

**Inclusion Criteria:** This report summarizes all deaths that occurred between January 1, 2012 and November 30, 2020 for which fentanyl or its analogues were detected, whether alone or in combination with other drugs, and the death resulted from illicit drug use<sup>[1]</sup>. In the majority of deaths, fentanyl or its analogues<sup>[2]</sup> were detected in combination with other drugs. Deaths were excluded if the fentanyl was known to be prescribed or the death was suspected to be due to intentional self-harm.

This data has been compiled to better understand overall illicit drug toxicity death trends in British Columbia and to inform other agencies' public safety strategies in a timely manner.<sup>[1]</sup> Please see the BC Coroners Service website for a summary of illicit drug toxicity deaths: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/death-investigation/statistical-reports>. **Note that fentanyl-detected data is subject to change as further test results become available.**

### Summary 2020:

- There were approximately 118 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths with fentanyl detected in November 2020. *Note that this data will change as further toxicology results are received for recent months.*
- Post-mortem toxicology results suggest that there has been a greater number of cases with extreme fentanyl concentrations in April-November 2020 compared with previous months (concentrations exceeded >50ug/L (micrograms/litre). From April-November, approximately 13% of cases had extreme fentanyl concentrations as compared to 8% from Jan 2019 to March 2020.
- In Apr-Nov 2020, 18% of fentanyl-detected illicit drug toxicity deaths in Vancouver Coastal Health had extreme fentanyl concentrations (>50ug/L) followed by 13% in Fraser Health and 12% in Interior and Island Health.
- Approximately 83% of illicit drug toxicity deaths in B.C. in 2020 have fentanyl detected (1,288 of 1,548 deaths, based on preliminary data and pending further results).
- Carfentanil has been detected in 55 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths to date in 2020, with 49 deaths in Jun-Nov 2020.
- Approximately 70% of those dying in 2020 were aged 30 to 59, with 89% between 19 and 59. Males accounted for 82% of all deaths during this period.

- Fraser Health Authority had the highest number (425) of illicit drug toxicity deaths with fentanyl detected in 2020, followed by Vancouver Coastal Health (361) and Island Health Authority (214).<sup>[3],[4]</sup>
- The Health Service Delivery Areas with the most fentanyl-detected illicit drug toxicity deaths in 2020 were Vancouver (318), Fraser South (202), Fraser North (131), South Vancouver Island (120), and Okanagan (96). When looking at individual townships over the same time period, the highest numbers of deaths were seen in Vancouver, Surrey and Victoria.<sup>[3-5]</sup>
- Preliminary data for 2020 suggest that the proportion of apparent illicit drug toxicity deaths with fentanyl detected (alone or in combination with other drugs) is at least 83%.

