

I'm not a bot









## How long will meth show up on a drug test

Mephamphetamine is a lab-made (synthetic) stimulant with high addiction potential. Whether as shiny bluish-white rocks or crystals, it may be called "crystal meth," "Tina," or "ice." Mephamphetamine's short-term effects typically include feelings of euphoria and increased alertness and energy. It can also cause serious negative health effects, including paranoia, anxiety, rapid heart rate, irregular heartbeat, stroke, or even death. Long-term use may lead to insomnia, memory loss, development of a substance use disorder, and other health problems. Methamphetamine, taken alone or combined with fentanyl, contributes to the overdose crisis in the United States. The effects of mephamphetamine may be felt immediately or within 20 minutes, depending on how it is used.<sup>5</sup> When smoked or injected, it enters the bloodstream and brain rapidly and produces an immediate and intense "rush" or euphoria. Other immediate effects include increased wakefulness, confidence, energy, and sex drive, as well as decreased appetite.<sup>1,3,6,7</sup> The euphoria wears off quickly, leading to a "crash." Some people try to avoid this and extend the euphoria by repeatedly taking the drug in a binge pattern. Repeated use in this way increases the risk of developing a mephamphetamine use disorder. Mephamphetamine has several immediate negative health effects, including paranoia, anxiety, rapid heart rate, irregular heartbeat, stroke, or even death. Long-term use may lead to insomnia, memory loss, development of a substance use disorder, and other health problems. Methamphetamine, taken alone or combined with fentanyl, contributes to the overdose crisis in the United States. The effects of mephamphetamine may be felt immediately or within 20 minutes, depending on how it is used.<sup>5</sup> When smoked or injected, it enters the bloodstream and brain rapidly and produces an immediate and intense "rush" or euphoria. Other immediate effects include increased wakefulness, confidence, energy, and sex drive, as well as decreased appetite.<sup>1,3,6,7</sup> The euphoria wears off quickly, leading to a "crash." Some people try to avoid this and extend the euphoria by repeatedly taking the drug in a binge pattern. Repeated use in this way increases the risk of developing a mephamphetamine use disorder.

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NIDA, Methamphetamine National Institute, National Institute on Drug Abuse website. November 20, 2024 Accessed May 16, 2025. Expand for more information Are you or someone you know experiencing severe symptoms or in immediate danger? Please seek immediate medical attention by calling 9-1-1 or visiting an Emergency Department. Poison control can be reached at 1-800-222-1222 or www.poison.org. Are you or someone you know experiencing a substance use and/or mental health crisis or any other kind of emotional distress? Please call or text 988 or chat www.988lifeline.org to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. 988 connects you with a trained crisis counselor who can help. For referrals to substance use and mental health treatment programs, call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline at 1-800-662-Help (4357) or visit www.findtreatment.gov to find a qualified healthcare provider in your area. For other personal medical advice, please speak to a qualified health professional. Find more health resources on USA.gov. The emergency and referral resources listed above are available to individuals located in the United States and are not operated by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). NIDA is a biomedical research organization and does not provide personalized medical advice, treatment, counseling, or legal consultation.

