

General Notices and Requirements

Applying to Standards, Tests, Assays, and Other Specifications of the United States Pharmacopeia

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General Notices and Requirements

Change to read:

▲The *General Notices and Requirements* section (the *General Notices*) presents the basic assumptions, definitions, and default conditions for the interpretation and application of the *United States Pharmacopeia (USP)* and the *National Formulary (NF)*.

Requirements stated in these *General Notices* apply to all articles recognized in the *USP* and *NF* (the “compendia”) and to all general chapters unless specifically stated otherwise. Where the requirements of an individual monograph differ from the *General Notices* or a general chapter, the monograph requirements apply and supersede the requirements of the *General Notices* or the general chapter, whether or not the monograph explicitly states the difference.

1. TITLE AND REVISION

The full title of this publication (consisting of three volumes and including its *Supplements*), is *The Pharmacopeia of the United States of America*, Thirty-Second Revision and the *National Formulary*, Twenty-Seventh Edition. These titles may be abbreviated to *United States Pharmacopeia*, Thirty-Second Revision (or to *USP 32*), to *NF 27*, and to *USP 32–NF 27*. The *United States Pharmacopeia*, Thirty-Second Revision, and the *National Formulary*, Twenty-Seventh Edition, supersede all earlier revisions. Where the terms “*USP*,” “*NF*,” or “*USP–NF*” are used without further qualification during the period in which these compendia are official, they refer only to *USP 32*, *NF 27*, and any *Supplement(s)* thereto. The same titles, with no further distinction, apply equally to print or electronic presentation of these contents. Although *USP* and *NF* are published under one cover and share these *General Notices*, they are separate compendia.

This revision is official beginning May 1, 2009, unless otherwise indicated in specific text.

Supplements to *USP* and *NF* are published periodically.

Interim Revision Announcements are revisions to *USP* and *NF* that are published in *Pharmacoepial Forum*. *Interim Revision Announcements* contain official revisions and their effective dates, announcements of the availability of new USP Reference Standards, and announcements of tests or procedures that are held in abeyance pending availability of required USP Reference Standards.

Revision Bulletins are revisions to official text or postponements that require expedited publication. They are published on the USP website and generally are official immediately unless otherwise specified in the *Revision Bulletin*.

Errata are corrections to items erroneously published that have not received the approval of the Council of Experts and that do not reflect the official requirements. *Errata* are effective upon publication.

2. OFFICIAL STATUS AND LEGAL RECOGNITION

2.10. Official Text

Official text is text contained in *USP* and *NF*, including monographs, general chapters, and these *General Notices*. Revisions to official text are provided in *Supplements*, *Interim Revision Announcements*, and *Revision Bulletins*. General chapters numbered from 1000 to 1999 are considered interpretive and are intended to provide information on, give definition to, or describe a particular subject. They contain no mandatory requirements applicable to any official article unless specifically referenced in these *General Notices*, a monograph, or a general chapter numbered below 1000. General chapters numbered above 2000 apply only to articles that are intended for use as dietary ingredients and dietary supplements.

2.20. Official Articles

dium when a monograph for the article is published in the compendium and an official date is generally or specifically assigned to the monograph.

The title specified in a monograph is the *official title* for such article. Other names considered to be synonyms of the official titles may not be used as substitutes for official titles.

Official articles include both *official substances* and *official products*. An *official substance* is a drug substance, excipient, dietary ingredient, other ingredient, or component of a finished device for which the monograph title includes no indication of the nature of the finished form.

An *official product* is a drug product, dietary supplement, compounded preparation, or finished device for which a monograph is provided.

2.30. Legal Recognition

The *USP* and *NF* are recognized in the laws and regulations of many countries throughout the world. Regulatory authorities may enforce the standards presented in the *USP* and *NF*, but because recognition of the *USP* and *NF* may vary by country, users should understand applicable laws and regulations. More information about the legal status of the *USP* and *NF* is provided in the *Mission and Preface*.

3. CONFORMANCE TO STANDARDS

3.10. Applicability of Standards

Standards for an article recognized in a USP compendium are expressed in the article’s monograph, applicable general chapters, and these *General Notices*. Unless specifically exempted elsewhere in a compendium, the identity, strength, quality, and purity of an article are determined by the official tests, procedures, and acceptance criteria, whether incorporated in the monograph itself, in the *General Notices*, or in the applicable general chapters.

The standards in the relevant monograph, general chapter(s), and *General Notices* apply at any time in the life of the article from production to expiration. The manufacturer’s specifications, and good manufacturing practices generally, are developed and followed to ensure that the article will comply with compendial standards until its expiration date, when stored as directed. Thus, any official article tested as directed in the relevant monograph shall comply.

