

VICTORIA'S DRUG CHECKING SERVICE

SERVICE REPORT

Pitch Music & Arts

Multi day festival
7-9 March 2025

Report dated [DATE] 2025

Partnership of



The Loop
Australia



YSAS

Funded by



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Overview

On 7-9 March 2025, Victoria's drug checking service operated at **Pitch Music and Arts festival** in Moyston, Victoria from 12-6pm.

We analysed **557 samples**.

We had **237 harm reduction conversations** with 486 people.

226 respondents consented* to us sharing aggregate demographic information.

HOW IT WORKED

Patrons often arrived in groups.** Upon arrival, one person in each group filled out an anonymous demographics survey (the '**respondent**') and received an identification number. They then entered a private booth, where they dropped off their **sample(s)**.

They returned later that day (or later in the festival) to receive their results. At this point, a member of the health/harm reduction team took people (individuals or groups) to a private booth to explain their results and **discuss harm reduction information**.

* 237 respondents filled out the survey but 11 did not provide consent for their data being used for research/service evaluation/reporting.

** Group sizes ranged from 1-8 people, with a median of 2 people per group.

Demographics

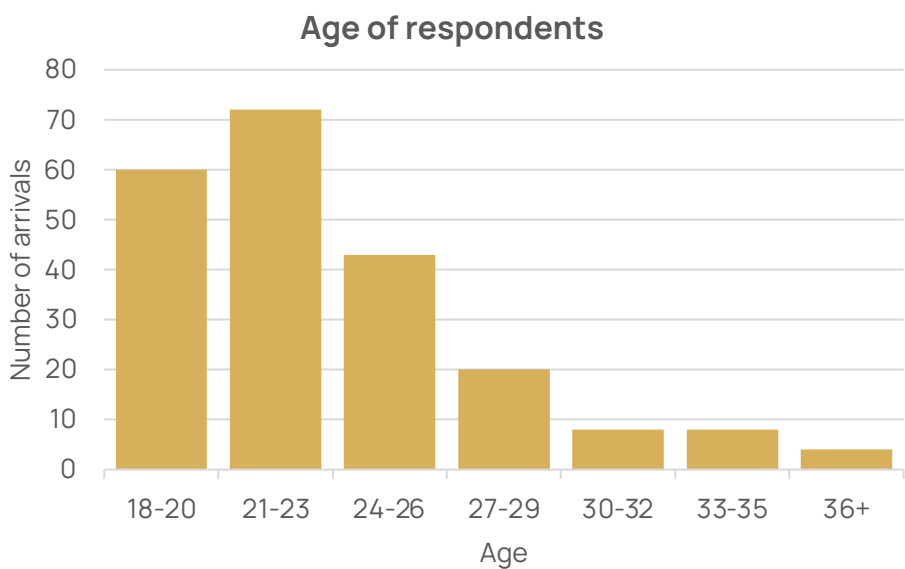
AGE

Respondents ranged from 18-50 years of age.

74% of respondents were 25 years or younger.

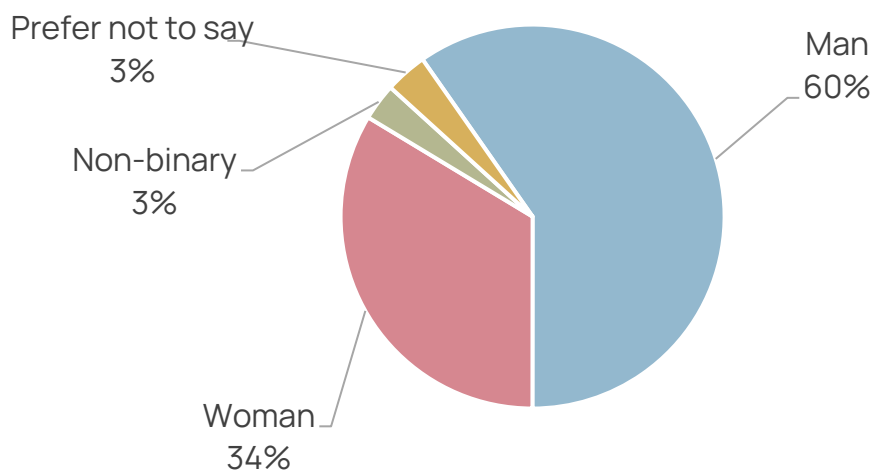
94% of respondents were 30 years or younger.

