

Marijuana Drug Testing 101

HOW TO PASS A MARIJUANA DRUG TEST





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Forward



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Drug testing is becoming more and more common in the United States and most western countries. Drug tests may be used during the employment application process, while employed, by probation officers in the criminal justice environment, for alcohol and drug evaluations and even required by courts in divorce or child custody cases. If you are facing the prospect of a drug screen and perhaps practice moderate use of marijuana for medicinal or recreational use, it is imperative you understand the testing process in order to test clean.

Drug screens for marijuana usually measure THC or its metabolite, Carboxy THC. Depending on the specific testing method, traces of THC can be found hours or even days after consumption or ingestion and Carboxy THC can be detected days, weeks or even months after use. I hope this guide to marijuana drug testing helps you obtain the right result.

David N. Jolly



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What is a Drug Test?

A drug test for any drug is designed to analyze a biological sample to determine how much of a drug is in the individual's body.

Marijuana contains hundreds of chemicals but there are only two that drug screens are looking for. The first is THC and this is the chemical or psychoactive component that affects mood, perception and behavior.

The second chemical drug testing is looking for is Carboxy THC, which is a metabolite of marijuana and is produced when the liver breaks down the THC.



What are the Reasons for Drug Testing?

Drug testing may be required for a number of reasons including:

- Screening prior to employment
- Testing for those in security or military positions
- Safety precaution for those operating heavy machinery or vehicles
- Testing as a deterrent to prevent drug use in schools, companies and government departments
- Routine testing as part of a drug program
- In divorce cases or child custody matters
- Following an arrest for a crime when drug impairment is suspected, such as driving under the influence
- By probation departments to confirm compliance with court orders
- For an alcohol | drug evaluation as ordered by a court during a criminal case

Length of Time for THC Detection

THC



If you have consumed marijuana recently and are facing the prospect of a drug test, you may wonder how long you will have to wait in order to test negative.

Like most things, there is no easy answer. The length of time THC or Carboxy THC stays in the body is different from person to person. It is very important you do your best to time the drug test with the complete elimination of marijuana from your body.

Factors that may affect rapid elimination of marijuana from your body include:

- Body fat (because THC binds to fat and the more fat in the body the longer THC will stay in the system)
- The frequency with which you consume cannabis (the more you use the longer evidence will remain in your body)
- The strength of the cannabis consumed and
- The amount of cannabis that is consumed.

Length of Time THC (and Metabolites) remain detectible:

- Urine Test: 30-45 days (daily consumer)
- Blood Test: 45-60 days
- Hair Test: 90-120 days (daily consumer)
- Saliva Test: 1-7 days (daily consumer)

Metabolism

THC Metabolism

THC loves fat and is fat soluble, which means it attaches itself onto the body's fat tissue. Those with higher body fat may store and hold Carboxy THC for a longer period compared to a person who is thin and a lower percentage of body fat.

Marijuana detection may also depend on whether the person is an occasional user or a frequent user of cannabis.

Frequent marijuana users tend to retain THC metabolites in their fat tissues for a much longer period than do occasional users.

Detox

THC Elimination

The elimination of Carboxy THC, the metabolite of THC and the evidence that confirms prior use of marijuana is critical to understand before facing a drug test.

You want to be certain that there is no evidence remaining if you wish to pass the drug screen.

Carboxy THC has an elimination half-life of several days or even weeks for very heavy users. The half-life of a drug is when the amount of the drug in the body is reduced by 50%. Different studies suggest - or guess - the average half-life of Carboxy THC is about 4 days.

Please don't use this number as accurate as it is dependent on too many factors often not considered by researchers.

TYPES OF DRUG TESTING



Urinalysis Testing (UA)

Urinalysis testing is the most common way of screening for cannabis consumption. Urine samples are easy to collect and relatively non-invasive. The samples are then sent to a laboratory to be tested after collection.

UA tests detect Carboxy THC, the metabolite of THC. Remember, Carboxy THC will remain in your system days or weeks after marijuana use and a urinalysis test will detect these substances if they are in your system.

It should be noted that urinalysis testing is probably the easiest to manipulate. Flushing out the body with higher consumption of water or by using a detox kit or drink will likely have greater benefits with UA testing than other forms or marijuana drug tests.



Marijuana Blood Tests

Blood tests for drugs are often used during DUI or criminal investigations when an officer suspects the driver has used marijuana or another drug, or during a criminal investigation following a fatal traffic accident when drugs might be suspected.

