

Poppy Seed Warning Q&A

Quick Facts

- Poppy seeds are harvested from the poppy plant, a crop cultivated for the pharmaceutical and food industries.
- The seeds can become contaminated with morphine and codeine during harvesting.
- A new variant of poppy seeds has higher levels of codeine than previously reported.
- Ingestion of this variant of poppy seeds could cause Service members to test positive for codeine on a drug test.
- Due to the risk of a codeine positive drug test, the DoD is recommending Service members avoid consuming poppy seeds or any food products containing poppy seeds.
- Poppy seed products to avoid include poppy seed muffins, poppy seed/everything bagels and poppy seeds breads, crackers and oils.
- This is not a permanent ban. The DoD is working on additional testing measures to distinguish illicit codeine use from poppy seed ingestion. The warning will be updated in the coming months.

Q Why are Service members being told to avoid poppy seeds?

A There is a variety of poppy seeds that could cause Service members to test positive for codeine on a drug test

Q Hasn't there been a known association with poppy seeds and drug tests for years?

A Yes, but the association has been with morphine positive drug tests and the DoD uses a higher cutoff for morphine to account for this.

Q Is this a permanent ban on poppy seeds?

A No, DoD felt it was prudent to warn Service members while we work to put additional testing measures in place. The warning will be updated in the coming months

Q What foods should Service members avoid?

A Any food products containing poppy seeds. This includes bagels, muffins, cakes, breads, crackers and poppy seed oils.

Q Is there a safe amount of poppy seeds to eat that won't impact my drug test?

A The type of poppy seeds, amount consumed and time of consumption relative to the drug test are all factors. In some cases a single poppy seed muffin can cause a positive test.

Q What happens if I accidentally eat poppy seeds prior to a drug test?

A The DoD has temporarily suspended the reporting of codeine positives and is working on additional testing measures to distinguish illicit codeine use from poppy seed ingestion.