Information provided by NIDA is not a substitute for professional medical care or legal consultation. Methamphetamine, better known as meth or crystal meth, is a potent illicit central nervous system stimulant that is smoked or injected for its euphoric effects. While the effects of meth are often short-lived, traces of it can linger for much longer in the body. This table shows how long meth is in the system and how long it is detectable in certain drug test types.[1][5]Drug Sample TypeMethamphetamine Detection TimeUrine testing< 2 - 5 daysSaliva testingup to 48 hoursHair testingup to 90 daysRead below to learn more about how the body metabolizes meth, drug tests for meth, and how long meth stays in the system. Many substances have similar detectable characteristics to methamphetamine that can be picked up in a urine test, even if the person being tested has never taken the drug. Different methods of drug testing are able to detect meth over different lengths of time. Some are more accurate than others while some have longer detection windows. Saliva tests are rarely used as substances tend to be hard to trace after a short amount of time. The presence of methamphetamine is detectable 10 minutes after last use in saliva and for up to four days.[1] Hair follicle testing takes longer to process and is more expensive than other drug tests but can trace substance use back much further and more accurately. Meth is detectable in hair follicles up to 90 days after the last dose.[2] The presence of meth is detectable in blood tissues within a few hours of last use and is almost undetectable past 24 hours.[5] Cheap or low-cost meth may have fewer meth metabolites in it due to being heavily cut and potentially may not show up in these drug tests. Most urine tests will detect meth up to four days after last use, though it can be detected up to seven days later in heavy users.[2]Any detectable amount of methamphetamine in the system is a strong sign of meth abuse. There are many factors that can influence the detection rate of illicit drugs in a toxicology test and these can vary from person to person.Factors that influence meth detection rates include:[3]Length of time meth was abused(for a chronic meth user will have larger traces of the drug in their system)Quantity of meth used(the concentration of meth in the system will be higher after a meth binge or heavy meth pipe use)Purity of the drug(Fitness(physical activity) can speed up the metabolism of meth)Whether other substances were taken(such as alcohol or other stimulants)Weight(people who take longer to process meth/GenderAgePre-existing medical conditions(specially those involving liver, heart, and kidney function)Related: How long do drugs stay in your system? Urine tests, or immunoassays, is the most common type of drug test. They work by detecting specific chemicals in your sample. If they find them, they'll tell you that you've used a drug. But sometimes, they can give false results. That's why it's important to understand how they work. One way they can give a false result is if you've taken the drug. This is known as a false-positive result, where the drug has been detected even though it isn't in the body's system. Drugs that can have an effect on meth urine tests include:[3]Antibiotics - Levaflex(floxacin) - Ritalin(methylphenidate) and Adderall(dextroamphetamine/amphetamine)Decongestants - Sudafed(pseudoephedrine)Antipsychotics - Thorazine(chlorpromazine) - Glucophage(metformin)Oral diabetes medicine - Transdurate(labetalol)Oral diabetes medicine - Glucophage(metformin)Anti-depressants - Prozac(fluroxetine), Zoloft(sertraline), trazodone(When having a drug test for methamphetamine, it is important to notify the clinician if you have had any of the above substances. This way a more accurate drug test can be conducted.Related: What does meth look, taste, and smell like? There are many claims on the internet for quick fixes to get meth out of your system quickly. Not only are these false, but some are also potentially life-threatening.A "baking soda bomb" is a concoction of water, baking soda, and bleach that is reported to clear methamphetamine out of the system through urination. This recipe is unproven and incredibly dangerous as consuming bleach can cause liver, kidney, and intestinal damage as well as death.[4]The only way to get meth out of your system is to let it metabolize naturally and be passed in urine.Related blog: Can Damaged Skin Heal After Meth Addiction? Meth is an incredibly potent stimulant that holds a high potential for abuse, dependence, and addiction. The drug is also cheap and readily available in many areas, making it even more likely for people who try it to become addicted.If you or someone you care about is abusing meth and may have developed a dependence, it is important to seek out professional treatment before addiction occurs.Getting treatment from a rehab facility can help to get meth and other drugs out of your system and regain control of your life. Visit our rehab directory to find a rehab center near you. 3 Methamphetamine has an average half-life of 10 hours, which means that after 10 hours, only half of the original amount remains in the body. This means that after 20 hours, only one-quarter of the original amount remains, and so on. So, if you take a single dose, it will take about 40 hours for only one-eighth of the original amount to remain. Sensation only lasts a short while — often a few minutes — but the drug itself can stay in your body for a much longer period of time.Meth is a stimulant that can energize both your body and mind. It poses a high risk of addiction.A urine test can detect traces of meth in your system within the first week after use. If you need a negative drug test for employment or legal reasons, you'll want to avoid using meth during that time