At times, compendial standards take on the character of statistical procedures, with multiple units involved and perhaps a sequential procedural design to allow the user to determine that the tested article meets or does not meet the standard. The similarity to statistical procedures may seem to suggest an intent to make inference to some larger group of units, but in all cases, statements about whether the compendial standard is met apply only to the units tested. Repeats, replicates, statistical rejection of outliers, or extrapolations of results to larger populations, as well as the necessity and appropriate frequency of batch testing, are neither specified nor proscribed by the compendia. First-party (manufacturer), second-party (buyer), or third-party (regulator) compliance testing may or may not require examination of additional specimens, in accordance with predetermined guidelines or sampling strategies.

Official products other than dietary supplements are prepared from ingredients that meet *USP* or *NF* standards, where standards for such ingredients exist.

Official substances are prepared according to recognized principles of good manufacturing practice and from ingredients complying with specifications designed to ensure that the resultant substances meet the requirements of the compendial monographs.

3.10.10. Applicability of Standards to Drug Products, Drug Substances, and Excipients

The applicable *USP* or *NF* standard applies to any article marketed in the United States that (1) is recognized in the compendium and (2) is intended or labeled for use as a drug or as an ingredient in a drug. The applicable standard applies to such articles whether or not the added designation “*USP*” or “*NF*” is used. The standards apply equally to articles bearing the official titles or names derived by transposition of the definitive words of official titles or transposition in the order of the names of two or more active ingredients in official titles.

3.10.20. Applicability of Standards to Medical Devices, Dietary Supplements, and Their Components and Ingredients

An article recognized in *USP* or *NF* shall comply with the compendial standards if the article is a medical device, component intended for a medical device, dietary supplement, dietary ingredient, or other ingredient that is intended for incorporation into a dietary supplement, and is labeled as conforming to the *USP* or *NF*.

Generally, dietary supplements are prepared from ingredients that meet *USP*, *NF*, or *Food Chemicals Codex* standards. Where such standards do not exist, substances may be used in dietary supplements if they have been shown to be of acceptable food grade quality using other suitable procedures.

3.20. Indicating Conformance

A drug product, drug substance, or excipient may use the designation “*USP*” or “*NF*” in conjunction with its official title or elsewhere on the label only when (1) a monograph is provided in the specified compendium and (2) the article complies with the identity prescribed in the specified compendium.

When a drug product, drug substance, or excipient differs from the relevant *USP* or *NF* standard of strength, quality, or purity, as determined by the application of the tests, procedures, and acceptance criteria set forth in the relevant compendium, its difference shall be plainly stated on its label.

When a drug product, drug substance, or excipient fails to comply with the identity prescribed in *USP* or *NF* or contains an added substance that interferes with the prescribed tests and procedures, the article shall be designated by a name that is clearly distinguishing and differentiating from any name recognized in *USP* or *NF*.

A medical device, dietary supplement, or ingredient or component of a medical device or dietary supplement may use the designation “*USP*” or “*NF*” in conjunction with its official title or elsewhere on the label only when (1) a monograph is provided in the specified compendium and (2) the article complies with the monograph standards and other applicable standards in the compendium.

The designation “*USP*” or “*NF*” on the label may not and does not constitute an endorsement by USP and does not represent assurance by USP that the article is known to comply with the relevant standards. USP may seek legal redress if an article purports to be or is represented as an official article in one of USP’s compendia and such claim is determined by USP not to be made in good faith.

The designation “*USP–NF*” may be used on the label of an article provided that the label also bears a statement such as “Meets *NF* standards as published by USP,” indicating the particular compendium to which the article purports to apply.

When the letters “*USP*,” “*NF*,” or “*USP–NF*” are used on the label of an article to indicate compliance with compendial standards, the letters shall appear in conjunction with the official title of the article. The letters are not to be enclosed in any symbol such as a circle, square, etc., and shall appear in capital letters.

If a dietary supplement does not comply with all applicable compendial requirements but contains one or more dietary ingredients or other ingredients that are recognized in *USP* or *NF*, the individual ingredient(s) may be designated as complying with *USP* or *NF* standards or being of *USP* or *NF* quality provided that the designation is limited to the individual ingredient(s) and does not suggest that the dietary supplement complies with *USP* standards.

4. MONOGRAPHS AND GENERAL CHAPTERS

4.10. Monographs

Monographs set forth the article’s name, definition, specification, and other requirements related to packaging, storage, and labeling. The specification consists of tests, procedures, and acceptance criteria.

