

SCRAM^x® SYSTEM FAQ

TAMPERS, INTERFERANTS AND OBSTRUCTIONS



How does the Bracelet know if an offender is tampering with the system?

- Temperature sensors monitor the ambient temperature around the bracelet, which verifies that the subject has not removed the bracelet or is trying to do something to modify the body temperature and prevent “sweating.”
- An Infrared (IR) sensor that measures the reflective quality of the skin ensures that the bracelet is in place and that nothing has been placed between the skin and the bracelet in an attempt to obstruct the alcohol testing.
- A number of other strap and battery sensors ensure the Bracelet is in place and on the proper subject.
- The Bracelet also continuously conducts diagnostic tests to ensure the unit is functioning properly

How can you test negative on a urine or breath test just hours after having a confirmed drinking event on SCRAM^x?

It is not just possible, but probable, that someone can drink and test negative for alcohol just hours later using breath, blood or urine testing. Some specific types of urine tests can see residual indicators of alcohol several hours after a standard urine test would be negative for alcohol. But only if there was a very high level drinking event, and not with a consistent level of accuracy that can ensure the courts that someone was not drinking alcohol.

Breath, blood and urine testing are accurate and reliable for determining the level of intoxication for on-the-spot alcohol testing, such as a roadside sobriety test. But the body metabolizes alcohol very quickly, and once the process is complete, there are virtually no trace elements left in the body to facilitate detection. While drugs leave residual indicators in the body for hours, days or even weeks that are fairly easy to test for, alcohol does not. As such, long-term monitoring programs that test for alcohol consumption either randomly or even one to two times a day are very easy to circumvent.

Can someone put something between the bracelet and the leg to block readings?

At installation, the Infrared (IR) sensor takes a baseline reading. It shoots an IR beam out to the skin and then measures the reflective quality of what bounces back. If anything is placed between the bracelet and the skin or there’s any alteration to the baseline IR sensor, SCRAM^x will generate an Obstruction Alert. Most of the time, SCRAM^x is able to see both the drinking and the obstruction. AMS has tested hundreds of products over the years and conducts ongoing field testing to ensure the Bracelet is able to detect obstructions.

I heard you can put your ankle/leg in ice water or ice and keep your skin from sweating, then you can drink.

Not only will the temperature sensor register an alert, but this tactic does not prevent the Bracelet from taking transdermal readings. In addition, submerging the Bracelet in water is prohibited and would result in a violation.

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Why is there a list of products with alcohol that SCRAMx clients aren't supposed to use on or near the Bracelet? Doesn't that mean that those products could cause a false positive?

Offenders sign an offender agreement at the time of install that prohibits them from using products containing alcohol on or around the bracelet. The reason is that someone who drinks while wearing SCRAMx may try to “mask” a drinking event by “spiking” the bracelet. That can be done by spraying or applying a product with alcohol, then claiming it wasn't drinking, just exposure to a product.

A product with alcohol will cause a “spike” because the readings will go up much faster than the body could ever consume alcohol, and will also evaporate/burn off much faster than the body could ever metabolize alcohol. The process for confirming an event as actual assumption includes human analysis and the application of mathematical algorithms that ensure any confirmed drinking event was actually consumption, not environmental alcohol. So while SCRAMx can distinguish between consumed and environmental alcohol, the offender agreement prohibiting use of alcohol-containing products is intended to discourage spiking of the bracelet. That type of tamper is considered a violation and is addressed with graduated sanctions by the court or monitoring authority.

What if a drink or something with alcohol is accidentally spilled on the bracelet?

SCRAMx could get an alert for alcohol spilling on the bracelet; however, the system is designed to distinguish between exposure to alcohol around the bracelet and actual consumed alcohol that metabolizes through the skin. Spilling a drink or a product with alcohol (hairspray, perfume) would create a rapid spike much faster than the body would ever consume alcohol and would evaporate and burn off much faster than the body can metabolize alcohol. Our confirmation process includes an analysis that ensures that any confirmed event is consumed alcohol. AMS has tested hundreds of products over the years to ensure that nothing can mimic the results of consumed alcohol, including this scenario.

