Drug Testing FAQs

How many specimens are tested annually at the Navy Drug Screening Laboratories (NDSLs)?
The two NDSLs test approximately 2.5 million specimens annually from Navy and Marine Corps active duty, recruit, and reserve members, all Department of Defense (DOD) military applicants processed through the Military Entrance Processing Stations, and other military members (i.e., Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, ROTC).

How are specimens tested?
Specimens are transported from the submitting units to the laboratory via the US Postal Service, private carrier (FEDEX, DHL, UPS), or hand-delivery. The accessioning department staff documents receipt of the specimens on the specimen custody and control document, examines the package, specimen, and accompanying documentation, and assigns the applicable discrepancy codes. Strict chain of custody is maintained throughout specimen handling and processing. The accessioning department technician prepares an initial testing batch, pours an aliquot of each specimen into individual tubes, and transfers the batch to the screening department to conduct the initial testing analysis using immunoassay instrumentation.

If no drug is detected during the immunoassay testing, the service member's specimen is reported as negative and the specimen is discarded. If a specimen is presumptively positive, the result is compared against data from the electronic prescription reporting system (ePRS); some drug classes may be reported as negative if there is a valid prescription documented in ePRS within the last 180 days. Specimens that are presumptively positive that are not cleared through ePRS are sequestered for confirmatory analysis using a new aliquot poured from the original specimen bottle. These specimens are tested for drug presence and concentration using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) or liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) instrumentation. The drug or metabolites must be present at or above the DOD cutoff, and all quality control and reporting criteria must be satisfied, in order to be reported as positive.

All data generated by the laboratory are subject to multiple reviews by laboratory certifying officials to ensure that all procedures have been followed and that the results are scientifically valid and legally defensible prior to uploading the results to the iFTDTL portal.

What drugs / metabolites are included in the panel and what are the DOD cutoffs?

Drug / Metabolite	**Confirmation Cutoff (ng/mL)**
Marijuana Metabolite (THC)	15
Cocaine Metabolite (BZE)	100
Opioids:	
Morphine (MOR)	4000
Codeine (COD)	2000
Oxycodone (OXCOD)	100
Oxymorphone (OXMOR)	100

Hydrocodone (HYDC)	100
Hydromorphone (HYDM)	100
Heroin Metabolite (6AM)	10
Fentanyl (FENT)	1
Norfentanyl (NFENT)	1
Amphetamines:	
d-Amphetamine (DAMP)	100
d-Methamphetamine (DMETH)	100
Methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA)	500
Methylenedioxyamphetamine (MDA)	500
Benzodiazepines:	
Alpha-hydroxyalprazolam (AHAL)	100
Lorazepam (LORA)	100
Nordiazepam (NORD)	100
Oxazepam (OXAZ)	100
Temazepam (TEMA)	100
Synthetic Cannabinoids:	
JWH-018 (SYCAN)	1
JWH-073 (SYCAN)	1
UR144 (SYCAN)	1
MAM-2201 (SYCAN)	1
AB CHIMINACA (SYCAN)	1
AB PINACA (SYCAN)	1

Can the laboratory test for any other drugs outside of the DOD panel?
The NDSLs are only certified to test for the drugs / metabolites included in the DOD panel, but can coordinate additional testing with the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System. Steroid testing requests are coordinated by NDSL Great Lakes. Submission information can be found in the Steroid Testing and Specimen Submission FAQ documents under Key Resources on this website.

Does the concentration of drug / metabolite in the specimen indicate when / how much of the drug was used?
The urinalysis result represents a single point in time and does not convey the drug dosage or phase of metabolism. Other confounding variables include the frequency of use, time since last use, physical condition, fluid intake, other medications / drugs, etc. The laboratory expert witnesses can provide technical insight regarding typical rates of metabolism for the reported drugs / metabolites in the specimen.

How long does the laboratory retain specimens?
Negative specimens are discarded after testing is complete. Positive specimens are retained in frozen storage for one year; the retention date may be extended in response to legal document or expert witness requests.

How long does it take to get results from the laboratory?
Results are reported via the iFTDTL portal. Negative and positive results are usually reported within four and six days, respectively, from the date of receipt at the laboratory. Results may be delayed due to workload fluctuations. Steroid and off-panel testing results will have longer turnaround times.

Where can I sign up to receive drug test results via the iFTDTL portal?
Accounts may be obtained by contacting your Service iFTDTL point of contact.
The Navy POC can be reached at 901-874-2458, DSN 882-2458 or by email at MILL_DTADMIN@navy.mil. The Marine Corps POC can be reached at 703-784-9526, DSN 278-9526 or by email at usmcinfo@ftdtldata.amedd.army.mil.

My Plain Language Address (PLAD), Command name or UIC/RUC changed. What should I do to make sure I receive my test results?
Notify the Service point of contact as soon as possible to request a database change. Results are posted to the portal based on UIC/RUC.

What should I do if I don't receive my test results?
Contact the laboratory to which specimens were submitted for further guidance.

NDSL Great Lakes:
(847) 688-2045, usn.great-lakes.navdruglabgrlil.list.ndslgl-tech-help@mail.mil

NDSL Jacksonville:
(904) 546-8033, usn.ndsljax@mail.mil

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