

MythBusters -

Drug Testing Myths



Why Client's "Invent" Excuses

- denial of the disease
- "learned" behavior of chronic dishonesty
- risk taking/manipulative behavior
- paranoia
- threat of court sanctions

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The Myths

Myth #1

- Passive inhalation of marijuana smoke can cause a “positive” drug test result.
- NO - not if standard cutoffs are used
- THC (cannabinoid) assay uses variable cutoffs (20/25 or 50 ng/mL)
- passive inhalation research indicates less than 10 ng/mL in volunteer urines
- urine versus hair

The Excuse:

“I’m still positive for
THC because of excess
body fat.”

The Excuse:

“I’m positive for THC because I’m on a diet and breaking down fat cells containing THC.”

The Excuse:

“I’m positive for THC because I exercise a lot and I’m burning up fat cells containing THC.”

The Excuse:

“I’m positive for THC
because I had a deep
tissue massage.”

The Excuse:

“I’m positive for THC because I was in a hot tub and the THC was sweat out of my fat cells.”

Myth #2

- body fat and/or obesity significantly influences the results of drug tests for marijuana
- NO!
- body fat excuses by clients widespread

THC and Fat:

- marijuana does bind to fat cells
- there are case studies indicating prolonged elimination patterns
- BUT, marijuana's elimination from the body is largely driven by concentration
- while small amounts of marijuana may be retained in the body - generally these amounts do not have an effect on a urine drug test

Myth #3

- Consuming poppy seeds (i.e., eating poppy seed bagels) can cause a positive urine drug test for opiates.

Place a poppy prohibition in your agreement and don't allow clients to use this excuse to “explain away” a positive urine opiate test result!

Myth #4

- Drinking vinegar or cranberry juice will produce a “negative” urine drug test.
- NO!
- theory is to cause a “pH shift”, making the urine sample acidic - altering the chemistry of immunoassay tests
- in reality - the body detoxifies the acid & dilutes to physiological pH

Myth #5

- consuming large doses of vitamins (niacin - B3) purges marijuana from the system and/or speeds up its elimination from the body by increasing a person's rate of metabolism
- FALSE!

All about niacin:

- niacin - vitamin that affects more than 50 metabolic functions, releasing energy from carbohydrates
- does not increase metabolism rate
- absolutely NO scientific or medical data indicating niacin has ANY effect on a urine drug test
- adds a more intense "yellow" color to the urine
- niacin used to disguise diluted samples
- niacin overdose is often accompanied by skin "flushing"

Myth #6

- blood is a good alternative specimen for drugs of abuse testing
- FALSE!
 - ◆ sample of limited volume
 - ◆ “dirty” sample (protein, blood cells, lipids)
 - ◆ drugs in low concentrations
 - ◆ parent drugs with short half-life
 - ◆ many testing methods not sufficiently sensitive

Myth #7

- beer-battered fish can cause a positive urine test for alcohol

- **FALSE!**

Myth #8

- The presence of urine sediment (material that settles to the bottom of the collection cup) is a good indicator of sample tampering.

- **FALSE!**

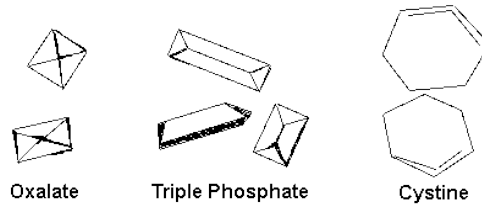
Urine is a complex matrix:

Urine sediment occurs naturally & is comprised of:

cells - (epithelial, kidney, blood)

casts - (cylindrical particles formed by WBC, RBC, granular material, fat, etc.)

crystals -



organisms (bacteria, yeast, fungi)

Myth #9

- Sure-Jell or Certo is an effective technique clients can use to adulterate urine samples and produce negative test results.

- **FALSE!**

Sure-Jell/Certo - Pectin

- pectin - complex carbohydrate found in plant cells (skins & seeds of fruit)
- pectin used to “set” jams & jellies
- “activation” of pectin requires boiling
- pectin (ingested/added directly) *may* cause urine to be more viscous

Sure Jell/Certo - Pectin

- Don't believe in the Certo or Sure Jel method. I tried it...failed all the drug tests I took every time I used it...I was being tested for marijuana for Arkansas Drug Court. Tested me every week...failed all three drug screens...they use a new on site screening machine that spins the sample around...supposedly it can even detect meth for up to 10 days...and can detect adulterants too...I cleaned up rather than try to cover up.

Myth #10

- having sex with someone who uses drugs will cause a positive urine drug screen in an abstinent client

■ **FALSE!**

Myth #11

- A urine creatinine level of 475 mg/dL is reasonable evidence to indicate specimen tampering.
- TRUE!