11 people did not report their age.



GENDER

Most respondents reported their gender as man (60%).

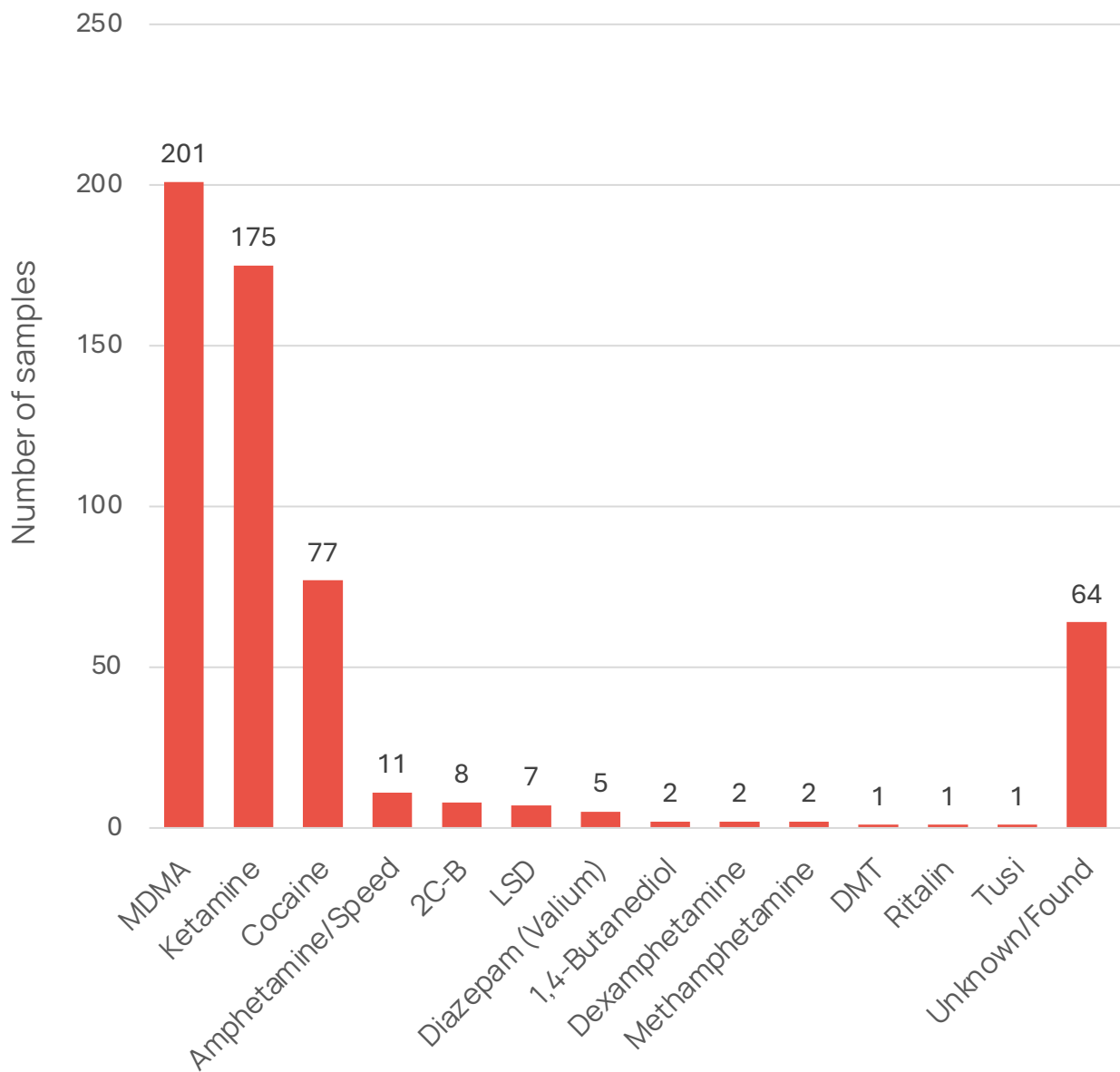


We tested 557 samples

We asked people what drugs they expected in samples.