Figure 1: Percent of Illicit Drug Deaths with Fentanyl Detected

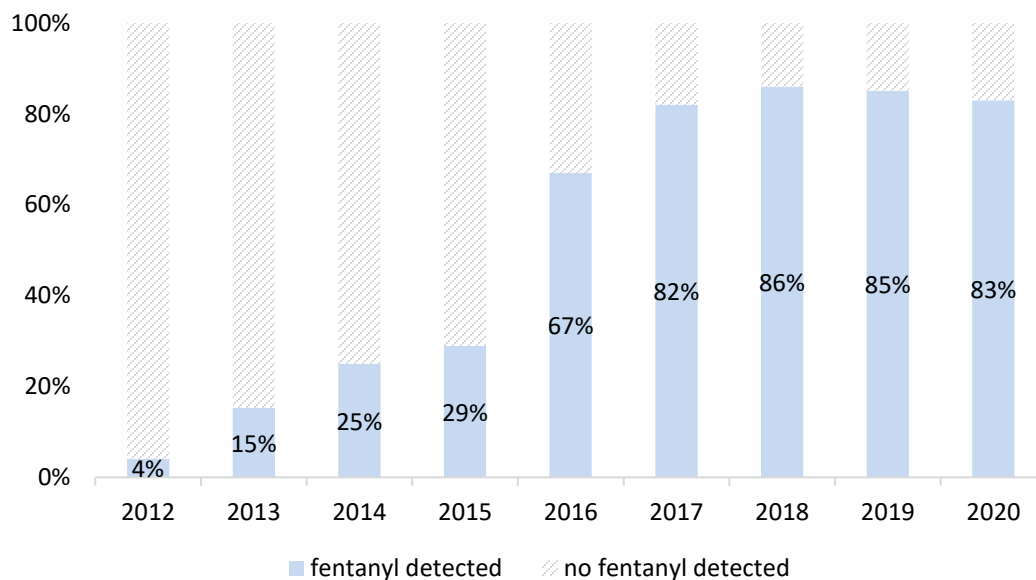


Figure 3: Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths with Carfentanil Detected

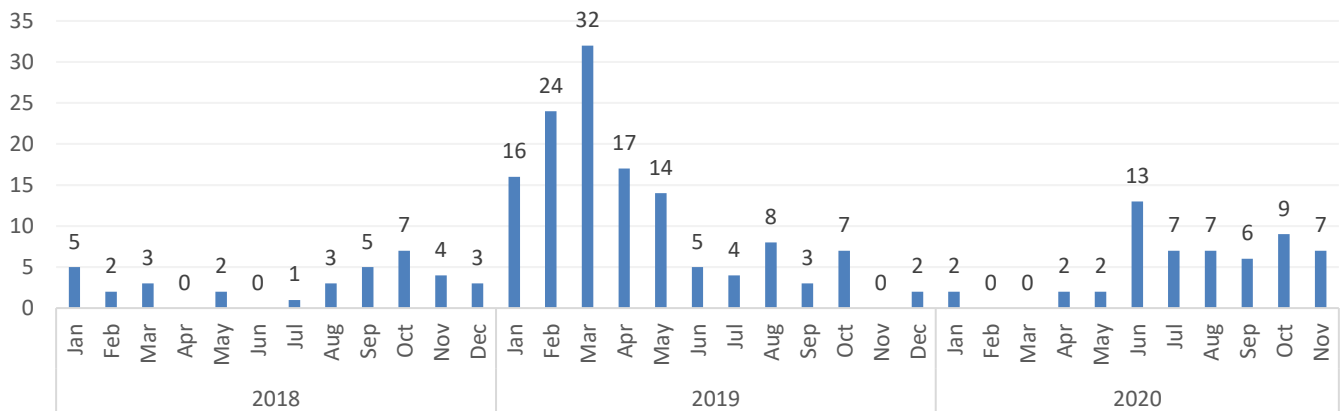


Figure 4: Percent of Fentanyl Detected Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths with Fentanyl Concentrations >50ug/L