period, since there aren't any guaranteed ways to make meth fully leave your system before the test.Read on to learn how drug tests detect meth and how your body processes the drug.Healthline does not endorse the use of any illegal substances, and we recognize abstaining from them is always the safest approach. However, we believe in providing accessible and accurate information to reduce the harm that can occur when using.Drug screenings most often test your body for meth by examining your urine or your hair. A blood test can also detect meth. When meth enters your bloodstream, your body breaks the drug down into other, simpler chemicals called metabolites. Your body will absorb some of these chemicals, but most of the drug and its metabolites wind up in your kidneys to become part of your urine.Anywhere from 37% to 54% of the meth you take will come out in your urine chemically unchanged.If you only used meth once, a urine test can detect meth or its metabolites for about 2 to 3 days after use.If you use meth regularly, some of it may remain circulating in your system, waiting until you release it as urine. You may need to wait up to 4 days after using meth to get a negative urine test, though the exact amount of time this takes can vary.If you need a negative test result, you might wonder what you can do to help meth leave your system faster.However, there is not much you can do to make meth leave your system more quickly. One strategy you may have come across involves drinking a lot of water at once — with "a lot" meaning two or three 12-ounce glasses. Drinking a lot of water does two things: It prompts your body to produce more urine, allowing you to expel more meth and meth byproducts. It can dilute your urine 10-fold within 30 minutes, lowering the concentration of meth in your urine enough that you test negative.However, it's important to note that the screening will show that your urine has been diluted.Your body usually produces the same amount of a chemical called creatine each day. Diluted urine will have low levels of creatine. That said, other physical conditions can also affect your creatine levels, so testers typically can't say for sure that you intentionally diluted your urine.It's also important to keep in mind that drinking very large amounts of water in a short period of time can cause water intoxication, which can be fatal. Speak with a doctor for information about how much water you should be drinking.You'll want to get emergency medical attention if you've had more than 3 L of water in a few hours and experience: headachesmuscle weakness or crampsfaintingnausea or vomitingdrowsiness and lethargyseizuresDiuretics, or water pills, may also dilute your urine and help you pee more. However, they also put more sodium in your urine, which can be harmful. Water pills, but it deposits most of the drug in your brain, lungs, liver, and kidneys.Meth that enters your brain drastically increases your dopamine levels, creating a powerful reward incentive to keep using. However, it can also kill brain cells, causing long-term damage to your memory, attention, and executive functioning.Meth that doesn't go to the brain will either leave your body in your urine or be gradually broken up into two components:Amphetamine: Another stimulant that poses a high risk of addiction, amphetamine also raises your brain's dopamine levels, though not as much as meth does.Parahydroxymethamphetamine (p-OHMA): This metabolite raises your blood pressure and boosts your adrenaline. It has little effect on your brain.These metabolites will also eventually get washed out of your body via your urine.When you use meth, your bloodstream carries it to every part of your body, including the cells in your hair follicles. As your hair grows, your body pushes these cells out of your follicles. By the time you can see your hair, the cells have already died — but they've also become microscopic time capsules, trapping the meth they absorbed inside.A positive result after a drug screening, the examiners may encourage you to consider substance use treatment. They may refer you to a local program, but you can also ask a doctor or mental health professional for recommendations.The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved any drugs to treat meth addiction the way it has for other substances. Instead, doctors recommend meth treatment based on individual needs, though patterns of abuse can contribute to treatment decisions. People who use meth regularly may benefit from ongoing treatment, such as counseling, support groups, and medication. Treatment goals for therapy may include:building motivation to stop using meth, such as finding alternate hobbieslearning how distorted or distressing thought patterns can contribute to self-sabotaging behavioreducating your family members on how meth addiction works and how they can support youaddressing underlying trauma or emotional pain that plays a part in meth useKeep in mind, too, that addiction isn't a choice you make. Meth use disorder and treatment addiction are serious mental health conditions that often require professional treatment. There's no shame in asking for help, and it's never too late to reach out for support. A urine test can detect meth use for at least 2 to 3 days. The detection window may be longer if you use meth regularly.If you'd like to stop using meth, support from a trained specialist can help you take the first steps toward recovery. Emily Swaim is a freelance health writer and editor who specializes in psychology. She has a BA in English from Kenyon College and an MFA in writing from California College of the Arts. In 2021, she received her Board of Editors in Life Sciences (BELS) certification. You can find more of her work on GoodTherapy, Verywell, Investopedia, Vox, and Insider. Find her on Twitter and LinkedIn.