

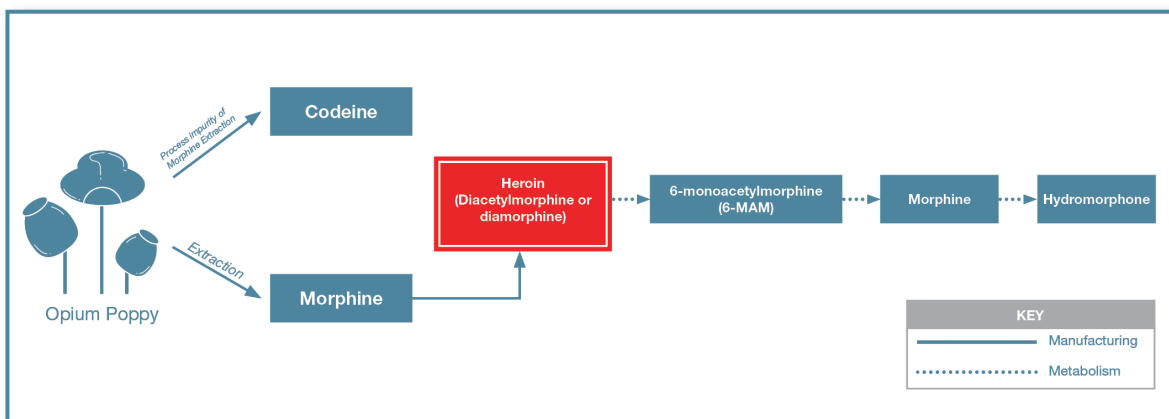
HEROIN

Heroin is an opioid synthesized from morphine, a naturally occurring opiate from the pod of poppy plants.¹ Heroin was created in an attempt to find a safer and less addictive analgesic than morphine, but was later found to have addictive properties far exceeding morphine. It is typically found as a white or brown powder, or as a black sticky substance commonly called black tar heroin.² It can be injected, smoked, or snorted, producing a strong euphoria known as the *rush*, followed by alternating states of sleep and restlessness.² Heroin quickly becomes physiologically and physically addictive among users due to the *rush*.

Heroin, also known as diacetylmorphine, is rapidly metabolized to 6-monoacetylmorphine (6-MAM) and then further into morphine.¹ Characteristic test results of recent heroin use include the presence of 6-MAM and morphine at extremely high levels, as well as the possibility of codeine as a process impurity from the production of heroin.¹ A recent study suggests the possibility of a natural, unknown inhibitor of the metabolism of 6-MAM to morphine, making it possible to see only 6-MAM with heroin use.³ The presence of morphine and potentially codeine and/or hydromorphone without 6-MAM can indicate the end of the elimination phase several days after heroin use.⁴

In an attempt to enhance the effects to the user, heroin can be fortified with other drugs such as cocaine, fentanyl, and fentanyl analogs.² The addition of such drugs has contributed to an increase in heroin-related overdoses and deaths.

Precision Diagnostics offers urine and oral fluid tests for 6-MAM, as well as the common metabolites related to heroin use: morphine, codeine, and their respective metabolites as seen in the figure below.^{5,6}



Interpretations of 6-MAM and morphine patient reports can be challenging.

A Precision Diagnostics trained Clinical Support Specialist can assist with further review of your patient's results

(800) 635-6901 Option 2

References:

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3. Andersson, M., Bjorkhem-Berman, L., Beck, O., (2015). Possible mechanism for inhibition of morphine formation from 6-acetylmorphine after intake of street heroin. Forensic Science International. 252:150-156.
4. White, R. M., Black, M. L., Pain Management Testing Preference, AACCC Press, Washington DC. 2007; 13-14.
5. Medical Review Officer Manual for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs. Effective October 1, 2010; 57, 80-82. https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/workplace/mro-guidance-manual-oct2017_2.pdf
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Precision Diagnostics is a leader in clinical laboratory testing and medication adherence monitoring. Specializing in qualitative and quantitative drug testing, our innovative state-of-the art technology provides new levels of data visibility and pricing transparency.

Precision's role is to ensure each participant, from the patient to the provider and the payer, benefits from our continued commitment to the principles of value-based care and medically necessary test utilization.

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