Unlike urinalysis testing, blood tests measure active THC and Carboxy THC while UA testing only tests for Carboxy THC.

Because blood testing is invasive with the use of a needle, it is used far less frequently in drug testing. In States with strict driving under the influence of marijuana laws, blood draws may be requested by the law enforcement officers or required by the very quick grant of a search warrant for blood.



Marijuana Hair Tests

Hair testing has proven to be an accurate form of testing for marijuana testing. Hair testing also provides the longest period of detection, up to 3 months following cannabis use.

Following cannabis consumption, the THC reaches the hair follicles through the blood vessels in the scalp and is then deposited in the hair shafts. Once there, THC will remain on the hair as it grows.

During the testing process only a small sample of hair is required. Frequent cannabis users are more likely to test positive due to the build-up of Carboxy THC in their hair over time. There are some concerning studies that also found that secondhand smoke can leave evidence of THC residue in the hair.

While hair testing is considered a more reliable form of testing it is also more expensive than urine or blood testing and therefore done less frequently.



Saliva Test

Saliva testing is one of the newer methods of testing for marijuana and frankly, I have never seen it used in my line of work. There are certain advantages in that it is less expensive and more convenient than other tests usually employed.

Studies have shown that saliva samples produce positive results within hours of marijuana use, which is faster than urine samples.

Sweat Test

Sweat testing is a relatively non-invasive way to monitor drug exposure using a patch that is applied to the skin for up to two weeks. This type of test can be used in drug treatment, in employment programs or in the criminal justice system.

Sweat testing has some serious limitations due to the fact that the amount of perspiration can be very different between people and the accuracy of THC measurement may be affected by environment contamination, temperature and level of physical exertion.



At Home Drug Tests

At-home drug tests are easy to find and can be purchased in both drug stores and online. They are also relatively affordable. While these tests are not as accurate as the other tests mentioned, they may give an indication of whether there remains marijuana in your body. Be cautious with these tests as studies have proven that false negative tests have occurred when the at home test has passed its expiration date or the test chemicals are not working correctly.

While I have never used an at-home drug tests, many of my clients have. The reliability is still debatable but to counter balance this, my clients have often purchased two or three different tests and used them in conjunction with each other. Sometimes more is better.



Removing THC From Your System

Knowing the basics about cannabis and the types of testing is one thing, but knowing how to safely and quickly eliminate THC from your system prior to a drug test is another. There are some predictable and guaranteed methods that will work and others that might not work. Be careful when cleansing your system as urine testing (the most common) requires the sample needs to be the proper color, the right temperature, have the correct creatine level, the correct pH level, and contain uric acid.



[Marijuana In and Out - How Quickly Cannabis enters and leaves your body \(click the red box\)](#)



[Fast Elimination of Carboxy THC \(click the red box\)](#)



Abstinence (Best method)

The easiest and only guaranteed way of testing negative is to abstain from using any marijuana products prior to testing. Unfortunately there is no easy way to determine how long you must remain abstinent.

For infrequent users you may be okay 3-4 days after use while a semi-regular user might need 7-10 days. For a heavy user it might be more than 10 days and up to 60 days. There are just too many variables, such as how often you consume, your body's fat levels and your own chemistry. Know your limits, adjust accordingly and add some more time to those calculations.



Urine Dilution (Should Work)

A common practice in flushing out THC, literally, is to drink copious amounts of water. There are some studies that have determined that drinking large amounts of water prior to a urine test does lower the Carboxy THC in the urine and may actually lead to a negative result.

There is one problem with this practice that cannot be overlooked. Testers will be on to you if you drink so much water that the sample is diluted. These samples will be rejected and a suspicious eye turned in your direction. I have faced dozens of Judges who believe a diluted sample is effectively, a positive sample.

Knowing this, drink lots of water up to the day before the test, but not too much water the day of testing.



Exercise (Might Work)

Exercise may assist in the detoxification process as it does burn body fat, and that is where THC loves to hide.

It is highly recommended that you increase your workouts that burn fat (cardio and some weights). The longer you are able to do this the better results.

Be careful with this method as there is some evidence that sweating out THC could actually result in a temporary spike of THC so do not exercise with any vigor for 1-2 days prior to testing.



Detoxification Kits and Drinks

Detoxification is the removal of a toxic substance from the body. In general, it is healthier and safer to allow the Carboxy THC to leave the body naturally. However, sometimes the unexpected happens and you just don't have time to allow the natural way to eliminate the THC.

