

# UNDER the SCOPE



MISSOURI STATE HIGHWAY PATROL • CRIME LABORATORY

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To improve efficiency, please notify the lab if analysis of your evidence is no longer required.

To noticeably decrease case turnaround time, only submit those items that require analysis.

Nonprobative items offer no value from a forensic analysis standpoint and their submission will only cause delays.



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## Drug Tablet Submissions: Time Saving Suggestions

In an effort to continue to provide quality, timely results, the Crime Lab offers the following tips for agencies to use when determining what drug evidence to submit.

When the lab report states “Physical characteristics indicate...”. What does that drug result really mean?

Thousands of legally manufactured tablets and capsules are received by the Crime Lab every year. Many of these items are identical tablets or capsules, non-scheduled medications, or medications of the same schedule. Using instrumental methods, the lab currently confirms one tablet or capsule per subject of each scheduled pharmaceutical submitted. All remaining identifications are based solely on their markings, and since no chemical analysis is performed, the Analysis Result will state “Physical characteristics indicate...”. The Crime Lab utilizes commercial libraries for this purpose; however, your wait time can be significantly reduced if you utilize free web-based libraries rather than submitting these items to the Crime Lab. Websites such as **Drugs.com** offer a free pill identifier containing descriptors and photos. In addition, the database

may also provide a link to the manufacturer’s website to further support the identification.

By using this convenient reference and not submitting these medications to the Crime Lab, your agency can save valuable hours in travel and wait time. Benefits are also reflected in the Crime Lab’s ability to get to your other pending cases that DO require chemical analyses.

As always, when packaging evidence to submit to the Crime Lab to support criminal charges, ask the questions, “Is this item probative?” and “Does it require forensic analysis?” If the answer is “No” or “Not at this time”, please package these items separately and retain them at your agency. To help us take the “unnecessary time” out of turnaround time, please: **Be selective so we can be effective!**

For more ideas on what you can do to effectively decrease the turnaround time of your case, please visit the MSHP’s website where you’ll find other editions of “Under The Scope” under the “Other Publications” link, or contact us directly with any questions or training needs you might have.