

DRUGS OF ABUSE

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN TESTING USING AN ON-SITE DRUGS OF ABUSE TEST

WHY ARE YOU TESTING

It is important to know exactly why you are testing, is it for:

- Impairment or
- History of usage

WHICH TEST SPECIMEN TO USE

There are two methods available;

- Oral fluid (saliva) which checks for impairment; and
- Urine, which checks for a history.

DETECTION WINDOWS

The estimated detection times are as follows:

In oral fluid, drugs will be detected within minutes after use.

In urine, drugs will remain undetected in the first 4-8 hours.

Detection Time	Oral Fluid	Urine
Marijuana	12-24 hrs	Days/weeks *
Opiates	12-24 hrs	2-4 days
Amphetamine	24-48 hrs	1-2 days
Methamphetamine	24-48 hrs	2-5 days
Benzodiazepines	24-48 hrs	1 week
Cocaine	12-24 hrs	2-3 days

The detection time differs from person to person and depends on a number of factors (age, sex, weight, metabolism, usage).

*	Infrequent use:	1-3 days
	Regular use:	1-3 weeks
	Chronic use:	1-3 months

Note: When testing for THC using the Oral Fluid method, you must be aware that it not scientifically proven to be accurate even if many of the test manufacturers claim it is.

MEDICATIONS

Prescription and over the counter medications can have an effect on the test result. Each product should have a list of cross-reacting substances and non-cross-reacting substances.

HOW ACCURATE ARE THESE TESTS?

The subject regarding testing for substance abuse is a sensitive and often emotional one.

It is important that the test you will be using will be the most reliable and accurate one available to you. These tests are screen tests only and should be followed up with a GC-MS confirmation test procedure.

It is highly recommended that these test be performed under the guidance of a registered medical practitioner.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN PURCHASING A TEST DEVICE:

There are numerous test devices on the market and you must be sure the one you are purchasing is going to be the most accurate and reliable available.

A product insert should accompany each test device. It is very important to read the insert carefully. Information printed on the insert should include the following:

- Intended use with cut-off levels
- Summary and explanation
- Principle
- Material provided
- Material required but not provided
- Warnings and precautions
- Storage and stability
- Specimen collection and preparation
- Quality control
- Procedure
- Interpretation of results
- Limitation of procedure
- Expected results
- Performance characteristics
 - Accuracy
 - Sensitivity
 - Precision
 - Specificity
- Interference
 - List of cross-reacting substances
 - List of non-cross reacting substances

It is also important to check if the device has any accreditation listings such as FDA approval and/or a CE mark.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS FOR DRUGS

AMP	Amphetamines
BAR	Barbiturates
BZO	Benzodiazepines
BUP	Buprenorphine

COC	Cocaine
MTD	Methadone
MET	Methamphetamine (TIK)
OPI	Opiates
OXY	Oxycodone
PCP	Phencyclidine
THC	Marijuana (dagga)

INFORMATION ON SUBSTANCES:

Amphetamines (SPEED/ECSTASY) are a class of potent sympathomimetic agents with therapeutic applications. The most common amphetamines are d-amphetamine and d,l-amphetamine. Amphetamines are central nervous stimulants that cause the neurotransmitters epinephrine, norepinephrine and dopamine to be released into the brain and body giving users feelings of euphoria, alertness, and increased energy. Chronic abuse of amphetamine leads to tolerance and drug reinforcement effect. Cardiovascular responses to amphetamine include increased blood pressure and cardiac arrhythmias. More acute responses produce anxiety, paranoia, hallucinations and psychotic behavior. Amphetamine is metabolized by a number of pathways. In general, acid urine promotes excretion whereas alkaline urine retards it. In 24 hours, approximately 79% of the amphetamine dose is excreted in acid urine and about 45% in alkaline urine. Typically, about 20% is excreted as unchanged amphetamine. Unchanged amphetamine can be detected up to 1 –2 days after use.

Barbiturates are a group of prescription drugs that are frequently abused. They can depress the central nervous system. Acute higher dose induces exhilaration, sedation and respiratory depression. More acute responses produce respiratory collapse and coma. The effects of short acting barbiturates, such as secobarbital, last for 3 to 6 hours. The effects of long acting barbiturates, such as phenobarbital, last 10 to 20 hours. Short-acting barbiturates normally remain detectable in urine for 4 to 6 days, while long -acting barbiturates can be detected for up to 30 days. Barbiturates are excreted in the urine in unchanged forms, hydroxylated derivatives, carboxylated derivatives and glucuronide conjugates.

