0	0	26	295

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

- 151 opioid samples (51.2%) tested positive for fentanyl using the FT-IR spectrometer
- **The total fentanyl positivity rate in opioid samples was 88.8%**
- Of the 68 stimulant samples, 1 (1.5%) tested positive for fentanyl
- Of the 44 psychedelic samples, 0 (0.0%) tested positive for fentanyl

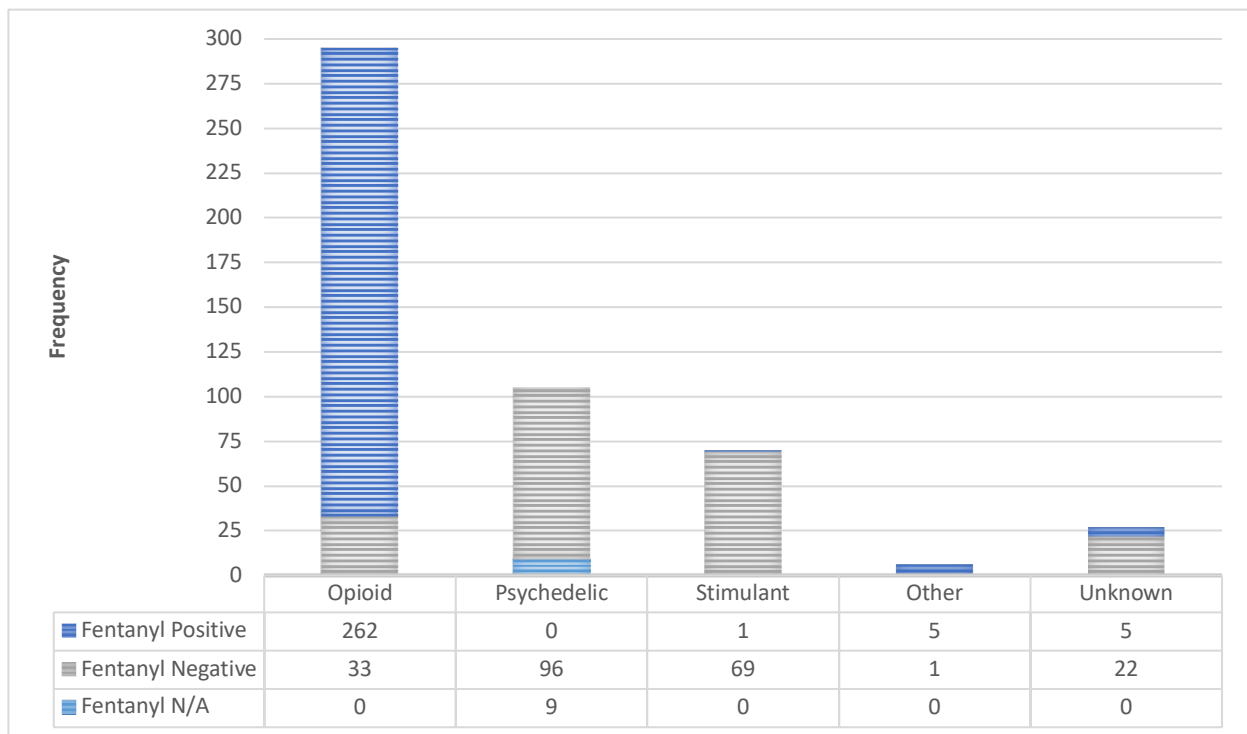


Figure 2. Number of drug checking samples that tested positive and negative for fentanyl in Vancouver Coastal Health, in April 2019, by expected drug category

Table 4. Public health notifications of drug checking results in VCH in April 2019

Date & Location	Expected Drug	FT-IR Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Lab Analysis	Outcome
9-Apr 2019 MOPS	Heroin	Heroin with approx. 25% Dextromethorphan	Negative	N/A	RADAR alert
17-Apr 2019 Insite	Cocaine	Cocaine with approx. 25% Methamphetamine	Negative	N/A	RADAR alert

For more immediate notifications of concerning drug checking results, subscribe to VCH's Real-time Drug Alert and Response System (RADAR) by texting "alert" to (236) 999-DOPE (3673)