

# ANKORS

	Nelson BC: 101 Baker Street, V1L 4H1		Phone: (250) 505-5506		Fax: (250) 505-5507	
	Cranbrook BC: 209-16<sup>th</sup> Ave. N, V1C 5S8		Phone: (250) 426-3383		Fax: (250) 426-3221	
	www.ankors.bc.ca		information@ankors.bc.ca		1-800-421-AIDS	
	HIV/AIDS Network, Outreach and Support Society					

## ANKORS Weekly Drug Checking Report

Week of January 31<sup>st</sup>

Hi to all,

I hope you are all doing well and taking care.

It was a very busy week for drug checking at ANKORS. I was in Grand Forks on Tuesday and in Trail on Wednesday for testing – the rest of my week was spent in Nelson. Overall, I tested **25 samples**: nine samples in Grand Forks, six in Trail, and ten in Nelson. The substances were as follows: 12 down samples, seven MDMA samples, five methamphetamine samples, and one ketamine sample.

**IMPORTANT!** ANKORS released an **alert** this week regarding one of the down samples that was tested in Nelson. This sample was associated with **multiple overdoses** last week. The sample is **purple** in colour, with a **granular, pebbly texture**. Results for this sample showed that it contained **benzodiazepines** and a fentanyl content of approximately **20-30%**. This is **more than double** the amount of fentanyl usually seen in samples from our region. Please see the poster that has been attached separately for a picture of the sample and more information.

The other down samples that I tested this week varied widely in their composition and fentanyl percentage. Of the 12 samples that I tested, **all but one sample contained benzodiazepines** (11/12 samples). Fentanyl percentage ranged from a level below the detection limit of the FTIR (<5%) to up to 20% (excluding the sample in the alert). Most samples had about 5-10% fentanyl, which is the currently the normal amount for our region.

Two samples that I tested in Nelson (a down sample and a ketamine sample) contained a precursor which is used in the creation of fentanyl. The effects of this precursor are not well known, and it is unclear whether it has any psychoactive effects or can cause considerable harm. However, based on my research, this is doubtful. I have sent both of these samples to Vancouver for confirmatory testing and hope to get more information about them shortly.

All methamphetamine samples that I tested contained only meth – no other cuts or buffs were detected. Most of the MDMA samples that I tested (5/7 samples) contained only MDMA, with no additional cuts or buffs detected. Two of the MDMA samples did not contain any MDMA at all, and instead contained inert substances (buffs) that are intended to look like or mimic the drug, but have no psychoactive potential and are relatively harmless.

**Disclaimer:** While drug checking can help reduce the risk of using drugs by allowing users to make better informed decisions, please recognize that the use of FTIR spectrometry and test strips has limitations. Notably, the FTIR cannot detect substances that are present in amounts below its detection limit (5%) or substances that are absent from the reference databases. Test strips may fail to detect certain drug analogues

and the binary results cannot be translated to parts of the sample that were not tested with the strips. No drug use is completely safe, and checking your drugs does not eliminate all risk.

Next week, I will offer drug checking Monday, Wednesday and Thursday in Nelson. On Tuesday I will be in Castlegar at The Way Out shelter. Please spread the word and encourage folks to come by to have their samples tested! Additionally, samples can be dropped off at ANKORS anytime for testing – just be sure to leave the appropriate contact information with the sample(s) so that results can be shared with the service user. Samples will be tested as soon as possible upon returning to the office and results will be provided in a timely and discreet manner.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions!

Amelia Martzke  
Drug Checking Program Coordinator  
ANKORS Nelson  
Cell: 236-972-7080  
Office: 250-505-5506  
[drugcheckankors@gmail.com](mailto:drugcheckankors@gmail.com)