

Definition of Dosage Forms

Aerosols: Aerosols are suspensions of fine, solid or liquid particles in a gas. This preparation is also known as pressurized preparation. These are dosage forms for spraying in a solution, suspension or emulsion form with an atomizer device or nebulisers. Aerosols are packed in pressurized containers with suitable propellants that provide a steady stream of the liquid. They are most popular in the treatment of asthma or respiratory tract infection and skin conditions.

Cachets: Cachets are disc or cylinder shaped devices made from rice paper and consist of a lower and upper part, the latter having a slightly broader flange. Medication of disagreeable taste is enclosed between the two halves and sealed.

Capsules: These are similar to cylindrical cachets and are available in different sizes. The material is however gelatin, hard or flexible (hard or soft gelatin capsules).

Capsule, Delayed Release: A coated capsule or more commonly encapsulated granules that may be coated to resist releasing the drug in stomach because the drug will irritate gastric mucosa or gastric fluid will inactivate the drug.

Capsule, Extended Release: A capsule that is formulated in such a manner as to make the contained medication available over an extended period following ingestion.

Collodians: Fluid preparations for external use in the form of collodians contain substances dissolved in a volatile solvent which, after evaporation, leaves a thin film of the material on the surface.

Creams: Highly viscous oil-in-water or water-in-oil emulsions meant for external application are considered as creams. Medicament may also be incorporated in them.

Demulcent: A bland viscous liquid, usually water based, used to coat and soothe damaged or inflamed skin or mucous membranes (Methyl cellulose).

Draughts: These are liquid oral preparations of which only one or two rather large doses of the order of 50 ml are prescribed. Each dose is issued in a separate container. Ipecacuanha Emetic Drought,

Dusting Powders: This form of medication comprises of extremely fine particles to be dusted on the affected part.

Oral Drops: A solution, emulsion, or suspension i.e. administered in small volumes, such as drops by means of a suitable device.

Elixirs: These are sweetened, clear and coloured, aromatic, hydroalcoholic liquids.

Emulsions: Emulsions are mixtures of two immiscible liquids in which one phase is dispersed into the other in the form of minute globules. An emulsifying agent is employed to bring about emulsification. Usually unpalatable oils may be conveniently administered as emulsions dispersed in water.

Expectorant: A drug that increases respiratory tract secretions, lowers their viscosity and promotes removal (Potassium Iodide).

Fecal Softener: A drug that promotes defecation by softening the feces.

Foam: An emulsion packaged in a pressurized aerosol container that has a fluffy, semisolid consistency when dispensed.

Ear drops: Solutions of drugs meant for dropping in the ears are classified as ear drops.

Enemas: Drugs in solution or in dispersed form meant for rectal administration are called enemas.

Gargles: Aqueous solutions employed for local action in the throat are called gargles. They may be diluted with luke-warm water before use.

Gels: Insoluble substances presented as suspension of their colloidal state in a hydrated form are known as gels.

Granules: These are free flowing, dry conglomerates of particles ranging from 1 to 5 mm in diameter. The medicament and the excipients are rendered to a cohesive mass with a suitable moistening agent and the mass is pressed through a sieve of required granule size and dried.

Effervescent Granules: Effervescent granules is a mixture is a mixture of citric and tartaric acids with sodium bicarbonate. Usually a medicament is included and sucrose or saccharin may be added as a sweetening agent.

When the patient dissolves the prescribed dose in water, the acid and bicarbonates react together producing carbonic acid and the preparation is taken during effervescence or immediately afterwards. The carbonated water partly disguises the unpleasant taste of the saline medicaments that are administered in this way.

These are dosage form containing ingredients that rapidly release carbon dioxide when in contact with water.

Emollient: A topical drug especially an oil or fat used to soften the skin and make it more pliable (cold cream).

Implant: A small, sterile solid mass, consisting of a highly purified drug with or without excipients made by compression or molding and put in place by injection or incision.

Inhalations: Inhalations are the preparations meant for relieving congestion of the throat. These preparations are either volatile and inhaled directly, or contain volatile substances which can be inhaled by adding the preparation to hot water.

Insufflations: Insufflations, commonly known as snuffs also, provide a medicament intimately mixed with a dusting powder to be deeply inhaled or blown into body cavities by an insufflator.

Injections: Preparations intended for parenteral administration or for constituting or diluting a parenteral article prior to administration.

