Critical Reports on Applied Chemistry Volume 6

Materials Used in Pharmaceutical Formulation

edited by A.T. Florence

Published for the Society of Chemical Industry by
Blackwell Scientific Publications
Oxford London Edinburgh
Boston Palo Alto Melbourne

£39.00

14–15 Belgrave Square, London, SW1X 8PS
and published for them by
Blackwell Scientific Publications
Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0EL
8 John Street, London WC1N 2ES
9 Forrest Road, Edinburgh, EH1 2QH
52 Beacon Street, Boston
Massachusetts 02108, USA
706 Cowper Street, Palo Alto,
California 94301, USA
99 Barry Street, Carlton,
Victoria 3053, Australia.

First published 1984

Enset (Photosetting)
Midsomer Norton, Bath.
Printed in Great Britain by
Butler & Tanner Ltd, Frome and London

DISTRIBUTORS

USA
Blackwell Mosby Book Distributors
11830 Westline Industrial Drive
St Louis, Missouri 63141

Canada
Blackwell Mosby Book Distributors
120 Melford Drive, Scarborough
Ontario M1B 2X4

Australia
Blackwell Scientific Book Distributors
31 Advantage Road, Highett
Victoria 3190

British Library
Cataloguing in Publication Data

Materials used in pharmaceutical formulation.
——(Critical reports on applied chemistry;
v.6)
1. Drugs—Vehicles
I. Florence, A.T. II. Series
615'.19 RS201.V43

ISBN 0–632–01257–9

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Materials used in the film coating of oral dosage forms

Raymond C. Rowe

1 Introduction

Film coating is a process which involves the deposition of a membrane—consisting of polymer, plasticizer, colourant and possibly other additives—on to the surface of a pharmaceutical dosage form, typically a tablet or a granule. Over the past decade there has been a dramatic increase in the use of this process in the UK. An estimate of the growth can be obtained by studying the growth in the sales of low viscosity grades of hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, arguably the most commonly used film former for tablet film coating (Fig. 1)[1]. Current UK sales of these grades of polymer are in excess of 30 tonnes per annum which if used to film coat a

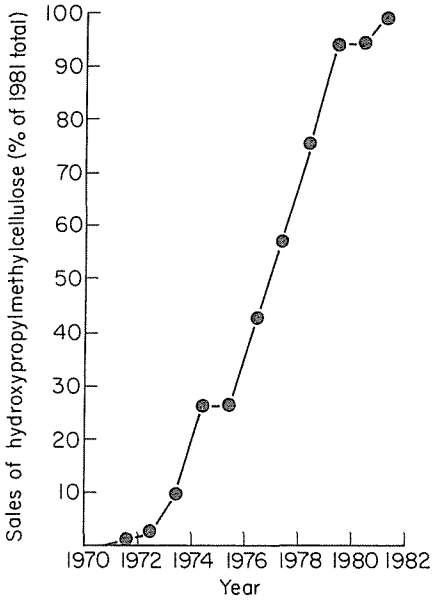

Fig. 1. Growth of tablet film coating in the UK as indicated by the growth of sales of low viscosity grades of hydroxypropylmethylcellulose.

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