

Drug Testing in Sports

What is drug testing?

Drug testing is the process of collecting samples of your blood, urine, or saliva to check for chemicals that are either illegal or banned in a sport.

Drug testing in sports helps:

- Prevent cheating in sports
- Keep a level playing field for athletes
- Support the notion of fair play and equality

Some common chemicals or substances for which athletes are usually tested are:

- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Alcohol
- Stimulants such as amphetamines, ephedra, or caffeine
- Steroids
- HGH (human growth hormone)

Each sports organization has a different list of substances they test for. Contact your specific league to find out the chemicals you will be tested for.

Most drug tests are surprise tests or random tests.

Why is this test done?

Drug testing in sports is done for a variety of reasons:

- To keep a level playing field for athletes
- To support fair play and equality
- To prevent or deter cheating in sports

Drug testing is used at many levels of sports:

- High school athletes
- College athletes
- Olympic athletes
- Professional football, baseball, basketball, hockey, and cycling

How do I prepare for the test?

You don't have to do anything to prepare for the test.

What happens during the test?

You will provide a sample of your urine, blood, or saliva for tests in a lab. A testing official will be present to ensure that:

- The proper procedure is followed

- The sample is your urine and not someone else's
- The sample isn't tampered with

Often officials from the sports governing body are present to observe as well.

What happens after the test?

The urine, blood, or saliva samples are sent to a lab and the test results reported to the governing body of the particular sport. If drugs are not found in the test sample, the result is negative. If substances are found, the result is positive and you may be banned or suspended from your sport. The length of suspension depends on what substance was detected and how many previous drug tests have been positive.

You can get more information from:

- World Anti-Doping Agency
<http://www.wada-ama.org/>.
- NCCA
<http://www.ncaa.org/health-and-safety/policy/drug-testing>

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