Normal Urine Creatinine

- 2005 study “Urinary Creatinine Concentrations in the U.S. Population” determine the mean (based upon 22,245 participants) was 130 mg/dL
 - ◆ less than 1% below 20 mg/dL
 - ◆ less than 1% greater than 400 mg/dL
- it's all about patterns
- significant fluctuations in urine creatinine levels are not normal

Myth #12

- Urine drug testing is an excellent strategy for monitoring clients using prescription drugs and determining potential abuse of prescribed medications
- Not so much!

Drug testing is an excellent tool for the abstinence monitoring of court clients, however it provides limited information for the differentiation between the appropriate therapeutic use of prescribed medications and the misuse/abuse of those same drugs - regardless of the specimen tested.

Other Control Strategies

- search & seizure (client contract)
- healthcare contact forms
- pill counts
- no out-of-state prescriptions
- use of specified pharmacies
- loss of completion credits/time while on certain prescription meds

Myth #13

- Having a novacaine shot from a dentist will cause a positive urine drug test result for cocaine.

■ **FALSE!**

The Excuse:

“I tested positive for cocaine because I used Orajel/ Anbesol for a tooth ache.” (benzocaine)

The Excuse:

“I tested positive for cocaine because I got a bad sunburn and applied Solarcaine[®].”

The Excuse:

“I live near a farm that
grows sugar cane.”

The Excuse:

“I tested positive for cocaine because I went to a movie starring Michael Caine.”

Myth #14

- A client with diabetes is likely to produce dilute specimens (with urine creatinine levels of less than 20 mg/dL) because of his/her disease.
- False!

Diabetes & Creatinine

- what does the research say
- question is whether diabetes causes dilute urine samples - the answer is NO!
- average urine creatinine level for a non-Hispanic black participant, 20-49 years of age is 180 mg/dL - subtract 30 mg/dL of creatinine for a diabetic condition, starting with an average urine creatinine level of 150 mg/dL

Urine Creatinine Patterns

- don't get hung up on 20 mg/dL
- look for creatinine patterns
- “normal” vs. dilute
- honesty is a proximal goal
- client who always produces “low” creatinine urine sample

Myth #15

- Does the act of cooking/heating foods that contain alcohol liberates the alcohol in the process, thus producing alcohol-free food.
- False!

Alcohol in Food - Cook's Illustrated Study (2005) “A Few Sobering Thoughts”

- beef burgundy - three hours in oven, lid on, 40% alcohol retained
- flambé recipes - igniting brandy over high heat 29% alcohol retained - igniting brandy in cold pan 57% alcohol retained

Myth #16

- The presence of designer drugs (such as Spice & K2 or “bath salts” can be detected by using routine urine screening methods.
- False!

Myth #17

- strenuous exercise will cleanse your body of drugs
- a quick trip to the gym the morning of a surprise test will do nothing to help your chances of passing
- FALSE

Myth #18

- Washing hair with “special” shampoos will remove drugs of abuse from hair

Myth #18

Four Proven Ways To Beat a Hair Drug Test

1. **ABSTAIN FOR 100+ DAYS**
2. **SHAVE IT ALL OFF**
3. **DO-IT-YOURSELF DETOX**
4. **USE DETOX PRODUCTS THAT WORK**

Two Steps A'Head" Cleansing Shampoo and Conditioner

This is our top selling hair cleansing solution and is the only product on the market that stands behind a full guarantee. Our extreme strength shampoo cleanses your hair in roughly 60 minutes and it's cleansing effect lasts for 48 hours or permanently depending on your exposure to toxins. Ph balanced safe for permed & color treated hair. This Hair follicle treatment formula helps dissolve the toxins trapped in your hair. While detoxifying you will feel a strong tingling sensation of the scalp. After usage your hair is cleansed of toxins, clean and healthy.

\$89.95

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Nutra Cleanse

Top Selling Permanent Cleansing Product

Top Seller This program is designed for people that have a high level of exposure to toxins. This is also the program we recommend for those that weigh over 200 lbs regardless of toxin levels. All toxins are removed permanently with this 5-day detox program. This program includes our pre-cleanse formula, a daily herbal supplement, easy instructions, detox diet menu and phone support to ensure you reach your personal cleansing deadline! 2 free home test kits included to verify you are clean.

View all [permanent cleansers](#).

\$109.95

Select options



■ **False! This stuff doesn't work!**

Myth #19

- Consuming baking soda will produce a negative drug test for meth
- sodium bicarbonate
- No research to support this theory
- “Over 500 Fabulous, Fun, and Frugal Uses You've Probably Never Thought Of” by Vicki Lansky she mentions nothing about using Baking Soda to pass a drug test

Myth #19

- Ur-ine Trouble, 200 pages – no mention of baking soda
- Arm & Hammer – largest mining company of sodium bicarbonate does drug testing a gets positive results
- sodium bicarbonate is a natrually occurring body chemical
- FALSE

Myth #20

- “Holding” drugs “for a friend” produces positive drug test results.
- Really!!!! Pleading to a felony in order to beat a drug test?
- FALSE

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