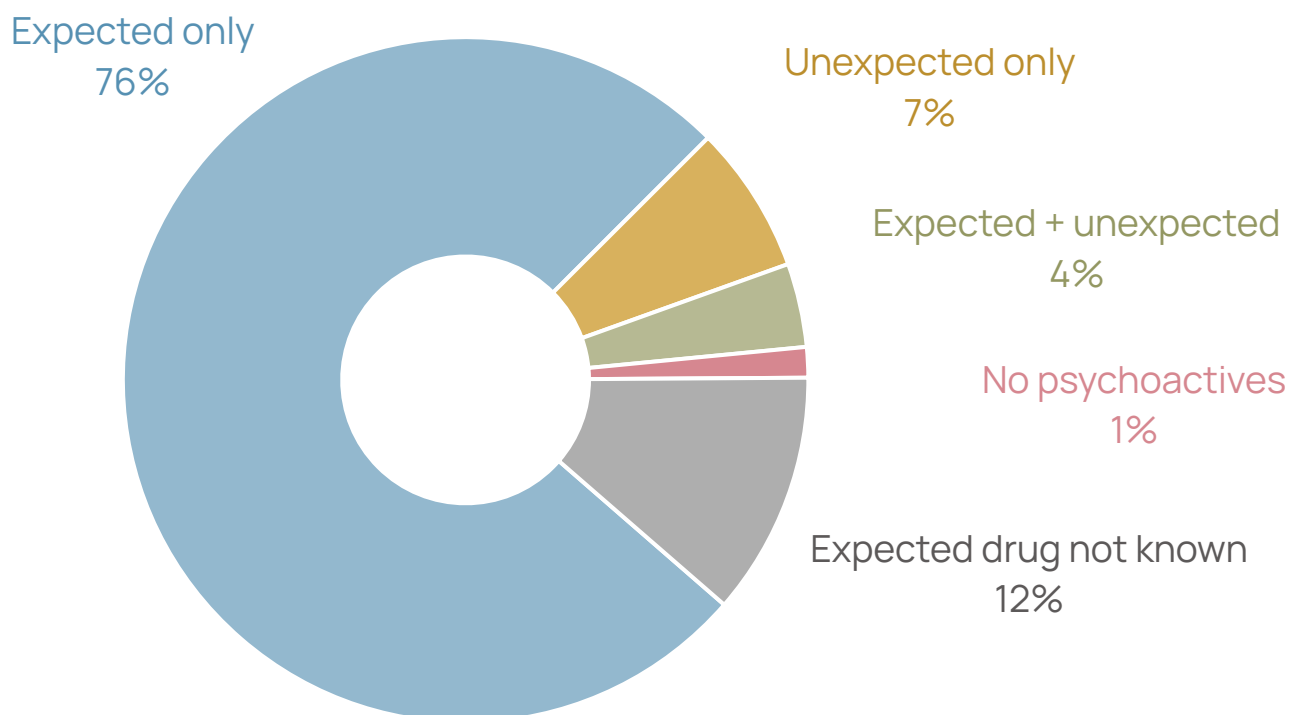
Most were expected to be **MDMA** (36%), **ketamine** (31%), and **cocaine** (14%). The expected drug was unknown for 11% of samples (including ground finds).

What was the sample expected to be?



We also disposed of 11 samples (not included in the total number of tested samples).

In 76% of samples, we detected only the drug that was expected



'Expected only': the only psychoactive drug/s we detected, matched what the person submitting them expected.

'Expected + unexpected': we detected the psychoactive drug that was expected, but we also detected another (unexpected) psychoactive drug.

'Unexpected only': we did not detect the expected drug/s, but we did detect one or more different (unexpected) psychoactive drug/s.

'No psychoactives detected': we did not detect any psychoactive drugs.

'Expected drug not known': when the person submitted their sample, they didn't know or tell us what they expected (e.g. they might have 'found' the substance).

Alerts/notifications

We shared two general notifications at Pitch.

General notifications aim to minimise unwanted and/or adverse effects related to the consumption of specific substances that we have identified on-site. General notifications have a lower harm/risk threshold than findings that we publish in urgent alerts.

1. HIGH POTENCY MDMA

Description: High-strength MDMA pill: yellow Spongebob pill approx. 1cmx1cm

Harm reduction advice: Heat and MDMA can be dangerous. Take rests from dancing often, in the shade. Sip fluids regularly – 500ml per hour. Get your drugs tested at drug checking service. Start low (take less) and go slow (redose AFTER feeling effects).

2. 4-CMC MIS-SOLD AS MDMA

Description: multiple white or off-white powders contained 4-CMC, a synthetic cathinone (MDMA was expected).