Irrigations: These preparations are used as antiseptics for washing the urinary bladder or vagina, the solution being introduced through a soft tube.

Jellies: Jellies are non-greasy semi-solid preparations containing a high proportion of gelatin, gum or starch.

Lozenges: The medicament, sugar and gum are made into a solid form for local action and slow release of the drug meant for the mouth and the throat.

Liniments: Emulsions, viscous, oily or free flowing solutions of drug in alcohol meant for application to the skin usually by rubbing are called liniments.

Lotions: These are preparations in solution or suspension form to be applied to the affected part without friction. The lotions may be applied as such or with the support of a dressing material.

Linctuses: Linctuses are viscous, liquid, oral preparations that are usually prescribed for relief of cough. They are simple solutions or admixtures containing a high proportion of syrup and sometimes glycerin which has a sweet taste and has a demulcent effect on the mucous membranes of the throat.

Mixtures: Solutions and suspensions meant for oral use are classified as mixtures. The vehicle is usually water and their stability is limited from a few days upto a few weeks.

Mouth washes: Mouth washes are liquid preparations for treating mouth infections or providing a freshening feeling. They are usually diluted before use.

Nasal Drops: Solution of drugs meant for instilling in the nasal cavity with the aid of a dropper are considered as nasal drop.

Ointments: These are semi-solids meant for external use. The medicament is incorporated in the base usually comprising of greasy substances.

Pastilles: The drug along with gelatin and glycerin is converted into a solid form for slow dissolution in the mouth.

Pills: Pills are spherical dosage forms containing the drug and excipients. Pills have now been almost completely replaced by capsules and tablets. As dosage form pills are very popular in J Ayurvedic medicine and are known as vati.

Powders: The medicament with or without excipient in fine state of subdivision is supplied in either bulk or individually wrapped in a paper.

Pessaries: The medicament is either compressed in a suitable shape or moulded with the help of a base so that it is released when inserted into vagina by solution or melting.

Pastes: Pastes contain a very high proportion of the solid medicament in relatively small proportion of the base, meant for external application.

Poultices: These are thick and pasty preparations. Due to good heat retention property, they may be applied on a dressing while hot and bandaged on to the affected part to relieve inflammation.

Paints: Solutions in viscous vehicles or suspensions that are meant to be applied to the skin or mucus with a soft device such as brush or cotton are called paints.

Dispersible Tablets: These are tablets designed to dissolve quickly in water. After dissolution, the solution can be applied to the skin or mucous membrane or can be consumed.

Syrups: These are concentrated solutions of sucrose or any other sugars. Syrups are less commonly prescribed as such except cough syrups but are very often prescribed as sweetening and flavouring vehicles.

Sprays: Drugs dissolved in alcoholic or glycerin media and sprayed in the form of fine droplets to the mucous with the help of a spraying device are called sprays.

Suppositories: These are semi-solid to solid moulded preparations meant for insertion into the rectum. They resemble pessaries which are meant for vagina. The medication is incorporated in a suitable base that liquefies at the body temperature and releases the medicament. Some of the bases may dissolve in the rectum and release the medicament.

Tablets: These are solid dosage forms in which the medicament is compressed in different shapes and sizes. They may be plain or coated. Tablets remain the most popular dosage form.

Spirits: Spirits are alcoholic or aqueous alcoholic solutions of volatile substances prepared usually by simple solution or by admixture of ingredients. Most are used as flavouring agents but a few have medicinal value.

Tinctures: These are alcoholic preparations containing the active principle of vegetable drugs. They are relatively weak compared with extracts.

Aromatic Waters: Aromatic waters are dilute, usually saturated, solutions of volatile oils or other volatile substances (chloroform and camphor). They are mainly used as flavouring agents.

Extracts: Extracts are concentrated preparations containing the active principles of vegetable or animal drugs. The drugs are extracted with suitable solvents.

Suspension: A liquid preparation that consists of solid particles dispersed through out a liquid phase in which the particles are not soluble, may be oral, topical, otic, ophthalmic.

Shampoos: A solution, emulsion or suspension used to clean hair and scalp.

Plaster: A solid or semi-solid mass supplied on a backing material and intended to provide prolonged contact with skin.

Rubefacient: A topical drug that induces mild skin irritation with erythema, used as a toughening agent (Rubbing alcohol).