



Navy Drug Screening Laboratory Jacksonville

Screening News

February 2009

Volume 1, Number 1

In This Issue

- CO's Desk
- In Focus: Accessioning
- Discrepancy of the Month
- Drug Facts
- Ask the Expert

Contact Us:

NDSL Jacksonville
PO Box 113, Bldg H-2033
Naval Air Station
Jacksonville, FL 32212-0113
904-542-7755
DSN 942-7755

CO's Desk

As the Commanding Officer of the Navy Drug Screening Laboratory Jacksonville, it is an honor to be part of such an incredible team of professionals dedicated to ensuring warfighter readiness by deterring illegal drug use through providing accurate and timely forensic drug testing.

As part of our commitment to you, we have developed this newsletter to provide the latest news concerning issues which may affect you and your program. In this and future editions of the "NDSLJAX Screening News" we will present information about our operations by highlighting the activities of one of our departments, describe common discrepancies observed from samples submitted to the lab for testing, provide facts concerning commonly used drugs and much more.

We hope you find this newsletter informative and useful. Please let us know if there is anything you would like to see in future editions or send in your questions and we'll have our experts provide the answer.

E. R. Hoffman
CDR MSC USN

In Focus - Accessioning Department: "Where Excellence Begins!"



Accession technician Lorenzo Amos thoroughly inspecting a specimen bottle. "The first step in our process is the inspection of the package and the form for any discrepancies. Then each bottle is inspected and assigned a unique laboratory accessioning number. Finally, the specimen is poured into a test tube and transferred to the initial screening department for drug testing."

A list of some of the items that we look for during our inspection:

Did you know: All our employees must pass rigorous training requirements, leading to certification in the areas in which they work.

Did you know: Non-forensic corrections are one of the most commonly reported discrepancies associated with samples submitted to NDSL JAX.

Did you know: Marijuana (THC) was the 2nd most commonly detected drug found in samples submitted to NDSL JAX last year.

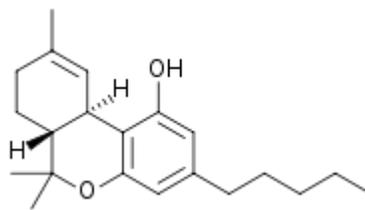
- Intact package seal
- Signature/initials on package seal
- DD Form 2624 discrepancies
- Intact bottle seal
- Label discrepancies
 - Date, UPC/service member initial and batch number on label
 - Social Security Number (SSN)
 - SSN and specimen collection date match DD Form 2624
 - Batch and specimen numbers match DD Form 2624

Discrepancy of the Month

Non-Forensic Correction (GY)

To minimize problems in processing and reporting test results, it is important to make proper forensic corrections and correct chain of custody entries on the DD Form 2624. Non-forensic corrections occur when a person makes a change to the printed or handwritten information and then fails to initial and date the change. For example, the Urinalysis Program Coordinator (UPC) lines out an individual's SSN on DD Form 2624 for a sample that was not collected but does not initial and date the correction. See the ASK THE EXPERT section below for more information.

Drug Facts



MARIJUANA (THC)

(Tetrahydrocannabinol)

Information obtained from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)

www.usdoj.gov/dea

Description: Marijuana is obtained from the *Cannabis sativa* plant and is the most widely used illicit drug in the United States. Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the psychoactive ingredient in the marijuana plant and is directly associated with the mood altering properties of marijuana.⁽¹⁾

A dry, shredded green/brown mix of flowers, stems, seeds, and leaves of the plant is usually smoked as a cigarette (joint, nail), or in a pipe (bong). It also is smoked in blunts, which are cigars that have been emptied of tobacco and refilled with marijuana, often in combination with another drug. It might also be mixed in food or brewed as a tea. As a more concentrated, resinous form it is called hashish and, as a sticky black liquid, hash oil. Marijuana smoke has a pungent and distinctive, usually sweet-and-sour odor.⁽²⁾

Medical properties of the plant were recognized in China 2700 years ago for the

Did you know: The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) is a valuable source for information regarding illicit or illegal drugs (www.usdoj.gov/dea)

relief of pain, muscle spasms, convulsions, epilepsy, asthma, and rheumatism.⁽¹⁾ Cannabis grows in the wild in areas of Russian Federation, Central Asia, Africa, and Latin America.⁽³⁾

