

Drug Checking in British Columbia January 2019

This report summarizes key indicators for Fourier Transform Infrared (FT-IR)/fentanyl test strip combination drug checking done in British Columbia in January 2019.

As the FT-IR spectrometer has a detection limit of 3-4% by weight (Sherman 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.

- In January 2019, 610 drug checks were completed on samples in British Columbia
 - 530 drug checks were completed in Vancouver Coastal Health region
 - 46 drug checks were completed in Fraser Health region
 - 34 drug checks were completed in Interior Health Region
- The majority of samples tested were expected by clients to be either opioids (401 or 65.7%), stimulants (85 or 13.9%), or psychedelics (54 or 8.9%).

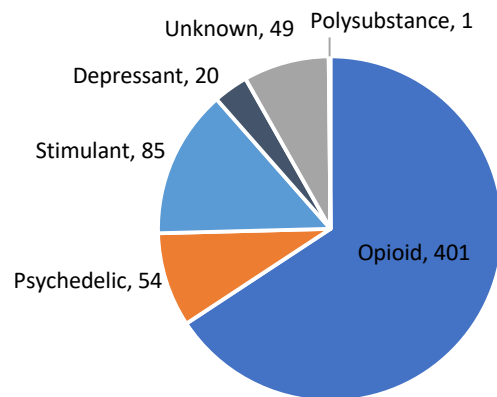


Figure 1. Number of drug checks performed in BC in January 2019, by expected drug category

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



Figure 2. Number of samples that matched client expectation using FTIR/test strip drug checking in British Columbia in January 2019, by expected drug category

	Depressant	Opioid	Polysubstance	Psychedelic	Stimulant	Unknown	Total
True	13	357	1	50	80	0	500
False	7	39	0	2	3	0	51
N/A	0	5	0	2	2	49	59
Total	20	401	1	54	85	49	610

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

Figure 3. Number of opioid samples that matched client expectation using FTIR/test strip drug checking in British Columbia in January 2019, by expected drug

	Fentanyl	Heroin	Fentanyl & Heroin	Fentanyl analogue	Pharmaceutical	'Down'*	Total
True	265	18	2	1	0	71	357
False	16	12	3	1	2	5	39
N/A	2	0	0	0	2	1	5
Total	283	30	5	2	4	77	401

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*

- 246 opioid samples (61.3%) tested positive for fentanyl using the FT-IR spectrometer.
- **The total fentanyl positivity rate in opioid samples was 88.7%.**
- Of the 85 stimulant samples and 54 psychedelic samples, 1 (0.7%) tested positive for fentanyl using a test strip.

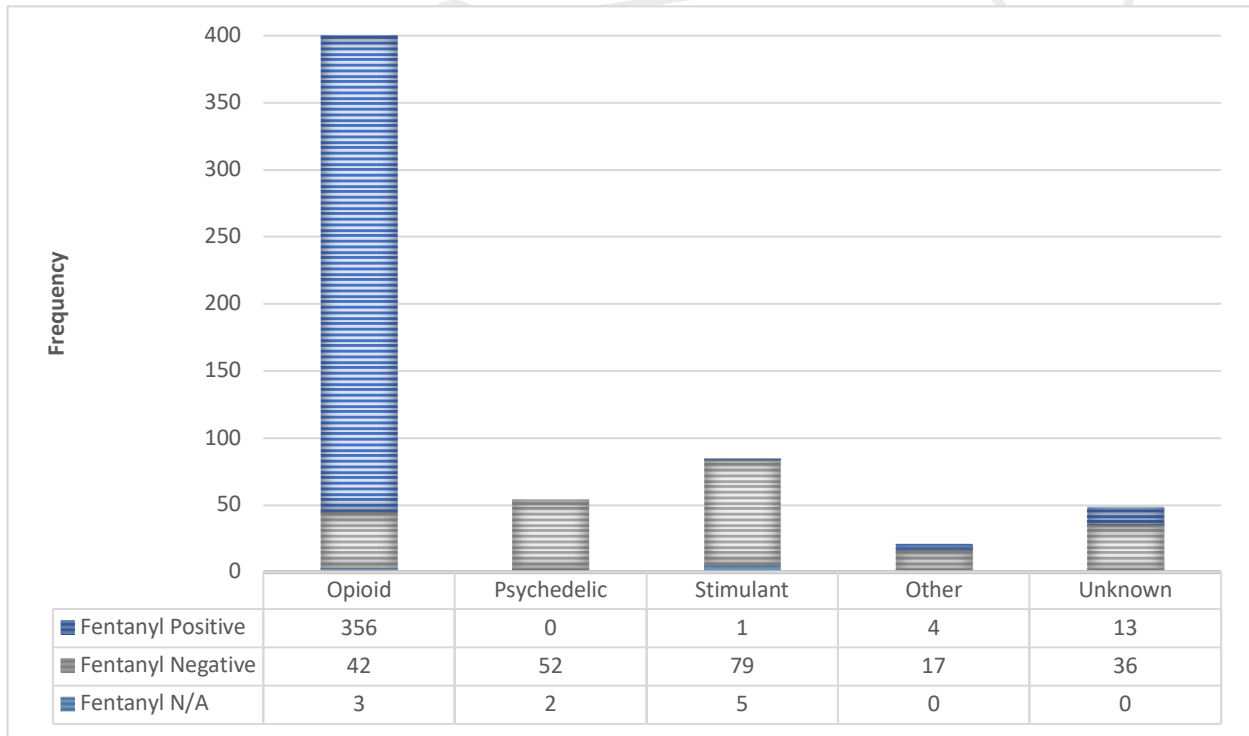


Figure 4. Number of drug checking samples that tested positive and negative for fentanyl in British Columbia, in January 2019, by expected drug category

Figure 5. Public health notifications of drug checking results in British Columbia in January 2019

Date & Location	Expected Drug	FT-IR Drugs Detected	Fentanyl Strip	Lab Analysis	Outcome
8-Jan 2019 MOPS	'Down'	AMB-FUBINACA	Positive	N/A (MOPS)	RADAR alert
10-Jan 2019 MOPS	Alprazolam (Xanax)	None	Positive	N/A (MOPS)	Email notification
14-Jan 2019 Insite	'Down'	AMB-FUBINACA	Positive	TBD	RADAR alert
15-Jan 2019 MOPS	Alprazolam (Xanax)	None	Positive	N/A (MOPS)	Email notification
23-Jan 2019 Insite	Unknown	N-ethylpentylone & MDMA	Negative	TBD	RADAR alert
24-Jan 2019 SafePoint	Alprazolam (Xanax)	None	Negative	U-47700 & 5F-ADB	FHA Overdose Alert