

Basics of Drug Testing

Many factors influence the length of time required for drugs to be metabolized and excreted through the urine. The most important of these is the half-life of the drug. Half-life refers to the amount of time the body requires to reduce the amount of a given drug to undetectable levels. The length of time drugs are present in the urine is influenced by each individual's rate and efficiency of urine production, pH, fluid consumption pattern, amount of the drug taken and the length of time over which the drug was taken. The larger the dose of the drug consumed and the more frequently the drug is consumed, the longer the time required to reduce the drug to undetectable levels. For all these reasons the detection periods are estimates only.

Detection Periods

Drug	Maximum Detection Time
1. Marijuana and hash (THC)	4 days to 6 weeks
2. Opiates (Heroin, Opium, Morphine, Codeine)	4 days
3. Cocaine (including Crack)	3 days
4. Amphetamines	5 days
5. Methamphetamine (Ice, Crank)	5 days
6. Ecstasy	5 days
7. PCP	10 days
8. Alcohol	3-10 hours
9. Barbiturates	24 hours-6 weeks
10. LSD	8 hours
11. Morphine	1-2 days
12. Methadone	2-3 days
13. Quaalude	2 weeks
14. Benzodiazepines	3 days-6 weeks

Dietary poppy seeds may screen positive for opiates, requiring confirmation testing.

Certain over the counter medications may screen positive for amphetamines, requiring confirmation testing.

It is important to always list any prescription medications or over the counter medications being taken before taking a drug test.