Explanation: minor or delayed effects – avoid taking more if no effects felt. Increased risk of serotonin toxicity if mixed with MDMA. Cathinones like 4-CMC carry an increased risk of cardiac events (heart attack).

Harm reduction advice: Start low go slow – avoid taking more substances, especially MDMA. Get your drugs tested at the drug checking service. Stay cool, take breaks, keep hydrated. Seek assistance from DanceWize or Medical if you feel symptoms: overly fast heart rate, disorientation, hallucinations, anxiety, paranoid, high blood pressure, overheating.

We worked with the festival organisers to disseminate this information on-site, using electronic screens and printed posters.

The Victorian Department of Health also shared these general notifications in statewide communications, available here: [MDMA](#) and [4-CMC](#).

MDMA

Total samples expected to be MDMA	201
Expected psychoactive only	174
MDMA	116
MDMA + filler Fillers: 31x cellulose, 10x inositol, 8x MSM, 3x Sorbitol, 2x sucrose, 1x creatine, 1x lactose, 1x paracetamol, 1x starch	58
Expected + unexpected psychoactives	10
MDMA + caffeine	4
MDMA + MDA	2
MDMA + MDA + filler Fillers: 2x cellulose	2
MDMA + Cocaine	1
MDMA + Ketamine	1
Unexpected psychoactive only	15
MDA + filler Fillers: 9x cellulose	9
4-CMC (4-Chloromethcathinone)	2
4-CMC (4-Chloromethcathinone) + pipradrol	1
Methamphetamine	1
Dimethylpentylone (DMP)	1
2-PEA (2-phenethylamine) + multiple other compounds We detected several compounds - awaiting secondary analysis.	1
No psychoactives detected Fillers: 1x pill containing sucrose; 1x powder containing creatine + flour	2

- Harm reduction for MDMA is [available here](#).
- Information comparing MDA and MDMA is [available here](#).
- **2-PEA (2-phenethylamine)** is a very mild stimulant. It's structurally related to amphetamine but is [unlikely to have noticeable effects](#) even at very high doses. It has effects on monoamine neurotransmission, so there may be noticeable effect if combined with MAOI anti-depressants.
- **Pipradrol** is mild stimulant that has previously been used in medications.

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Ketamine

Total samples expected to be ketamine	175
Expected psychoactive only	164
Ketamine	129
Ketamine + filler Fillers: 11x creatine, 7x MSM, 5x starch, 3x taurine, 3x 1-[(2-Chlorophenyl) (methylimino) methyl]cyclopentanol, 2x glutamine, 2x MSG, 1x benzocaine, 1x inositol, 1x lidocaine	35
Expected + unexpected psychoactives	4
Ketamine + MDMA	2
Ketamine + Cocaine + filler Filler: Boric acid	1
Ketamine + 2F-DCK + 2-FXE/2F-NENDCK	1
Unexpected psychoactive only	7
2-FXE/2F-NENDCK	4
2-FXE/2F-NENDCK + 2F-DCK	2
Tiletamine + filler Fillers: 1x procaine	1
No psychoactives detected	0

- Harm reduction for ketamine is [available here](#).

Tiletamine, 2-FXE/2F-NENDCK and 2-FDCK are **ketamine analogues**.

- Ketamine analogues are designed to mimic the effects of ketamine, but they have different chemical structures. Unlike ketamine, these analogues are not well-researched and they can have different effects and potency.
- **2F-NENDCK** has been anecdotally reported as having a faster and stronger onset than ketamine, sometimes with more intense visual distortions. Harm reduction advice available via [CAHMA](#).
- We know little about the effects of **2F-DCK**. You can read about this substance on [Psychonaut Wiki](#) and in this [research article](#).
- **Tiletamine** is also sometimes known as 'polar bear ket'. It is more potent and lasts for a longer duration than ketamine. Harm reduction advice available via [CAHMA](#).
- For more information on ketamine analogues, see the 'fake' [ketamine explainer from NUAA](#).

