

17 panel hair follicle drug test

17 panel hair follicle drug test is a comprehensive drug screening method used to detect the presence of multiple substances over an extended period. This type of test analyzes hair samples to identify drug metabolites, offering a longer detection window compared to urine or saliva tests. The 17 panel test screens for a broad range of drugs, making it highly effective for employment screening, legal cases, and rehabilitation monitoring. Understanding how the test works, what substances it detects, and its advantages is crucial for organizations and individuals seeking reliable drug testing methods. This article explores the details of the 17 panel hair follicle drug test, including the testing process, detection windows, and common use cases. Additionally, it covers the types of drugs tested and factors that can affect the results.

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What Is a 17 Panel Hair Follicle Drug Test?

A 17 panel hair follicle drug test is an advanced screening tool designed to detect the presence of 17 different drugs or drug classes through the analysis of hair samples. Unlike traditional urine or blood tests, this method examines hair follicles, which can retain drug metabolites for an extended period, typically up to 90 days. This makes the test ideal for identifying long-term drug use rather than recent consumption. The 17 panel designation refers to the number of drug substances or categories the test can detect, providing a broad and detailed assessment of an individual's drug history.

Purpose and Importance

The primary purpose of the 17 panel hair follicle drug test is to provide a reliable means of drug detection for employers, legal entities, and rehabilitation centers. This testing method is particularly valuable in situations where a comprehensive drug history is necessary. Its ability to detect multiple substances simultaneously helps prevent drug abuse in sensitive environments and promotes safety and compliance.

How Does the 17 Panel Hair Follicle Drug Test Work?

The 17 panel hair follicle drug test works by analyzing a small sample of hair, usually taken from the scalp, to identify drug metabolites that have been deposited in the hair shaft. When a person consumes drugs, the metabolites enter the bloodstream and are incorporated into the hair follicles as the hair grows. Because hair grows approximately half an inch per month, a 1.5-inch hair sample can reveal drug use over the previous 90 days.

Sample Collection and Analysis

During the collection process, a technician cuts a small amount of hair close to the scalp. In cases where scalp hair is unavailable, body hair may be used, although this can affect the accuracy of the detection window. The collected hair is then sent to a laboratory where it undergoes washing to remove external contaminants, followed by chemical analysis using methods like immunoassay screening and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) confirmation.

Detection Window

The detection window for the 17 panel hair follicle drug test is generally up to 90 days, which is significantly longer than urine or saliva tests that typically detect drugs for only a few days to a week. This extended window makes the test highly effective for uncovering patterns of drug use rather than isolated incidents.

Drugs Included in the 17 Panel Screening

The 17 panel hair follicle drug test screens for a wide range of drugs and metabolites. This comprehensive panel covers common substances of abuse, enabling thorough monitoring and detection.

- Amphetamines (AMP)
- Methamphetamines (MET)
- Cocaine (COC)
- Opiates (OPI) - including morphine and codeine
- Phencyclidine (PCP)
- Marijuana (THC)
- Barbiturates (BAR)
- Benzodiazepines (BZO)

- Methadone (MTD)
- Propoxyphene (PPX)
- Ecstasy (MDMA)
- Oxycodone (OXY)
- Hydrocodone (HYC)
- Tramadol (TRA)
- Buprenorphine (BUP)
- Ketamine (KET)
- Fentanyl (FEN)

Significance of Each Drug Panel

Each drug panel targets specific substances or drug classes that are commonly abused. Including a broad spectrum ensures that the test can identify a variety of illegal and prescription drugs, making it a versatile tool for drug monitoring.

Advantages of Hair Follicle Drug Testing

The 17 panel hair follicle drug test offers several advantages over other testing methods, contributing to its popularity in various fields.

Long Detection Period

One of the most significant benefits is the extended detection window, which can capture drug use up to three months prior to testing. This is valuable for identifying chronic or habitual drug use.

Difficulty of Cheating

Hair follicle tests are harder to adulterate or cheat compared to urine tests, as it is difficult to substitute or clean hair samples effectively.