For general requirements relating to specific monograph sections, see section 5, *Monograph Components*.

Because monographs may not provide standards for all relevant characteristics, some official substances may conform to the *USP* or *NF* standard but differ with regard to nonstandardized properties that are relevant to their use in specific preparations. To assure interchangeability in such instances, users may wish to ascertain functional equivalence or determine such characteristics before use.

4.10.10. Applicability of Test Procedures

A single monograph may include several different tests, procedures, and/or acceptance criteria that reflect attributes of different manufacturers’ articles. Such alternatives may be presented for different polymorphic forms, impurities, hydrates, and dissolution cases. Monographs indicate the tests, procedures, and/or acceptance criteria to be used and the required labeling.

4.10.20. Acceptance Criteria

The acceptance criteria allow for analytical error, for unavoidable variations in manufacturing and compounding, and for deterioration to an extent considered acceptable under practical conditions. The existence of compendial acceptance criteria does not constitute a basis for a claim that an official substance that more nearly approaches 100 percent purity “exceeds” compendial quality. Similarly, the fact that an article has been prepared to tighter criteria than those specified in the monograph does not constitute a basis for a claim that the article “exceeds” the compendial requirements.

An official product shall be formulated with the intent to provide 100 percent of the quantity of each ingredient declared on the label. Where the minimum amount of a substance present in a dietary supplement is required by law to be higher than the lower acceptance criterion allowed for in the monograph, the upper acceptance criterion contained in the monograph may be increased by a corresponding amount.

The acceptance criteria specified in individual monographs and in the general chapters for compounded preparations are based on such attributes of quality as might be expected to characterize an article compounded from suitable bulk drug substances and ingredients, using the procedures provided or recognized principles of good compounding practice, as described in these compendia.

4.20. General Chapters

Each general chapter is assigned a number that appears in angle brackets adjacent to the chapter name (e.g., *Chromatography* (621)). General chapters may contain the following:

- Descriptions of tests and procedures for application through individual monographs,
- Descriptions and specifications of conditions and practices for pharmaceutical compounding,
- General information for the interpretation of the compendial requirements,
- Descriptions of general pharmaceutical storage, dispensing, and packaging practices, or
- General guidance to manufacturers of official substances or official products.

When a general chapter is referenced in a monograph, acceptance criteria may be presented after a colon.

Some chapters may serve as introductory overviews of a test or of analytical techniques. They may reference other general chapters that contain techniques, details of the procedures, and, at times, acceptance criteria.

5. MONOGRAPH COMPONENTS

5.10. Molecular Formula

The use of the molecular formula for the active ingredient(s) named in defining the required strength of a compendial article is intended to designate the chemical entity or entities, as given in the complete chemical name of the article, having absolute (100 percent) purity.

5.20. Added Substances, Excipients, and Ingredients

Substances are regarded as unsuitable for inclusion in an official article and therefore prohibited unless: (1) they do not exceed the minimum quantity required for providing their intended effect; (2) their presence does not impair the bioavailability, therapeutic efficacy, or safety of the official article; and (3) they do not interfere with the assays and tests prescribed for determining compliance

The air in a container of an official article may, where appropriate, be evacuated or be replaced by carbon dioxide, helium, argon, or nitrogen, or by a mixture of these gases. The use of such gas need not be declared in the labeling.

5.20.10. Added Substances, Excipients, and Ingredients in Official Substances

Official substances may contain only the specific added substances that are permitted by the individual monograph. Where such addition is permitted, the label shall indicate the name(s) and amount(s) of any added substance(s).

5.20.20. Added Substances, Excipients, and Ingredients in Official Products

Suitable substances and excipients such as antimicrobial agents, pharmaceutical bases, carriers, coatings, flavors, preservatives, stabilizers, and vehicles may be added to an official product to enhance its stability, usefulness, or elegance, or to facilitate its preparation, unless otherwise specified in the individual monograph.

Added substances and excipients employed solely to impart color may be incorporated into official products other than those intended for parenteral or ophthalmic use, in accordance with the regulations pertaining to the use of colors issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), provided such added substances or excipients are otherwise appropriate in all respects. (See also *Added Substances* under *Injections* (1).)

The proportions of the substances constituting the base in ointment and suppository products and preparations may be varied to maintain a suitable consistency under different climatic conditions, provided that the concentrations of active ingredients are not varied and provided that the bioavailability, therapeutic efficacy, and safety of the preparation are not impaired.