Cocaine

Total samples expected to be cocaine	77
Expected psychoactive only	66
Cocaine	34
Cocaine + filler Fillers: 22x creatine, 6x boric acid, 4x inositol, 1x glutamine, 1x lidocaine	32
Expected + unexpected psychoactives	6
Cocaine + caffeine	3
Cocaine + phenacetin	1
Cocaine + phenacetin + filler Fillers: 1x creatine	1
Cocaine + MDMA + filler Fillers: creatine	1
Unexpected psychoactive only	5
Ketamine Fillers: creatine	5
No psychoactives detected	0

- Harm reduction for cocaine is [available here](#).
- **Phenacetin** used to be a pain medication – it's no longer sold or used for health treatments because it can cause health problems including bladder and urinary tract cancers, and damage to the kidneys and liver. You're more likely to experience adverse effects (e.g. heart problems, hallucinations) if you take cocaine and phenacetin together, compared to cocaine by itself. More info on [phenacetin here](#).

Amphetamine

Total samples expected to be amphetamine	11
Unexpected psychoactive only	11
Methamphetamine	2
Methamphetamine + filler Fillers: 6x MSM, 1x dextrose	7
Methamphetamine + caffeine + filler Fillers: 1x MSM, 1x MSM + creatine	2

Methamphetamine

Total samples expected to be methamphetamine	2
Expected psychoactive only	1
Methamphetamine	1
Unexpected psychoactive only	1
MDA	1

- Harm reduction for amphetamine is [available here](#).
- Harm reduction for methamphetamine is [available here](#).
- In Australia, substances sold as 'amphetamines' are more likely to be methamphetamine, which is a stronger compound than amphetamine (i.e. a bump of methamphetamine has stronger effects than a bump of amphetamine).
- Sometimes people said they were bringing in 'speed': this is often assumed to be 'amphetamine', although these people did not specify. We categorised these as expecting amphetamine.

2C-B

Total samples expected to be 2C-B	8
Expected psychoactive only	4
2C-B	2
2C-B + filler Fillers: 2x cellulose	2
Expected + unexpected psychoactives	2
2C-B + ketamine	1
2C-B + ketamine + filler Filler: 1x cellulose	1
No psychoactives detected	2

- Harm reduction for 2C-B is [available here](#).

LSD

Total samples expected to be LSD	7
Expected psychoactive only	6
LSD	6
No psychoactives detected	1

- When someone expects LSD, we do a reagent test for the presence/absence of indole-related compounds. Indoles are psychedelic substances like LSD. If the reagent test indicates that indoles are present, we presume LSD is present.
- Harm reduction for LSD is [available here](#).

DMT

Total samples expected to be DMT	1
Expected psychoactive only	1
DMT	1

- Harm reduction for DMT is [available here](#).

1,4-Butanediol

Total samples expected to be 1,4-Butanediol	2
Expected psychoactive only	2
1,4-Butanediol	2

- 1,4-B is a precursor of GHB, which means that it converts to GHB in the body. It has a slower onset and it leaves the body more slowly than GHB, which means effects can last longer. It lingers in your system, which means that you may be more likely to re-dose too soon and experience a blow out or overdose.
- Harm reduction for 1,4-B is [available here](#).

'Tusi'

Total samples expected to be 'tusi'	1
Ketamine + MDMA	1

- 'Tusi' and 'pink cocaine' are terms often used to refer to a highly variable mixture of substances. It's usually pink. The mixture is usually a stimulant and a dissociative, although the actual substances vary widely. The sample we analysed was a pink powder sold as 'tusi' and the person bringing it in expected a ketamine/cocaine/MDMA mixture.
- Harm reduction for 'tusi' is [available here](#).

Diazepam ('Valium')

Total samples expected to be diazepam	5
Expected psychoactive only	3
Diazepam + filler Fillers: 3x lactose	3
No psychoactives detected	2

Dexamphetamine

Total samples expected to be dexamphetamine	2
Expected psychoactive only	1
Dexamphetamine + filler Fillers: 1x lactose	1
No psychoactives detected	1

Methylphenidate ('Ritalin')

Total samples expected to be methylphenidate	1
Expected psychoactive only	1
Methylphenidate + filler Fillers: 1x lactose	1

Pharmaceutical drugs (or counterfeit pharmaceutical drugs) usually contain a very small amount of the active ingredient. This is because the potency of these drugs means you only need a miniscule amount in a relatively large tablet. That means it's unlikely that we would detect these substances in our portable laboratory. The good news is that we didn't find any unexpected psychoactives in these substances!

