

Information sheet for the alcohol abstinence programme using urine samples

1. General

Proof of abstinence for six or twelve months may be required as a precondition for the Mental and Physical Examination (MPU). The requirements for an acceptable abstinence document are set out in the CTU criteria in the assessment criteria for fitness to drive valid since 1 May 2014 (1).

In your own interest, please take note of the following information, so that you can complete the abstinence control programme successfully in accordance with these criteria. Moreover, we recommend that you get in contact with an appropriate advice centre when preparing for the MPU.

2. Abstinence control programme

2.1. Registration

You can contact our institute regarding the abstinence control programme via the telephone number +49 961 309-270 or by e-mail at forensik@synlab.com and make an appointment for an introductory talk and contract signing. Please bring a valid official identification document with photo (identity card, passport) so that we can verify your personal data. We can also send you the contract after you register by telephone. Following receipt of the signed contract and a copy of your photo ID (valid identity card or passport), the abstinence control programme begins. The entry stamp of our company marks the official start of the abstinence control programme, unless you wish to start from a later point in time.

2.2. Contract

The type of abstinence control programme desired, the control period and the number of examinations required are set out in the contract with reference to the CTU1 criteria. It is your responsibility to determine the duration of the monitoring period. If you need help with this, please get in contact with an MPU advice centre. Along with the contract, you will receive this information sheet describing the general conditions for the control programme. The information sheet is a constituent part of the contract.

2.3. Costs

Service	Price incl. VAT	Comments
Ethyl glucuronide in the urine	€57.00	per analysis
Sampling under visual inspection	€20.00	per sample

The costs due must be paid on-site on the day of sampling, in cash or by EC card (depending on the sampling centre). In some sampling centres, payment can only be made by invoice.

3. Conditions of implementation

3.1. Accessibility and availability

According to the CTU-1 criteria, the appointments for sampling must be unpredictable. You must turn up at the laboratory for a urine sample by the day after notification at the latest. Extenuating reasons for non-availability must be communicated to the laboratory in good time.

For you this has the following consequences:

- Appointments are mainly announced via text message or by telephone. That means that you must always be accessible. Check your text message inbox, listen to your mailbox or answering service regularly, or check the list of incoming calls for the laboratory's phone number. Call us back! The time limit starts from the moment you are first contacted at the number you have provided. We keep a written record of this.
- Sampling may be carried out on all working days from Monday to Saturday, which means that you must also reckon with receiving a notification on Sunday.
- Non-availability owing to illness: If you should fall so ill at short notice that you cannot appear at the laboratory, you must inform the laboratory of this by telephone on the same day and prove it in writing by means of a doctor's certificate or certificate of incapacity for work within three working days. Please take note that this is also regarded as non-availability, and therefore counted as such.
- If you have already received a message requiring your attendance before you have informed the laboratory of your illness, a doctor must certify that you had already fallen ill on the day you received the notification. In addition, the certification must take the form of a Certificate of unfitness to travel (Wegeunfähigkeitsbescheinigung), which means that the certificate must indicate that attendance at a sampling appointment was impossible or made considerably difficult.
- Non-availability for professional reasons (e.g. business trips, off-site employment) or because of holidays: Non-availability for professional reasons or because of leave periods must be communicated to the laboratory at least three days in advance by post, e-mail or telephone. However, remember that synlab can offer numerous sites for sample collection in Germany.
- In the case of a programme lasting 12 months, availability (regardless of reasons) may be interrupted for a maximum of 6 weeks at one time, and for a maximum of 8 weeks in total. In the case of a programme lasting 6 months, availability (regardless of reasons) may be interrupted for no more than four weeks at a time or in total. Where necessary, it may be possible to bridge longer periods of absence, e.g. those caused by longer periods of employment abroad, via hair analysis. However, the laboratory must be informed in good time and give their approval. After the start of the control programme, you must not miss an appointment for the first two weeks.

3.2. Avoiding influence on the test results

In certain circumstances the laboratory results can be influenced by various factors, such as medicines containing alcohol, foodstuffs containing residual alcohol and alcohol-based cosmetics.

