

Remington's Pharmaceutical Sciences

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Table of Contents

Part 1 Orientation		44	Cholinomimetic Drugs	889	
1	Scope	3	45	Adrenergic and Adrenergic Neuron Blocking Drugs	898
2	Evolution of Pharmacy	8	46	Antimuscarinic and Antispasmodic Drugs	907
3	Ethics	20	47	Skeletal Muscle Relaxants	916
4	The Practice of Community Pharmacy	28	48	Diuretic Drugs	929
5	Opportunities for Pharmacists in the Pharmaceutical Industry	33	49	Uterine and Antimigraine Drugs	943
6	Pharmacists in Government	38	50	Hormones	948
7	Drug Information	49	51	Vitamins and Other Nutrients	1002
8	Research	60	52	Enzymes	1035
Part 2 Pharmaceutics		53	53	General Anesthetics	1039
9	Metrology and Calculation	69	54	Local Anesthetics	1048
10	Statistics	104	55	Sedatives and Hypnotics	1057
11	Computer Science	138	56	Antiepileptics	1072
12	Calculus	145	57	Psychopharmacologic Agents	1082
13	Molecular Structure, Properties and States of Matter	158	58	Analgesics and Antipyretics	1097
14	Complex Formation	182	59	Histamine and Antihistamines	1123
15	Thermodynamics	197	60	Central Nervous System Stimulants	1132
16	Solutions and Phase Equilibria	207	61	Antineoplastic and Immunosuppressive Drugs	1138
17	Ionic Solutions and Electrolytic Equilibria	228	62	Antimicrobial Drugs	1163
18	Reaction Kinetics	247	63	Parasitocides	1242
19	Disperse Systems	257	64	Pesticides	1249
20	Rheology	310	65	Diagnostic Drugs	1272
Part 3 Pharmaceutical Chemistry		66	66	Pharmaceutical Necessities	1286
21	Inorganic Pharmaceutical Chemistry	329	67	Adverse Drug Reactions	1330
22	Organic Pharmaceutical Chemistry	356	68	Pharmacogenetics	1344
23	Natural Products	380	69	Pharmacological Aspects of Drug Abuse	1349
24	Drug Nomenclature—United States Adopted Names	412	70	Introduction of New Drugs	1365
25	Structure-Activity Relationship and Drug Design	422	Part 7 Biological Products		
Part 4 Testing and Analysis		71	71	Principles of Immunology	1379
26	Analysis of Medicinals	435	72	Immunizing Agents and Diagnostic Skin Antigen	1389
27	Biological Testing	484	73	Allergenic Extracts	1405
28	Clinical Analysis	495	74	Biotechnology and Drugs	1416
29	Chromatography	529	Part 8 Pharmaceutical Preparations and Their Manufacture		
30	Instrumental Methods of Analysis	555	75	Preformulation	1435
31	Dissolution	589	76	Bioavailability and Bioequivalency Testing	1451
Part 5 Radioisotopes in Pharmacy and Medicine		77	77	Separation	1459
32	Fundamentals of Radioisotopes	605	78	Sterilization	1470
33	Medical Applications of Radioisotopes	624	79	Tonicity, Osmoticity, Osmolality and Osmolarity	1481
Part 6 Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Agents		80	80	Plastic Packaging Materials	1499
34	Diseases: Manifestations and Pathophysiology	655	81	Stability of Pharmaceutical Products	1504
35	Drug Absorption, Action and Disposition	697	82	Quality Assurance and Control	1513
36	Basic Pharmacokinetics	725	83	Solutions, Emulsions, Suspensions and Extractives	1519
37	Clinical Pharmacokinetics	746	84	Parenteral Preparations	1545
38	Topical Drugs	757	85	Intravenous Admixtures	1570
39	Gastrointestinal Drugs	774	86	Ophthalmic Preparations	1581
40	Blood, Fluids, Electrolytes and Hematologic Drugs	800	87	Medicated Applications	1596
41	Cardiovascular Drugs	831	88	Powders	1615
42	Respiratory Drugs	860	89	Oral Solid Dosage Forms	1633
43	Sympathomimetic Drugs	870	90	Coating of Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms	1666
			91	Sustained-Release Drug Delivery Systems	1676
			92	Aerosols	1694
			Part 9 Pharmaceutical Practice		
			93	Ambulatory Patient Care	1715
			94	Institutional Patient Care	1737
			95	Long-Term Care Facilities	1758
			96	The Pharmacist and Public Health	1773

Parenteral Preparations

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Dosage forms of drugs are designed to make it possible to introduce a drug into the body of a human or animal patient. Since the well-being, or even the life, of the patient may be affected, the dosage form must be designed and prepared in a manner intended to promote the safety of the patient. Concurrently, it is essential that the dosage form comply or enhance the therapeutic effectiveness of the drug.

