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Aseptic processing of health care products —

Part 3: Lyophilization

Traitement aseptique des produits de santé —

Partie 3: Lyophilisation

Reference number
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Foreword

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ISO 13408-3 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 198, *Sterilization of health care products*.

ISO 13408 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Aseptic processing of health care products*:

— *Part 1: General requirements*

— *Part 2: Filtration*

— *Part 3: Lyophilization*

— *Part 4: Clean-in-place technologies*

— *Part 5: Sterilization in place*

— *Part 6: Isolator systems*

Introduction

This part of ISO 13408 deals with lyophilization, which is a physical-chemical drying process designed to remove solvents from both aqueous and non-aqueous systems, primarily to achieve product or material stability. Lyophilization is synonymous to the term freeze-drying. Lyophilization involves freezing an aqueous system and removing the solvent, first by sublimation (primary drying) and then by desorption (secondary drying), to a level that no longer supports chemical reactions or biological growth. The result is a stable, well-formed product meant to rapidly disperse or solubilize while retaining biological or other activity. Because it is often the final step in an aseptic process with direct impact on the safety, quality, identity, potency and purity of a product, lyophilization is a critical processing step.

Where the finished lyophilized product is intended to be sterile, the product to be dried is an aqueous system that has already been sterilized. Therefore, all activities that can affect the sterility of the product or material need to be regarded as extensions of the aseptic processing of that sterilized product or material. In general, the predominant challenge in ensuring product or material sterility during lyophilization is to prevent microbiological and particulate contamination between the filling operation and completion of the lyophilization process. Of special, equipment-related concern is the protection of the product or material from microbiological contamination within the chamber.