Non-Invasive and Convenient

Collecting a hair sample is relatively non-invasive, painless, and can be performed quickly without the privacy concerns often associated with urine collection.

Comprehensive Screening

The ability to test for 17 different drugs simultaneously provides a broad overview of drug use, which is useful for employers and medical professionals requiring detailed information.

Limitations and Factors Affecting Test Results

Despite its advantages, the 17 panel hair follicle drug test has certain limitations and factors that can influence the accuracy and interpretation of results.

Hair Color and Type

Hair pigmentation may affect drug absorption, with darker hair sometimes showing higher levels of drug metabolites. This factor must be considered during result analysis to avoid bias.

External Contamination

External exposure to drugs or drug smoke can sometimes lead to false positives if the hair is not properly washed before analysis. Laboratories use stringent washing procedures to minimize this risk.

Recent Drug Use

Since hair testing reflects drug use over weeks to months, very recent drug consumption might not be detected immediately, as the hair containing metabolites must grow out from the follicle.

Cost and Turnaround Time

Hair follicle drug tests tend to be more expensive and may require longer processing times compared to urine or saliva tests, which can be a consideration for some organizations.

Preparation and Procedure for the Test

Understanding the preparation and procedure involved in a 17 panel hair follicle drug test helps ensure accurate and efficient testing.

Sample Collection Process

A trained collector typically cuts a small sample of hair close to the scalp, usually from the crown area. The sample size is approximately 100-120 strands or about 1.5 inches in length. This length corresponds to roughly 90 days of hair growth.

Precautions Before Testing

Individuals are advised to avoid hair treatments such as bleaching or dyeing before the test, as these can degrade drug metabolites and potentially affect test results. However, normal washing and grooming do not usually interfere with detection.

Laboratory Analysis

After collection, the hair sample is sent to a certified laboratory where it undergoes washing, extraction, and analysis. Initial immunoassay screening detects the presence of drugs, and any positive results are confirmed using more precise methods like GC-MS or liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS).

Applications of the 17 Panel Hair Follicle Drug Test

The 17 panel hair follicle drug test is utilized in a variety of settings where comprehensive drug monitoring is essential.

Employment Screening

Many employers use this test during pre-employment screening or random drug testing programs to ensure a drug-free workplace and enhance safety.

Legal and Forensic Uses

Courts and probation officers may require hair follicle testing to monitor compliance with drug abstinence during probation or custody cases.

Rehabilitation and Treatment Monitoring

Substance abuse treatment centers use the 17 panel test to track patient progress and detect relapse over extended periods.

Sports and Athletic Testing

Some sports organizations employ hair follicle testing to detect banned substances, benefiting from the long detection window for performance-enhancing drugs.

1. Provides a broad drug detection spectrum
2. Offers a longer detection window than urine or saliva tests

3. Reduces chance of sample tampering
4. Non-invasive and straightforward collection

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a 17 panel hair follicle drug test?

A 17 panel hair follicle drug test is a type of drug screening that analyzes a small sample of hair to detect the presence of 17 different substances or their metabolites over a period of up to 90 days.

Which drugs are typically included in a 17 panel hair follicle drug test?

A 17 panel hair follicle drug test generally includes drugs like marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, methamphetamines, PCP, benzodiazepines, barbiturates, MDMA, oxycodone, fentanyl, and others depending on the specific test panel.

How long after drug use can a 17 panel hair follicle test detect substances?

Hair follicle drug tests can detect drug use approximately 7 to 90 days prior to the test, since drugs are deposited in the hair shaft as it grows.

How is a 17 panel hair follicle drug test conducted?

A small sample of hair, usually about 1.5 inches long and the width of a pencil, is cut close to the scalp and sent to a lab for analysis to detect the presence of drugs.

Can a 17 panel hair follicle drug test detect synthetic or prescription drugs?

Yes, many 17 panel hair follicle tests can detect both synthetic and prescription drugs depending on the substances included in the panel, such as benzodiazepines, oxycodone, or fentanyl.