5.20.20.1. In Compounded Preparations

Compounded preparations for which a complete composition is given shall contain only the ingredients named in the formulas unless specifically exempted herein or in the individual monograph. Deviation from the specified processes or methods of compounding, although not from the ingredients or proportions thereof, may occur provided that the finished preparation conforms to the relevant standards and to preparations produced by following the specified process.

Where a monograph for a compounded preparation calls for an ingredient in an amount expressed on the dried basis, the ingredient need not be dried before use if due allowance is made for the water or other volatile substances present in the quantity taken.

Specially denatured alcohol formulas are available for use in accordance with federal statutes and regulations of the Internal Revenue Service. A suitable formula of specially denatured alcohol may be substituted for Alcohol in the manufacture of official preparations intended for internal or topical use, provided that the denaturant is volatile and does not remain in the finished product. A preparation that is intended for topical application to the skin may contain specially denatured alcohol, provided that the denaturant is either a usual ingredient in the preparation or a permissible added substance; in either case the denaturant shall be identified on the label of the topical preparation. Where a process is given in the individual monograph, any preparation compounded using denatured alcohol shall be identical to that prepared by the monograph process.

5.20.20.2. In Dietary Supplements

Additional ingredients may be added to dietary supplement products provided that the additional ingredients: (1) comply with applicable regulatory requirements; and (2) do not interfere with the assays and tests prescribed for determining compliance with compendial standards.

5.30. Description and Solubility

Only where a quantitative solubility test is given in a monograph and is designated as such is it a test for purity.

A monograph may include information regarding the article's description. Information about an article's "description and solubility" also is provided in the reference table *Description and Relative Solubility of USP and NF Articles*. The reference table merely denotes the properties of articles that comply with monograph standards. The reference table is intended primarily for those who use,

ence table may indirectly assist in the preliminary evaluation of an article, it is not intended to serve as a standard or test for purity.

The approximate solubility of a compendial substance is indicated by one of the following descriptive terms:

Descriptive Term	Parts of Solvent Required for 1 Part of Solute
Very soluble	Less than 1
Freely soluble	From 1 to 10
Soluble	From 10 to 30
Sparingly soluble	From 30 to 100
Slightly soluble	From 100 to 1,000
Very slightly soluble	From 1,000 to 10,000
Practically insoluble, or Insoluble	Greater than or equal to 10,000

5.40. Identification Test

The compendial test titled *Identification* is provided as an aid in verifying the identity of articles as they are purported to be, e.g., those taken from labeled containers. Tests presented in the *Identification* section shall be used to assist in establishing the identity of the substance but are not necessarily sufficient to establish proof of identity. Other tests and specifications in the monograph often are necessary to establish or confirm the identity of an article. Failure of an article to meet the requirements of a prescribed *Identification* test may indicate that the article is mislabeled.

5.50. Assay

Assay tests for compounded preparations are not intended for evaluating a compounded preparation before dispensing, but instead are intended to serve as the official test in the event of a question or dispute regarding the preparation's conformance to official standards.

5.50.10. Units of Potency (Biological)

For substances that cannot be completely characterized by chemical and physical means, it may be necessary to express quantities of activity in biological units of potency, each defined by an authoritative, designated reference standard.

Units of biological potency defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) for International Biological Standards and International Biological Reference Preparations are termed International Units (IU). Monographs refer to the units defined by USP Reference Standards as "USP Units." For biological products, units of potency are defined by the corresponding U.S. Standard established by FDA, whether or not International Units or USP Units have been defined (see *Biologics* (1041)).

5.60. Impurities and Foreign Substances

Tests for the presence of impurities and foreign substances are provided to limit such substances to amounts that are unobjectionable under conditions in which the article is customarily employed (see also *Impurities in Official Articles* (1086)).

Nonmonograph tests and acceptance criteria suitable for detecting and controlling impurities that may result from a change in the processing methods or that may be introduced from external sources should be employed in addition to the tests provided in the individual monograph, where the presence of the impurity is inconsistent with applicable good manufacturing practices or good pharmaceutical practice.

5.60.10. Other Impurities in USP and NF Articles

If a *USP* or *NF* monograph includes an assay or organic impurity test based on chromatography, other than a test for residual solvents, and that monograph procedure does not detect an impurity present in the substance, the amount and identity of the impurity, where both are known, shall be stated in the labeling (certificate of analysis) of the official substance, under the heading *Other Impurity(ies)*.

The presence of any unlabeled other impurity in an official substance is a variance from the standard if the content is 0.1% or greater. The sum of all *Other Impurities* combined with the monograph-detected impurities may not exceed 2.0% (see *Ordinary Impurities* (466)), unless otherwise stated in the monograph.

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