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## **Hair sampling, shipping, and storage for examination on drugs**

1. Head hair is the preferred specimen. Alternative hair (e.g. pubic, axillary) can be additionally collected or if head hair is unavailable.
2. The sample should be cut from the posterior vertex region of the head, as close as possible to the scalp. If not, the source of the sampling should be described. In general, head hair is estimated to grow at approximately 1 cm per month.
3. A lock of hair sample with the thickness of a pencil or several locks with the thickness of a straw is recommended.
4. The sampling does not need to be performed by a physician. The body site and any obvious cosmetic treatment of the hair should be recorded.
5. The cut hair lock can be wrapped or folded in aluminium foil and shipped in a letter.
6. Root (proximal) and tip (distal) should be clearly defined.
7. If the sample is not shipped immediately the dry hair should be stored in dark at room temperature.

See also: Forensic Sci. Int. (2004) 145: 83-84