

Information sheet for the drug abstinence programme using hair samples

1. General

Proof of abstinence for six or twelve months may generally 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 in 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, the abstinence control programme begins. The personal data in your contract will be checked against your ID on the day of your first sampling appointment.

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. 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. Sampling must be carried out at a certified sampling centre (see 3.3).

2.3. Costs

Service	Inclusive price	Comments
Multi-toxin screening of hair (amphetamine, benzodiazepine, cannabinoids, cocaine, methadone and opiates)	€154.90	per analysis
Multi-toxin screening of hair where there is knowledge of prior opiate consumption (additionally buprenorphine, tramadol and tilidine)	€214.40	per analysis
Hair sampling	€25.00	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. General conditions for hair analysis

According to the CTU1 criteria, abstinence from drugs can also be proven by using the hair. To do this, the section of hair near the scalp is tested. Depending on the length of the hair, by this means it is possible to check a specific period retrospectively. A growth rate of one centimetre per month is assumed. The requirements for accessibility at short notice and permanent availability do not apply in the case of hair analysis.

However, in order for the hair analysis to be usable, certain special aspects need to be taken into account:

- For the following reasons, drugs can still be identified in, for example, a 6 cm-long section of hair near the skull after abstinence for six months:
 - The growth of 10 to 20% of the hairs at the back of the head has come to a standstill. They last for around 6 months before they finally fall out. These hairs can indicate consumption from more than six months ago, depending on the intensity of consumption.
 - Additionally, drugs from body deposits can still be stored in the hairs for up to a few months after consumption has ended.
 - The growth rates of the hairs vary, both between individuals and in the same individual.
- Hair analysis is possible up to a maximum length of 6 cm.
- Bleached hairs are not suitable for the examination.
- Coloured hairs can be accepted for a maximum period of 6 months if uncoloured hairs are available for the second control period of 6 months or a urine control programme is carried out for the second control period. In this way, by looking at both the hair analysis and urine control, a period of one year can be regarded as adequately documented. You are obligated to disclose any cosmetic treatment of your hair when samples are taken.
- Suitability of other body hairs:
Other body hairs (e.g. pubic hair) can be used as proof of abstinence only in exceptional cases.
- Because the hair sample must be taken near the scalp (normally from the occipital protuberance), cosmetic consequences (bald patch in the sample area) are unavoidable. Any claims for damages arising from possible cosmetic consequences are expressly excluded.
- Please come to your sampling appointment with freshly washed hair.
- We recommend that you do not go to the hairdresser until you have received your findings or test result.

3.2. Avoiding influence on the test results

In certain circumstances the laboratory results can be influenced by various factors.

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.

- Cosmetic hair treatments (tinting, dyeing, bleaching, permanent waves, chemical smoothing) reduce the drug content of the hair. You should therefore avoid cosmetic hair treatments. Particularly in the case of bleaching, this can lead to results not being approved.
- Passive exposure to smoked drugs (e.g. cannabis or cocaine) or cocaine dust must be avoided at all costs.
- Please inform your doctor of the drug abstinence programme if you are being treated with medicines such as codeine. They will find alternative medication for you. If this is not possible, please ask your doctor to confirm it.
- As a precautionary measure, avoid hair treatments containing hemp.

3.3. Conduct after receiving an appointment and during sampling

Zur Überprüfung der Identität muss ein gültiger amtlicher Lichtbildausweis mitgebracht werden. Die Gebühren für die Untersuchung müssen vor der Untersuchung entrichtet werden. Entsprechend der CTU 2-Kriterien darf die Probenahme nur in einer zertifizierten Abnahmestelle erfolgen. Diese können Sie bei uns erfragen oder auf unserer Website einsehen.

3.3. Cancellation criteria

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

- Bleaching of hair
- Colouring of hair in the second control period
- Failure to disclose hair treatment
- Positive results

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.

3.4. 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