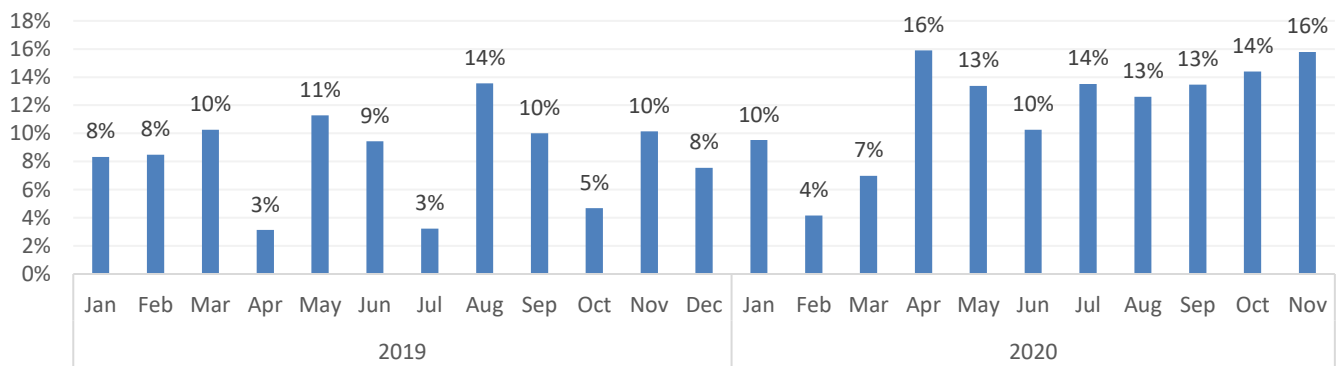
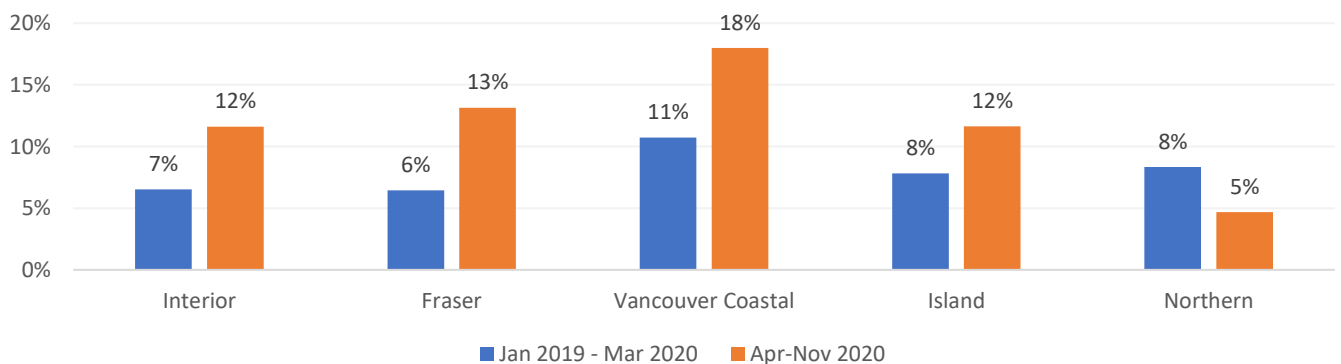


Figure 5: Percent of Fentanyl Detected Illicit Drug Toxicity Deaths with Fentanyl Concentrations >50ug/L by Health Authority



**Table 1: Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Month, 2012-2020<sup>[3]</sup>**

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	0	5	5	20	46	106	116	87	66
February	0	3	5	8	30	106	90	72	51
March	0	6	9	8	48	117	136	98	93
April	1	8	8	12	48	129	116	69	100
May	1	3	8	8	37	113	92	74	149
June	1	2	6	11	42	104	91	58	171
July	0	1	3	14	41	105	127	67	167
August	1	4	8	15	38	111	112	66	131
September	1	2	9	15	43	81	122	48	113
October	0	4	13	16	52	82	106	66	129
November	4	6	6	13	111	90	120	70	118
December	3	6	11	13	131	82	107	58	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,335</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>1,288</b>

**Table 2: Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Sex, 2012-2020<sup>[3]</sup>**

Sex	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Female	2	9	21	26	127	213	270	193	235
Male	10	41	70	127	540	1,013	1,065	640	1,053
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,335</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>1,288</b>

**Table 3: Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Age Group, 2012-2020<sup>[3]</sup>**

Age Group	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<19	0	1	0	2	12	16	14	11	15
19-29	3	19	28	43	153	244	275	152	235
30-39	2	10	33	46	196	350	358	244	313
40-49	6	13	19	29	154	283	301	180	316
50-59	1	5	7	24	121	247	284	176	276
60-69	0	2	4	9	30	82	97	67	124
70-79	0	0	0	0	1	4	6	3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,335</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>1,288</b>

**Table 4: Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Health Authority of Injury, 2012-2020<sup>[3-6]</sup>**

HA	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Interior	2	3	9	21	117	209	197	116	195
Fraser	7	16	29	57	210	387	445	282	425
Vancouver Coastal	1	10	26	40	182	367	384	235	361
Island Health	1	14	17	23	122	211	222	147	214
Northern	1	7	10	12	36	52	87	53	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,335</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>1,288</b>

**Table 5: Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Health Service Delivery Area of Injury, 2012-2020<sup>[3-6]</sup>**

