

What is Community Drug Checking?

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Community drug checking may use test strips and/or drug checking machines to identify the different substances in a sample or residue of drugs. These could be various drugs, fillers, cutting agents, and/or unexpected substances.



Fourier-transform infrared (FTIR) spectroscopy machine and immunoassay test strips.

Drug Checking Helps YOU

- Providing more information about your drugs helps in making informed decisions about safer use
- Lower your risk of overdose
- Lessen potential negative health outcomes
- Gain some control in an unregulated drug market

Drug Checking helps the COMMUNITY:

- Information about local drug supply
- Prevent overdose deaths
- Inform organization's response plans

**Drug checking is
always voluntary and
anonymous.**

Is this legal in Washington State?

- It is legal for this organization and its staff to offer and do drug testing. More information about the Washington state law can be found [here](#).
- Test strips and drug checking machines are not drug paraphernalia.

We are one of many harm reduction, public health, and syringe services programs that provide drug checking in WA State.

How are drug samples tested?

1. You **bring in a small amount of drugs or residue**, a sample about the size of a grain of rice or matchhead is all that's needed!
2. The drug checking technician may use various test strips and/or a Fourier-transformed infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) machine **to analyze the sample**.
3. You will get the initial results within **5-10 minutes**. The technician will help you understand what the results mean.
4. A piece of the sample is then sent in for **secondary testing**. A wallet card with a QR that is attached to a unique code will be given to you after the initial results which is linked to the secondary results.

What We Usually Can Tell You About Your Drugs

- Using **FTIR**
 - Main Active Ingredients
 - Cutting agents or buffers used for fillers
 - Potential contaminants
- Using **Test Strips**
 - If the substance the test strip was designed for is present (xylazine, fentanyl, benzodiazepine)

What We Usually Cannot Tell You About your Drugs

- Using **FTIR**
 - < 5% detection limit
 - Certain materials cannot be tested: organic materials (mushrooms, marijuana, peyote etc.), liquids, and drugs active at extremely low levels like LSD and fentanyl.
 - Drugs with very similar molecular structure cannot always be distinguished i.e. 2c products
 - Limited to available reference libraries – Novel substances may not be detectable.
 - Using **Test Strips**
 - Analogues/Drugs with similar effects, but slightly different chemical structures
 - False positives and invalid results
 - **Both Test Strips and FTIR**
 - Potency, purity, or strength of sample
 - Small, partial samples are used, and this may not represent the whole or detect all substances in the drug
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