

# Amphetamine Screen (Blood)



## Does this test have other names?

Amphetamine concentrations screen (blood), amphetamine screen (blood)

## What is this test?

This test measures the amount of a drug called amphetamine in your blood. This drug is a central nervous system stimulant. This group of drugs also includes methamphetamine (meth). The test is most often used to screen for drug use. It's often required by the court system and some workplaces. If you show symptoms of an amphetamine overdose, such as severe agitation and psychosis, a healthcare provider may order this test.

Amphetamine is a commonly used illegal drug that overstimulates the central nervous system. It makes users feel abnormally alert, energetic, and productive. Stimulants like amphetamine and meth can also cause euphoria, overwhelming agitation, delusions, and hallucinations. Feelings of aggression and paranoia can make people more prone to violence. Abusing these drugs can also cause other serious health problems. These include stroke, heart disease, convulsions, and severe tooth decay.

Amphetamine also has medical uses. Healthcare providers sometimes prescribe it in small doses for patients with attention-deficit disorder (ADD) and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). It's also sometimes used to treat a sleep disorder called narcolepsy. People with this disorder can fall into a sudden deep sleep in inappropriate places or times.

## Why do I need this test?

Amphetamine can be dangerous to your health if you take too much. If you've been prescribed this drug, your healthcare provider may use this test to make sure you're getting the correct, safe dose.

If you come to the ER with signs of a drug overdose, you may also have a blood or urine screen for meth, which changes to amphetamine in the body. Signs of an overdose include:

- Hyperactivity
- High blood pressure
- Rapid heartbeat
- Heavy sweating
- Dilated pupils
- Dangerously high body temperature (hyperthermia), as high as 104°F (40°C)
- Aggressiveness
- Irrational violence
- Severe agitation
- Psychosis

Even if you don't use amphetamines, your workplace may require you to have the test as a condition of employment. If you are a parolee or someone being treated for drug use disorder, you may need to take this test to show that you aren't currently abusing drugs.

## What other tests might I have along with this test?

You might also need a urine test to screen for amphetamine. Or a blood test to check for other drugs such as marijuana and cocaine.

If you have signs of a methamphetamine overdose, a healthcare provider may also order other tests. These can include a fingerstick blood sugar test, an acetaminophen test, and an electrocardiogram (ECG). This is done to rule out other health emergencies or monitor your condition. Providers may also order tests to check your electrolyte balance and the health of your kidneys and liver.

## **What do my test results mean?**

Test results may vary depending on your age, gender, health history, and other things. Your test results may be different depending on the lab used. They may not mean you have a problem. Ask your healthcare provider what your test results mean for you.

A test showing small amphetamine concentrations in your body is not always cause for alarm. On the other hand, large amounts of the drug in your system can be dangerous or even deadly.

The results of this test only show the amount of amphetamine in your system at the time of the test. Providers diagnose amphetamine use only after a physical exam. This exam includes taking your personal history and talking with you. If you have a problem with amphetamine use, your provider can suggest treatment for addiction, drug use, or depression.

## **How is this test done?**

The test requires a blood sample. This is drawn through a needle from a vein in your arm.

## **Does this test pose any risks?**

Taking a blood sample with a needle carries risks that include bleeding, infection, bruising, or a dizzy feeling. When the needle pricks your arm, you may have a slight stinging feeling or pain. Afterward, the site may be slightly sore.

## **What might affect my test results?**

Although blood tests for amphetamines cost more than urine tests, they are the more accurate testing method. It's possible to alter a urine test if a tester is not present when the sample is taken.

## **How do I get ready for this test?**

You don't need to prepare for this test.

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