Benzodiazepines are a class of widely prescribed central nervous system depressants, which have anxiolytic, hypnotic, anticonvulsant and muscle relaxant effects. Chronic abuse can result in addiction and tardive dyskinesia. Acute higher doses lead to drowsiness, dizziness, muscle relaxation, lethargy, coma and possible death. The effects of benzodiazepines use last 4 – 8 hours. Many of the benzodiazepines share a common metabolic route, and are excreted as oxazepam and its glucuronide in urine. Oxazepam is detectable in the urine for up to 7 days after drug use.

Buprenorphine a derivative of thebaine, is an opioid that has been marketed in the United States as the Schedule V parenteral analgesic Buprenex. In 2003, based on a reevaluation of available evidence regarding the potential for abuse, addiction, and side effect, DEA reclassified buprenorphine from a Schedule V to a Schedule III narcotic. Buprenorphine resembles morphine structurally but has a longer duration of action than morphine and can be administered sublingually as an analgesic. In October 2002, FDA approved the use of a buprenorphine monotherapy product, Subutex, and a buprenorphine/naloxone combination product, Suboxone, for the treatment of opioid addiction. Subutex and Suboxone are the first narcotic drugs available under the US Drug Act (DATA) of 2003 for the treatment of opiate dependence that can be prescribed in the US in a physician's work place. It has also been shown that buprenorphine has abuse potential and may itself cause dependency. In addition, a number of deaths have been recorded as a result of overdose with intravenously injected buprenorphine in conjunction with other psychotropic drugs such as benzodiazepines. Buprenorphine is metabolized primarily by n-dealkylation to form glucuronide-buprenorphine and glucuronidenorbuprenorphine.

Cocaine (CRACK) Derived from the leaves of cocoa plant, cocaine is a potent central nervous system stimulant as well as a local anesthetic. Some of the psychological effects induced by cocaine are: euphoria, confidence and a sense of increased energy, accompanied by increased heart rate, dilation of the pupils, fever, tremors and sweating. Continued ingestion of cocaine could induce tolerances and physiological dependency, which leads to its abuse. Cocaine is used by smoking, intravenous, intranasal or oral administration and excreted in the urine primarily as benzoylecgonine in a short period. Benzoylecgonine has a biological half-life of 5 – 8 hours, which is much longer than that of cocaine (0.5 – 1.5 hours), and can be generally detected for 12 – 72 hours after cocaine use or exposure.

EDDP 2-Ethylidene-1,5-dimethyl-3,3-diphenylpyrrolidine, is the primary metabolite of methadone. Methadone is a controlled substance and is used for detoxification and maintenance of opiate dependant patients. Patients on methadone maintenance may exhibit methadone (parent) levels that account for 5-50% of the dosage and 3-25% of EDDP in urinary excretion during the first 24 hours. The detection of EDDP is more beneficial than traditional methadone screening, in that EDDP exists only in urine from individuals that ingested methadone. The tampering of specimens by spiking the urine with methadone can be prevented. Secondly, renal clearance of EDDP is not affected by urinary pH, therefore the EDDP test provides a more accurate result of methadone ingestion than the methadone parent screen.

Methadone is a synthetic opioid, clinically available. It is used clinically for the treatment of severe pain and in maintenance programs for morphine and heroine addicts. Methadone acts on the central nervous and cardiovascular systems to

produce respiratory and circulatory depression. Methadone also produces miosis and increases the tone of smooth muscle in the lower gastrointestinal tract while decreasing the amplitude of contractions. Acute higher doses induce analgesia, sedation, respiratory depression and coma. After methadone administration, the major urinary excretion products are methadone and its metabolites, EDDP and EMDP. Large individual variations in the urine excretion of methadone are output of methadone from 5-22%. Typically, following a 5 mg oral dose, methadone and EDDP account for 5% of the dose in the 24-hour urine. In those individuals on maintenance therapy, methadone may account for 5 to 50% of the dose in the 24-hour urine and EDDP may account for 3 to 25% of the dose.