How accurate is a 17 panel hair follicle drug test?

Hair follicle drug tests are generally very accurate and reliable, with a low chance of false positives, as hair samples are less susceptible to adulteration compared to urine or saliva tests.

Can hair treatments affect the results of a 17 panel hair

follicle drug test?

Certain hair treatments like bleaching, dyeing, or perming may reduce the concentration of drugs in hair but usually do not completely eliminate drug traces from the hair follicle test.

Is a 17 panel hair follicle drug test more expensive than other drug tests?

Yes, 17 panel hair follicle drug tests are typically more expensive than urine or saliva tests due to the complexity of the testing process and the number of substances screened.

How long does it take to get results from a 17 panel hair follicle drug test?

Results from a 17 panel hair follicle drug test usually take between 3 to 5 business days after the lab receives the hair sample.

Can a 17 panel hair follicle drug test be used for employment screening?

Yes, many employers use 17 panel hair follicle drug tests for pre-employment screening or ongoing employee drug monitoring because of their ability to detect long-term drug use.

Additional Resources

1. Understanding the 17 Panel Hair Follicle Drug Test: A Comprehensive Guide

This book offers an in-depth look at the 17 panel hair follicle drug test, explaining how it works, what substances it detects, and its applications in various fields. It covers the science behind hair follicle testing and provides insights into preparation, interpretation of results, and legal considerations. Ideal for medical professionals and individuals undergoing testing.

2. Hair Follicle Drug Testing: Techniques and Technologies

Focusing on the methodologies used in hair follicle drug testing, this book details the technological advances that have made 17 panel tests more accurate and reliable. It discusses sample collection, laboratory analysis, and the challenges faced during testing. The book is useful for laboratory technicians and forensic scientists.

3. Drug Detection in Hair: The 17 Panel Test Explained

This text explains the science of drug incorporation into hair and how the 17 panel test identifies multiple substances simultaneously. It highlights the benefits and limitations of hair testing compared to urine or blood tests and explores real-world case studies. Readers gain a thorough understanding of the test's significance in drug monitoring.

4. Practical Applications of 17 Panel Hair Follicle Testing in Workplace Drug Screening

Designed for employers and occupational health professionals, this book discusses implementing hair follicle testing within workplace drug screening programs. It covers legal compliance, employee rights, and interpreting test results to maintain a safe work environment. The book also offers best

practices for communicating test outcomes.

5. Interpreting Results from 17 Panel Hair Follicle Drug Tests

This guide focuses on how to read and analyze results from the 17 panel hair follicle drug test. It explains cutoff levels, potential false positives and negatives, and factors affecting accuracy such as hair color and cosmetic treatments. Health practitioners and counselors will find this resource valuable for making informed decisions.

6. Hair Follicle Drug Testing for Addiction Recovery Monitoring

This book explores the role of the 17 panel hair follicle drug test in tracking substance use during addiction recovery. It discusses how regular testing can support treatment adherence and provide objective evidence of abstinence or relapse. The text also addresses ethical concerns and patient privacy.

7. Legal Perspectives on 17 Panel Hair Follicle Drug Testing

Covering the legal framework surrounding hair follicle drug tests, this book examines privacy laws, consent requirements, and the admissibility of test results in court. It is a critical resource for lawyers, policymakers, and organizations involved in drug testing programs. Case law examples provide practical insights.

8. Advances in Hair Follicle Testing: From 5 to 17 Panels

Tracing the evolution from basic drug panels to the comprehensive 17 panel test, this book highlights technological and scientific breakthroughs. It discusses how expanded panels improve detection capabilities and the implications for forensic and clinical toxicology. Readers will appreciate the historical context and future trends.

9. Preparing for a 17 Panel Hair Follicle Drug Test: What You Need to Know

Aimed at individuals facing hair follicle drug testing, this book offers practical advice on preparation, what substances are detectable, and how long drugs remain in hair. It debunks common myths and provides tips for maintaining hair health to ensure accurate results. This guide helps reduce anxiety and improve test compliance.

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