Common Names: Grass, pot, weed, bud, Mary Jane, dope, indo, blunt, ganja.⁽⁴⁾

Effects: Behavioral effects of cannabis include feelings of euphoria and relaxation, altered time perception, lack of concentration, impaired learning and memory, and mood changes such as panic reactions and paranoia. Cannabis was also found to produce rapid changes in some physiological effects including heart rate, blood pressure, and causing dry mouth, increased appetite and decreased respiratory rate.⁽⁵⁻⁷⁾

Trends: Overall marijuana production in Mexico, the principal source of foreign-produced marijuana to U.S. drug markets, appears to be increasing. Most of the foreign-produced marijuana available in the United States is smuggled into the country from Mexico via the U.S.-Mexico border by Mexican criminal groups; however, a sharp rise in marijuana smuggling from Canada via the U.S.-Canada border by Asian criminal groups has increased the domestic availability of marijuana produced in Canada.⁽⁸⁾

Among students surveyed as part of the 2008 Monitoring the Future study, 14.6% of eighth graders, 29.9% of tenth graders, and 42.6% of twelfth graders reported use of marijuana.⁽⁹⁾

Sources

1. Huestis MA: Cannabis (Marijuana) – Effects on human behavior and performance; *Forensic Sci Rev* 14:15; 2002.
 2. National Institute on Drug Abuse, InfoFacts: Marijuana, April 2006
 3. U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy: *Global Illicit Drug Trends* 1999; U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, DC; p 52; 1999.
 4. Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Marijuana Street Terms.
 5. Adams IB, Martin BR: Cannabis – Pharmacology and toxicology in animals and humans; *Addiction* 91: 1585; 1996
 6. Benowitz NL, Rosenberg J, Rogers W, Bachman J, Jones RT; Cardiovascular effects of intravenous delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol: autonomic nervous mechanism; *Clin Pharmacol Ther* 25: 440; 1979.
 7. Hollister LE: Health aspects of cannabis; *Pharmacol Rev* 38: 1; 1986.
 8. National Drug Intelligence Center, National Drug Threat Assessment 2006.
 9. National Institute on Drug Abuse and University of Michigan, Monitoring the Future 2008 Data From In-School Surveys of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Students, December 2008.
-

Did you know: Officers assigned to the Navy Drug Screening Laboratory belong to the Medical Service Corps and primarily possess a biochemistry sub-specialty

Ask the Expert

1. Can a person *knowingly* or *unknowingly* passively inhale enough marijuana side-stream smoke to cause a confirmed positive test result exceeding the DoD administrative cutoff concentration?

Answer: No. Studies published in scientific journals show no instances where passive inhalation of marijuana smoke, under everyday circumstances, caused urine specimens of non-marijuana users to test positive for THC metabolite using the confirmation cutoff level (15 ng/mL) currently mandated by the DoD.

2. How do you make a proper forensic correction?

Answer: Draw a single line through the incorrect information, initial and date the line-out and place the correct information in close proximity to the lined-out information. Forensic corrections are necessary when making any changes on the DD Form 2624 or on the urine specimen bottle.

3. How do you forensically void a sample on the custody document DD Form 2624?

Answer: Draw a single line through the bar-coded SSN on the DD Form 2624 and then initial and date the line-out each time you void a sample on the form.

4. What are examples of a proper chain of custody?

Answer: See examples below

Back of DD Form 2624

DATE	RELEASED BY	RECEIVED BY	PURPOSE
081229 Same date samples collected	Signature E.g., UPC Printed Name	Postal Service	Release to Postal Service for Shipment to Lab

Back of DD Form 2624

DATE	RELEASED BY	RECEIVED BY	PURPOSE
081229	Signature Person #1 Printed Name	Signature Person #2 Printed Name	Transfer Custody
081229	Signature Person #2 Printed Name	Postal Service	Release to Postal Service for Shipment to Lab

Back of DD Form 2624

DATE	RELEASED BY	RECEIVED BY	PURPOSE
081229	Signature Person #1 Printed Name	Storage	Temporary Secured Storage
090106	Storage	Signature Person #2 Printed Name	Retrieve from Storage
090106	Signature Person #2 Printed Name	Postal Service	Release to Postal Service for Shipment to Lab