Parenteral (Gk, *para enteron* = beside the intestine) is the route of administration of drugs by injection under or through one or more layers of the skin or mucous membranes. Since this route circumvents these highly efficient protective barriers of the human body, exceptional purity of the dosage form must be achieved. The processes used in preparing it must embody good manufacturing practices that will produce and maintain the required quality of the product. New developments in process technology and quality control should be adopted as soon as their value and reliability have been established as a means for further improving the quality of the product.

History¹

One of the most significant events in the beginnings of parenteral therapy was the first recorded injection of drugs into the veins of living animals, in about 1657, by the architect Sir Christopher Wren. From such a very crude beginning, the technique for intravenous injection and knowledge of the implications thereof developed slowly during the next century and a half. In 1855 Dr Alexander Wood of Edinburgh described what was probably the first subcutaneous injection of drugs for therapeutic purposes using a true hypodermic syringe.

The latter half of the 19th century brought increasing concern for safety in the administration of parenteral solutions, largely because of the work of Robert Koch and Louis Pasteur. While Charles Chamberland was developing both hot-air and steam sterilization techniques and the first bacteria-retaining filter (made of unglazed porcelain), Stanislaus Limousin was developing a suitable container, the all-glass ampul. In the middle 1920s Dr Florence Seibert provided proof that the disturbing chills and fever which often followed the intravenous injection of drugs was caused by potent products of microbial growth, pyrogens, which could be eliminated from water by distillation and from glassware by heating at elevated temperatures.

Of the recent developments that have contributed to the high quality standards currently achievable in the preparation of parenteral dosage forms, the two that have probably contributed most are the development of HEPA-filtered laminar airflow and the development of membrane microfiltration for solutions. The former made it possible to achieve ultraclean environmental conditions for processing sterile products, and the latter made it possible to remove from solutions by filtration both viable and nonviable parti-

cles of microbial size and smaller. However, many other developments in recent years have produced an impressive advance in the technology associated with the safe and reliable preparation of parenteral dosage forms. The following list identifies a few of the events which have contributed to that development.

1926—Parenterals were accepted for inclusion in the fifth edition of the *National Formulary*.

1933—The practical application of freeze-drying to clinical materials was accomplished by a team of scientists at the University of Pennsylvania.

1938—The Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act was passed by Congress, establishing the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

1944—The sterilant ethylene oxide was discovered.

1946—The Parenteral Drug Association was organized.

1961—The concept of laminar airflow was developed by WJ Whitfield.

1962—The FDA was authorized by Congress to establish current good manufacturing practices (CGMP) regulations.

1965—Total parenteral nutrition (TPN) was developed by SJ Dudrick.

1972—The Limulus Amebocyte Lysate test for pyrogens in parenteral products was developed by JF Cooper.

Administration

Injections may be classified in five general categories:

1. Solutions ready for injection.
2. Dry, soluble products ready to be combined with a solvent just prior to use.
3. Suspensions ready for injection.
4. Dry, insoluble products ready to be combined with a vehicle just prior to use.
5. Emulsions.

These injections may be administered by such routes as intravenous, subcutaneous, intradermal, intramuscular, intraarticular and intrathecal. The nature of the product will determine the particular route of administration that may be employed. Conversely, the desired route of administration will place requirements on the formulation. For example, suspensions would not be administered directly into the blood stream because of the danger of insoluble particles blocking capillaries. Solutions to be administered subcutaneously require strict attention to tonicity adjustment, otherwise irritation of the plentiful supply of nerve endings in this anatomical area would give rise to pronounced pain. Injections intended for intraocular, intraspinal, intracisternal and intrathecal administration require the highest purity standards because of the sensitivity of nerve tissue to irritant and toxic substances.

When compared with other dosage forms, injections possess select advantages. If immediate physiological action is

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