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## **Sterilization of health care products — Biological indicators —**

### **Part 3: Biological indicators for moist heat sterilization processes**

*Stérilisation des produits de santé — Indicateurs biologiques —*

*Partie 3: Indicateurs biologiques pour la stérilisation à la chaleur  
humide*



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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 198, *Sterilization of health care products*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 11138-3:2006), which has been technically revised.

A list of all parts of ISO 11138 can be found on the ISO website.

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## Introduction

This document specifies production, labelling, test methods and performance requirements for the manufacture of biological indicators including inoculated carriers and suspensions intended for use in validation and monitoring of sterilization processes. This document gives specific requirements for those biological indicators intended for use in moist heat sterilization processes.

Moist heat as the sterilizing agent is defined in this document as dry saturated steam. While air-steam mixtures can be used in moist heat sterilization processes, the methods and performance requirements of this document might not be applicable for biological indicators used in such processes.

The ISO 11138 series represents the current "state-of-the-art" according to the experts representing manufacturers, users and regulatory authorities involved in developing the standard. The intent is not to promote the use of biological indicators where such use is not advised, but to provide common requirements for the production of those biological indicators known to be in use today.

Standards exist providing requirements for the validation and control of moist heat sterilization (see ISO 17665 series).

**NOTE** It is possible that some countries or regions have published other standards covering requirements for sterilization or biological indicators.

Advice on selection, use and interpretation of results when using biological indicators can be found in ISO 14161.