In such instances there is yet another option, detoxification kits. These are kits proclaim to flush the marijuana metabolites out of the body and usually come in the form of drinks or pills.

It's advised to be very cautious with these kits as they are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).



Foods help Detox your Body from THC

Detoxing from marijuana can be done a number of ways but a healthy way to speed up the process is by eating and consuming the right food and drink.

High fiber foods are a great place to start. High fiber foods would include wholegrain bread (not white bread), whole wheat pasta, brown rice and whole grain cereals.

Antioxidant foods are also good to introduce into your diet. Such foods boost your immune system and repair damaged cells. Examples of antioxidant rich foods include very dark chocolate, nuts, all kinds of beans, fruits, vegetables and certain fish, like salmon. Did I say vegetables? Yes I did - consume lots of these!



Foods help Detox your Body from THC

Also essential for good health are lean proteins. It is smart to avoid red-meat when eliminating marijuana from your body so avoiding fatty proteins, helps. Meats such as chicken, turkey and ham as well as eggs and beans are good to assist with the healthy elimination of THC.

Finally, it is imperative you remain well hydrated when trying to flush out toxins and marijuana metabolites from your body. Ordinary water is the best choice and adding lemon or cucumber may give it some taste. Other drinks to consider would include cranberry juice, herbal teas and even apple cider vinegar, although science is less certain on their value in eliminating THC. It is important to avoid alcohol and fizzy drinks with lots of sugar.



POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

What Else Might Affect the Test Results?

There are occasions when unexpected products can interfere and affect a drug test for marijuana. Medicines used to treat nausea from chemotherapy, such as Dronabinol (aka Marinol), may give positive test results.

Another product, CBD should not show up on a drug test but the truth is that many CBD products do contain trace amounts of THC, so there remains a risk that a CBD product will be detectable in a drug test if enough CBD has been consumed. While the risk is very low, I also recommend extreme caution so avoid CBD products if you can and if in doubt, avoid them (or reduce them).



CRAZY WAYS TO PASS OR FAIL A DRUG TEST

Fake Urine

Yup, there is such a thing. Of course, such an alternative only works if the UA test is unmonitored. That being said, this is a really bad idea. In fact, Michigan just approved a new bill making it illegal to use such a product.

Please, **never** use this method.

Using Other Urine

Use someone's urine instead of your own urine has been attempted for many years. Well, this too is deception and would only work if the test is unsupervised. Many if not most tests are now supervised so this method would likely fail.

Please, **never** use this method.



Mid Stream Urine

If you are providing a urine sample try to provide a sample from the middle of your urine stream, not at the beginning or end of the stream. Apparently, most THC metabolites are present in the beginning and at the end of the stream. Also, if you can, avoid providing a urine sample in the morning as this is when the highest number of metabolites are present, evidently...

Special Shampoo

There are shampoos that allegedly assist in the faster removal of THC when used in conjunction with other methods of THC removal. Obviously using a shampoo that allegedly removes toxins from the hair is for hair testing, not other forms of marijuana drug testing.



CERTO

According to the manufacturer, Certo "helps simplify your favorite jam and jelly recipes and is an easier alternative to powder varieties." What it doesn't say is that CERTO has been used by many to pass a urinalysis test. The general idea is that because CERTO is high in fiber and carbohydrates, and can boost insulin for a short period of time which may prevent the burning of fats in the body which can cause a clean test (UA) for a few hours.

Advocates (and there are many) claim this method should result in a clean urinalysis for at least 3 hours.

TIPS: Proponents recommend that you should not do this too late, don't over-hydrate, you must use a sports drink and you should add creatine.

DIRECTIONS:

YOU WILL NEED:

- Two packets of Certo (Sure Jell or Fruit Pectin will do)
- Two x 32oz sports drinks (i.e. Gatorade)
- Creatine Monohydrate
- Multivitamin
- Vitamin B2 (optional)

THEN:

- Mix one packet of Certo with one of the sports drinks. Mix well and drink it the night before the drug test.
- 1-2 hours before the drug test, mix the second packet of Certo with the other sports drink.
- Consume it along with the multivitamin and B2.

The Macujo Method



The Macujo (or “Mac”) method is a seven-step hair-cleansing procedure designed to successfully pass hair testing. The idea is that the method opens up the hair cuticles and permits the cortex (middle the hair cuticle) to be flushed free of the THC metabolites.

