

Substance in hair may be a marker for alcohol consumption

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Credit: Laura Tiitto/public domain

A new *Drug Testing & Analysis* study reveals that measuring levels of ethyl sulphate (EtS), a metabolite of ethanol, in the hair can be used to assess alcohol consumption. In the study, researchers developed a method that was successfully applied to quantify EtS in hair samples from patients treated for alcohol use disorders.

The window of detection of [alcohol consumption](#) can be extended through the use of hair as a matrix. Also, compared with more traditional matrices (such as blood and urine), hair is easier to collect, transport, and store.

"EtS in hair shows potential as a direct biomarker for alcohol consumption and should be subject to future research," said lead author Dr. Delphine Cappelle, of the University of Antwerp, in Belgium.

More information: Delphine Cappelle et al, Assessment of ethyl sulphate in hair as a marker for alcohol consumption using liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry, *Drug Testing and Analysis* (2018). [DOI: 10.1002/dta.2410](#)

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