Since you have to provide proof of abstinence, every positive result, even if it was caused by the factors given below, will initially be interpreted to your disadvantage.

Therefore, in your own interest, you should unconditionally observe certain rules of behaviour.

- **Medicines containing alcohol:**
Please inform your doctor of the alcohol abstinence programme if you are being treated with medicines containing alcohol. They will find alternative medication for you. If this is not possible, please ask your doctor to confirm it. If using self-medication you should always check the packet or packet insert for details of alcohol content.
- **Foodstuffs:**
According to foodstuffs regulations, drinks with an alcohol content of less than 0.5% ABV may use the description 'alcohol-free'. Moreover, several foods contain ethanol caused by the manufacturing process or after being stored for a long period in improper conditions.

„Alcohol-free beer“	up to 0.5% ABV (equivalent to 4 g ethanol per litre)
Commercially available fruit juices	up to 0.38% ABV (equivalent to 3 g ethanol per litre)
Kefir (milk drink containing alcohol)	up to 2% ABV (equivalent to 16 g ethanol per litre)
Sauerkraut	up to 0.5% ABV
Bananas (ripe), grapes	up to 1% ABV

If you consume large quantities of these foods close to the time of your urine sample, i.e. after you have been informed of the appointment, it can result in a positive result for ethyl glucuronide, albeit at a threshold value. Therefore you should avoid these foodstuffs, especially after you have been given your appointment.

- **Hygiene products:**
Mouthwash and hand disinfectants may contain ethanol. Particularly after being given your appointment, you should not use these any more. If you use them at work, then perhaps other disinfecting agents should be used. Disinfectants containing isopropanol do not affect the results. You should avoid cleaning agents containing ethanol at work.
- **Food supplements containing creatine (for bodybuilding) falsify the creatine content of the urine as an indicator for the fluid status, and therefore should not be taken.**

3.3. Conduct after receiving an appointment and during sampling

Since the urine is checked for endogenous dilution by the laboratory chemists, and is not usable if it is too diluted, you should limit fluid consumption on the sampling day (max. 200 ml per hour). Three hours before your appointment, you should refrain from emptying your bladder any more.

To confirm your identity you must bring a valid identity card or passport with you to every sampling appointment. The fees for the examination must be settled before the examination. The sampling is carried out under visual inspection.

Note: If too much liquid is consumed, the creatine value of the urine can fall below 0.2 g/l. In this case the urine sample cannot be used as proof of abstinence. A new appointment at short notice will then be announced. This results in higher costs for you. If the urine is diluted twice in the course of one abstinence control programme (creatine < 0.2 g/l), the programme must be cancelled, unless the reduced creatine value is the result of physiological or medical causes. This must be confirmed by a doctor in document form.

3.4. Cancellation criteria

The abstinence programme will be cancelled in the event of the following:

- Failure to observe the time limit after receiving an appointment.
- If appointments are missed without extenuating circumstances.
- If there is insufficient certification of illness (e.g. no certificate of unfitness to travel).
- Non-availability of more than 4 weeks at a time/in total (6-month programme) or 6 weeks at a time/8 weeks in total (12-month programme), unless a hair analysis has additionally been requested.
- Positive test result for ethyl glucuronide
- Urine dilution on two occasions (creatine < 0.2 g/l), if no medically confirmed physiological or medical causes have been provided.

Cancellation of the abstinence control programme on your part must be performed via notification in writing. If you cancel the programme before the first sampling appointment, an administrative fee of 30 euros is payable.

3.5. Notification of results

No individual results are issued. If you have successfully completed the abstinence control programme, you will receive these all together along with a concluding report on the findings in accordance with the CTU4 criteria. For data protection reasons, our staff cannot give you any information about your test results by telephone.

References: (1) Schubert, W., Dittmann, V. and Brenner-Hartmann, J. (ed.): Urteilsbildung in der Fahreignungsbegutachtung, Beurteilungskriterien [Forming judgements when assessing fitness to drive: assessment criteria], Bonn, Kirschbaum Verlag, 3rd Edition, 2013