This rather lengthy, expensive and complicated method advises the use of rubber gloves, shower cap, Clean and Clear Deep Cleansing, Heinz Vinegar, Tide Liquid Laundry Detergent, Old Style Aloe Toxin Rid Shampoo and Zydol Ultra Clean.

Supporters of the “Mac” advise that this process be repeated at least 5 times within 3-5 days and a few hours before the test. Advocates of this practice believe this process is 90% successful but works better for thin, light hair and not as well for darker thicker hair.

I would **never** recommend any of my clients use this method.



Rapid Removal of THC

There are times when the rapid removal of THC from your body is necessary. Such a necessity may be due to a surprise urinalysis test for a probation department or for employment purposes. If this is you, there are some steps that you can take to rapidly remove THC from your system.

However, it must be remembered that even though some of these tips do work, never rely solely on them.

Most of the tips already noted in this book are safe to rely on and I recommend however, there are some additional methods you can take that may further assist the rapid removal of THC.

Finally, a word of caution. Be careful if you are detoxing on your own. Do not consume anything in excess of what is recommend to be healthy (including water). And remember, detoxification kits and drinks are not approved by the FDA.



Rapid Removal of Carboxy THC



Rapid Removal of THC

- **TIME:** Yes, I understand that you may not have much time when you are trying to rapidly remove THC, but any additional time can be valuable. If you're able to delay the test by several hours or a day or two, this may assist with the objective of testing clean.
- **WATER:** Water can be incredibly valuable to flushing out your body of toxins and, THC. This may be the best way to rapidly detox (for urine testing). Increase your water intake but do not drink too much water the day of testing.
- **DIET:** In addition to water, your diet can do wonders when it comes to flushing out THC. Eat healthy (avoid fried foods and fast foods), eat more vegetables, eat whole grains, eat/drink antioxidant foods and eat lean proteins.
- **EXERCISE:** THC loves fat, so get rid of it! Exercise more (cardio primarily) in the days and weeks leading up to your test. Research confirms this practice does work (even if only a little). However, do not exercise the day or two prior to testing!



Rapid Removal of THC

- **DETOX KITS:** The value of using these kits is not necessarily guaranteed however, if it may help (even a little) then it is worth trying. There are some kits that seems to accelerate the removal of THC but these quality kits usually require 5-10 days.
- **DETOX DRINKS:** There are some 24-Hour detox drinks that can be helpful for stimulating the body's natural detoxification process. However, they may also strip urine of certain indicators that testers look for to ensure the sample is genuine. Use cautiously!
- **MID-STREAM URINE:** This doesn't rapidly reduce THC ahead of the test, but there is some science that states the largest amount of THC metabolites and toxins are found in the first and last parts of the urine stream.
- **CRANBERRY JUICE:** Again, the value of cranberry juice can be debated but it's worth a try! The more I research this the less likely it appears this home remedy will work. Don't rely on it but there is no harm in using (just not the day of the test).



Rapid Removal of THC

- **B VITAMINS | CREATINE:** After reading a few studies on the value of these two items, it appears the value is negligible. Worth a try? Perhaps, but the value seems minimal, if any.
- **DRINKS:** Ginger, lemon, green tea and apple cider vinegar are favorites among many to remove THC from the body. I haven't found much scientific data to support this, just anecdotal information. Won't harm and perhaps (?) will help.
- **CERTO:** Check out CERTO on page 24. Once again, pros and cons to consider.
- **BENTONITE CLAY:** This product is made of aged volcanic ash and does have many detoxifying properties. It allegedly has external and internal uses that have valuable detoxifying benefits. I'm not sold on its use, but there are many who believe that using the clay in a bath, on the skin or added to drinking water may help.
- **AT HOME DRUG TEST:** As added peace of mind, an at-home drug test may be wise to ensure detoxification has been successful.



Final Thoughts

Drug testing is serious and as such it is important that all steps be taken to avoid a positive test. Understanding what steps are necessary will assist in a successful outcome.

As a reminder, the keys to preparing for a clean drug (marijuana) test are the following:

- Abstinence (do not use or consume marijuana)
- Time (give yourself enough time to remove Carboxy THC)
- Proper diet (eat healthy food, vegetables and whole grains)
- Water (drink lots of it to flush your system)
- Exercise (get more of it but not the day of the test).

Remember, seek counsel with an attorney if your drug test is court related, consult with a doctor if you have any medical issues, do not make matters worse by cheating the system, and understand your body and how marijuana will stay in your system. Do everything you can to test clean Best of luck!