HSDA	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
East Kootenay	0	1	2	1	6	4	5	0	16
Kootenay Boundary	0	0	1	2	5	15	12	10	11
Okanagan	2	1	4	14	60	133	111	69	96
Thompson Cariboo Shuswap	0	1	2	4	46	57	69	37	72
Fraser East	1	3	1	10	37	82	80	74	92
Fraser North	1	6	15	28	72	108	132	73	131
Fraser South	5	7	13	19	101	197	233	135	202
Richmond	0	0	0	3	13	25	11	12	10
Vancouver	1	5	22	32	152	307	339	208	318
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi	0	5	4	5	17	35	34	15	33
South Vancouver Island	1	3	2	9	60	95	114	65	120
Central Vancouver Island	0	10	13	11	46	84	82	58	72
North Vancouver Island	0	1	2	3	16	32	26	24	22
Northwest	0	1	0	1	7	6	12	13	11
Northern Interior	1	3	4	7	14	31	54	25	57
Northeast	0	3	6	4	15	15	21	15	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,335</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>1,288</b>

**Table 6: Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Month of Death and Health Authority of Injury, 2019-2020<sup>[3-6]</sup>**

Year	HA	Interior	Fraser	Vancouver Coastal	Island	Northern	Total
2019	January	11	29	27	14	6	87
	February	9	28	24	8	3	72
	March	20	31	29	14	4	98
	April	8	23	24	12	2	69
	May	10	26	23	10	5	74
	June	3	23	16	13	3	58
	July	11	19	16	13	8	67
	August	6	27	21	8	4	66
	September	7	17	9	13	2	48
	October	10	19	17	12	8	66
	November	8	25	15	18	4	70
	December	13	15	14	12	4	58
2020	January	9	16	23	11	7	66
	February	10	19	12	6	4	51
	March	12	36	23	13	9	93
	April	21	26	32	16	5	100
	May	18	52	38	34	7	149
	June	24	52	54	33	8	171
	July	24	52	43	33	15	167
	August	14	52	31	21	13	131
	September	17	37	32	16	11	113
	October	21	40	40	22	6	129
	November	25	43	33	9	8	118
<b>Total</b>		<b>311</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>2121</b>

**Table 7: Fentanyl-Detected Deaths by Top Townships of Injury in 2020, 2012-2020<sup>[3-5]</sup>**

Township	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Vancouver	1	5	22	32	152	307	339	208	318
Surrey	3	4	8	11	73	148	181	102	162
Victoria	0	3	2	8	53	84	92	55	108
Abbotsford	0	1	1	6	22	40	36	38	51
Kamloops	0	1	2	3	31	31	38	22	48
Kelowna	0	0	1	6	37	67	51	27	41
Burnaby	0	3	0	6	28	35	45	28	41
Prince George	1	3	4	6	13	20	46	17	39
Nanaimo	0	8	12	9	28	46	32	27	33
Chilliwack	1	0	0	2	8	17	27	19	29
New Westminster	1	0	0	3	8	16	30	15	28
Maple Ridge	0	3	7	12	20	24	26	9	24
Langley	1	1	5	6	19	32	29	20	23
Coquitlam	0	0	4	4	8	21	18	10	21
Vernon	0	0	1	2	10	16	20	13	18
Other Township	4	18	22	37	157	322	325	223	304
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,335</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>1,288</b>

**Notes:**

1. The BCCS operates in a live database environment. Some data for more recent years are based on preliminary circumstances and are subject to change as investigations are concluded. Data are not directly comparable to published counts from previous years.
2. Toxicology testing includes acetylfentanyl as of November 2015. Standard testing for carfentanil, 3-methylfentanyl, furanylfentanyl, and W-18 began in June 1, 2017. Fentanyl-detected data is derived from testing conducted by the BC Coroners Service.
3. Data for 2020 include cases from January 1 to November 30, 2020.
4. Data are based on location of injury.
5. Township of death was used in cases where injury township was unknown.
6. More information about the health regions can be found at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/geographic-data-services/land-use/administrative-boundaries/health-boundaries>