I read that hairspray/a hair salon can cause false positives?

Just like exposure to any other product with alcohol, it is definitely possible that SCRAMx would issue an alcohol alert if exposed to hairspray. However, hairspray/a hair salon environment is no different than any other product. The SCRAMx system is designed to distinguish between environmental exposure to alcohol and actual consumed alcohol that has metabolized in the body. Hairspray, along with hundreds of other alcohol-containing products, has been tested to ensure that exposure to the bracelet does not mimic a drinking event or create a false confirmed positive.

If you kiss or have sex with someone who is drinking, can that create a false positive on SCRAMx?

No. If there is substantial alcohol on or around the bracelet there might be an alcohol alert, but the system is designed to distinguish between alcohol consumed and metabolized by the person wearing the bracelet and exposure to something around the bracelet that contains alcohol.

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Isn't there a study that says if you eat certain baked goods they can create a false positive on SCRAMx?

No. This rumor started on the Internet many years ago after a Michigan judge misunderstood testimony about a scientific study. The peer-reviewed study in question evaluated whether the consumption of certain baked goods could create false positives on breath tests. The study concluded that some baked goods when consumed could create what's called "mouth alcohol" that lingers for several minutes in the mouth and can potentially create a false positive on a breath test. The results underscored the importance of proper wait times before a breath test, something that is standard in every jurisdiction in the country. **However, consumption of these foods would have no impact on urine, blood or transdermal testing.**

This Internet myth is now known as **The Chocolate Donut Theory**. Per the analysis of baked goods in the study, the conclusion is that **for someone to register positive for alcohol on a urine, blood, or transdermal test after eating baked goods, in one hour they would have to consume:**

- 274 chocolate cake donuts
- 207 chocolate raised donuts
- 43.48 pounds of Sun Maid[®] Raisin Bread
- 29.96 pounds of Thomas[®] Sourdough English Muffins
- 7.24 pounds of Kentucky bourbon cake
- 25.52 pounds of Home Pride[®] Wheat Bread

Can non-alcoholic beer or cold medicines create false positives? What about mouthwash?

While there are some reports that people are wrongly accused of drinking because they've consumed cold medicine or used mouthwash, the reality is those products, when used as directed, might create false positives with breath testing if proper test protocols are not followed. The reason is that consuming those products with alcohol might leave residual alcohol in the mouth, and when the breath test is taken, "mouth" alcohol creates a false positive. However, if proper protocols and wait times are employed for the breath test, these products would not create false positives.

These types of products would have no impact on the results of urine, blood, or transdermal tests unless used in such large quantities that they actually create intoxication. As with any product that contains alcohol, if an individual would consume enough of one of these products to become intoxicated, they are intoxicated. Whether the alcohol comes from hard liquor, wine, vanilla extract, or mouthwash, it's alcohol and can create intoxication.

Are there lights, alarms or other signals on the Bracelet that tell an offender when there is an alert?

No. There is no indication of any kind, on either the Bracelet or the Base Station, when there is an alert. When the Bracelet connects with the Base Station at pre-scheduled times, a green light on the Bracelet will blink to indicate that the two are communicating correctly. Note that the Bracelet and Base Station have to be within fairly close proximity of each other to wirelessly

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communicate—approximately 30 feet. The first indication of an alert will be at the data center, where all alerts are generated and analyzed before confirmation.

Can using hand sanitizers create false positives on SCRAM^x?

No. In 2008 the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) issued a warning that hand sanitizers had been shown to create false positive results on EtG urine tests. If someone got hand sanitizer near the bracelet and it creates an alcohol alert, SCRAM^x would be able to distinguish between the sanitizer and actual consumed alcohol that's been metabolized in the body.

What happens to offenders who are caught tampering with SCRAM^x?

That's up to the supervising agency. Generally, progressive sanctions are implemented, ultimately resulting with revocation of bond or probation and possibly incarceration. The type of punishment for violations and how quickly it escalates to incarceration depends on the laws and programs of that offender's supervising agency, the severity of their offense and the orders of the court. Some programs deal very aggressively with any kind of tamper violation, while others may provide more leniencies with tamper violations in comparison to a confirmed drinking event.