

## AMPHETAMINE / METHAMPHETAMINE



▲ One of the methods used to smoke meth is called "foiling" or "chasing the dragon". The methamphetamine is placed on aluminum foil and heated from below with an open flame. As the methamphetamine melts and the vapors rise, the user inhales the fumes through an empty pen casing, straw, etc. The tip of this pen casing was melted because it was held close to the heated foil (left). A sheet of aluminum foil may be used over and over. Repeated use produces discoloration and a dark residue where the methamphetamine was melted and vaporized (center). The user may either press small dimples in the foil or fold the foil to form a crease to hold the drug as it is heated and melts. The photo at top right shows the carbon deposits caused by the heat source on the underside of the foil used to heat the drug. This method of smoking is also commonly used for heroin.

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◀ Many hard-core users of methamphetamine inject the drug. Like heroin, the user typically dissolves the drug with a small amount of water in a cooker, such as a metal spoon, and then draws the solution into a syringe through a piece of cotton to filter any particles that did not dissolve. The user may or may not heat the solution to help dissolve the drug. The filter cotton used in this photo was removed from a cotton swab. Pieces of cotton balls and cigarette filters are frequently used as well.

▶ It is not uncommon to find urine stored in bottles when a lab is seized. On average, 40% - 50% of ingested methamphetamine is excreted from the body unchanged in the urine.

This figure can rise to 70% or more

in acidic urine. The experienced cook can extract and reprocess the methamphetamine in the urine. In 2003, there were a number of reports of large quantities of urine stored in seized labs, and many officers in meth task forces believe that collected urine is frequently overlooked.



▼ An individual arrested at a meth lab who was suffering from "crank bugs". This condition is sometimes seen in cases of heavy methamphetamine abuse. A similar condition, called "coke bugs" or "snow bugs", is also seen in heavy cocaine users. This is a drug induced hallucination or sensation that bugs are crawling on or under the skin. The medical term for this condition is "Magnon's Syndrome", which is named for the French neurologist Valentine Magnon. Magnon first identified this condition in chronic cocaine abusers in the late 1800s. The abuser repeatedly picks at the skin in an attempt to remove the bugs.