Methamphetamine (TIK/CAT) is the most popular synthetic derivative of the amphetamines. It is a potent sympathomimetic agent with therapeutic applications. Acute large doses lead to enhanced stimulation of the central nervous system and induce euphoria, alertness, reduced appetite, and a sense of increased energy and power. More acute response produces anxiety, paranoia, psychotic behavior, and cardiac dysrhythmias. Methamphetamine is excreted in the urine as amphetamine and oxidized and deaminated derivatives. However, 10-40% of methamphetamine is excreted unchanged. Methamphetamine is generally detectable in the urine for 3 to 5 days after use.

Opiate Opioid analgesics comprised of a large group of substances that control pain by depressing the central nervous system. Acute high dose used by abusers or addicts can cause depressed co-ordination, disrupted decision, decreased respiration, hypothermia and coma. Morphine is excreted unmetabolized and is the marker metabolic product of opiates. Morphine and morphine glucuronide is detectable in urine for several days after opiates dose.

Oxycodone is known as Oxycontin, Roxicodone and is an ingredient of Percodan, Percocet, Roxicet and Tylox. Oxycodone is a semi-synthetic opiates derived from opium. Like other opiates, oxycodone is characterized by its analgesic properties, and the tendency for users to form a physical dependency and develop tolerance with extended use. Oxycodone is usually administered in combination with non-opiate analgesics such as acetaminophen and salicylates for the relief of moderate to severe pain. Oxycodone is a central nervous system depressant that may cause drowsiness, dizziness, lethargy, weakness and confusion. Toxicity in an overdose of oxycodone can lead to stupor, coma, muscle flaccidity, severe respiratory depression, hypotension, and stripiac arrest. Oxycodone is metabolized by Nand O- demethylation. One of the metabolites, oxymorphone, is a potent narcotic analgesic, while the other, noroxycodone, is relatively inactive. Between 33 to 61% of a single dose of oxycodone is excreted in a 24 hour urine collection and consists of 13-19% free oxycodone, 7- 29% glucuronide conjugated oxycodone, 13-14% glucuronide conjugated oxymorphone and an unknown amount of noroxycodone. The detection time window of oxycodone is 1-3 days following use.

Phencyclidine commonly known as PCP, is a hallucinogen which interacts with dopamine, cholinergic and adrenergic systems. It has dose dependent stimulant, depressant, hallucinogenic and psychological effects. PCP is mostly administered by oral or intravenously. Even moderate amount of PCP, from 5 to 100 ng/ml, can result in psychotic, violent and self-destruction. At high doses, from 100 to 500 ng/ml, PCP can cause convulsions, hypertension, prolonged coma, absent peripheral sensation, and even death. PCP is metabolized via hydroxylation, oxidation, and conjugation with glucuronic acid in the liver. About 10% of the dose is excreted in urine as unchanged drug. PCP can be detected in the urine for 7 to 8 days after drug administration. For chronic users, PCP may persist in urine for 2 to 4 weeks. The length of time following drug use for which a positive result may occur is dependent upon several factors, including the frequency and amount of drug, metabolic rate, excretion rate, drug half-life, and the drug user's age, weight, activity, and diet.

THC (DAGGA) The agents of Marijuana that cause various biological effects in humans are called cannabinoid. Cannabinoid is a central nervous stimulant that alters mood and sensory perceptions, produces loss of coordination, impairs short term memory, and produces symptoms of anxiety, paranoia, depression, confusion, hallucination, and increased heart rate. Large doses of cannabinoid could cause the development of tolerances and physiological dependency and lead to abuse. A tolerance to the cardiac and psychotropic effects can occur and withdrawal syndrome produces restlessness, insomnia, anorexia and nausea. Δ^9 -THC is the primary active ingredient in cannabinoids. The main metabolite excreted in the urine is 11-nor - Δ^9 -THC-9-COOH, which are found within hours of exposure and remain detectable in the urine for 3- 10 days after smoking.

For more information please contact:

All information will be kept private and confidential.

DRUG TESTING AFRICA

DTA Pty Ltd, South Africa

PO Box 1661, Sun Valley 7985 Cape Town

email: email@drugtesting.co.za

website: www.drugtesting.co.za



The manufacturer, distributor and pharmacy do not accept any liability whatsoever for any consequent actions resulting from the interpretations of the product/s supplied.

Please read our Policy, Privacy, Feedback and Copyright on our web page http://www.drugtesting.co.za/contact_us.htm