Unknown expected substance

Total samples in which expected substance was unknown	64
One psychoactive detected	60
MDMA	28
MDMA + filler Fillers: 2x MSM, 1x cellulose	3
Ketamine	16
Ketamine + filler Fillers: 1x MSG, 2x MSM, 2x creatine	5
Methamphetamine + filler Filler: MSM	3
Cocaine	1
Cocaine + filler Fillers: 1x boric acid	1
MDA	1
1,4-B	1
2C-B	1
Multiple psychoactives detected	3
MDMA + 2C-B	1
MDMA + caffeine	1
Ketamine + MDMA	1
No psychoactives detected	1
Filler only Filler: lactose	1

Images of MDMA pills that contained unexpected psychoactives

	<p>Pressed pill: orange anarchy</p> <p>MDA + cellulose</p> <p>We detected the same contents in 2 other samples that matched this appearance</p>		<p>Pressed pill: green bone-shaped</p> <p>MDMA + caffeine</p>
	<p>Pressed pill: orange mask</p> <p>MDA + MDMA + cellulose</p>	 FRONT	<p>Pressed pill: green Heineken</p> <p>MDMA + caffeine</p>
	<p>Pressed pill: Red/orange Barcelona Football Club</p> <p>MDA + cellulose</p>	 BACK	<p>We detected the same contents in 2 other samples that matched this appearance</p>
 FRONT	<p>Pressed pill: red/pink Rolex</p> <p>MDA + cellulose</p>		<p>Pressed pill: dark grey mushroom</p> <p>Cellulose + dimethylpentylone (DMP)</p>
 BACK	<p>We also detected the same contents in a 'yellow Rolex'.</p>		<p>Pressed pill: Bright pink Moncler</p> <p>We tested 3 'bright pink Monclers'.</p> <p>2 contained MDA + cellulose. 1 contained MDA + MDMA + cellulose.</p>

Images of MDMA caps/powders that contained unexpected psychoactives



Capsule: white/grey crystalline powder
Cocaine + MDMA



Capsule: White and green capsule with tan colour crystals.
MDMA + MDA



Capsule: yellow and black with black, sticky/hash-like contents
MDMA+ ketamine



Crystals: white
4-CMC



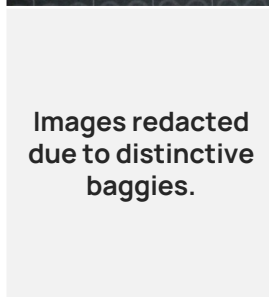
Capsule: purple capsule, white powder
MDA + MDMA



Crystals: white/grey
4-CMC



Capsule: clear capsule brown powder
MSM, 2-PEA, lidocaine, cocaine, mesterolone, methandrostenolone, oxandrolone



Images redacted due to distinctive baggies.

1 sample: 4-CMC + pipradrol in off-white crystals.
1 sample: methamphetamine + MSM in beige crystals.

Image of 2C-B pill that contained unexpected psychoactives



Pill: pink pressed pill. This is half a pill, says "CB"
2C-B + ketamine

We detected the same contents in 1 other sample that matched this appearance

FILLER GLOSSARY

1-[(2-Chlorophenyl) (methylimino)methyl]cyclopentanol:

An intermediate compound in ketamine synthesis – this is just leftover from the production of ketamine.

Benzocaine: A local anaesthetic (numbing agent) found in pharmaceutical products.

Boric acid: Often used as an antiseptic, insecticide, or preservative. It is found in pharmaceutical products.

Cellulose: The chemical that makes paper. It's a common pharmaceutical filler. It can come in powdered and microcrystalline forms.

Creatine: Often used as a supplement for muscle development.

Glutamine: An amino acid that is often taken as a supplement for muscle repair.

Lidocaine: A local anesthetic (numbing agent) found in pharmaceutical products.

Methylsulfonylmethane (MSM):

Often used as a supplement, with anti-inflammatory properties.

MSG: A flavor enhancer often used in cooking.

Paracetamol: A pain reliever – the active ingredient in Panadol.

Starch: A carbohydrate used in cooking and found naturally in foods such as wheat, potatoes corn and rice.

Taurine: An amino acid found naturally in meat and available as a dietary supplement.

Sugars

Dextrose: A sugar found in corn and wheat similar to glucose.

Inositol: A sugar naturally found in many foods, available as a supplement and used in films as prop for cocaine.

Lactose: A sugar derived from milk.

Sorbitol: A sugar alcohol used as a low-calorie sweetener

Sucrose: Table sugar.

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