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Dentistry — Graphical symbols for dental instruments

Art dentaire — Symboles graphiques pour instruments dentaires



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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.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

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.

ISO 21531 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 106, *Dentistry*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Dental instruments*.

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Introduction

Graphical symbols are used in many areas of daily life. They give necessary and useful information of many kinds in a visual way. They are used as signals (warning or alarm signals), for general information, as a means of control, for the correct application of machines, instruments, etc. and in many other ways of communication.

Their content of information is very often superior to verbal explanations because their information is visually acknowledged instantly and is often kept in memory easier and longer than terms or phonetic explanations.

Graphical symbols are internationally understandable without sometimes difficult, possibly misleading and costly translations.

Each ISO technical committee is responsible for the selection or creation of graphical symbols within its own field of interest. Graphical symbols may form the main subject of an International Standard, or a single symbol or several symbols may appear as part of a standard covering wider aspects of the subject to which the symbol(s) refer(s).

The ISO Technical Management Board has assigned overall responsibility for standardization in the field of graphical symbols to ISO/TC 145, *Graphical symbols*, and to ISO/TC 10/SC 10, *Technical product documentation (tpd) symbols*.

ISO/TC 210, *Quality management and corresponding aspects for medical devices*, which is responsible for the development of ISO 15233, has prepared an international guide to the development and registration of symbols for use in the labelling of medical devices. This guideline recommends that the proliferation of graphical symbols without international harmonization is undesirable and contrary to these objectives.

There is a need for simple, internationally accepted graphical symbols labelling that provide general and specific information to the user in a manner that overcomes the limitations of languages. It is in the best interests of safety and health of patients, dentists, dental technicians and other persons, to reduce the confusion inherent in the use of multiple language labelling. Both of these objectives can be met by the use of standardized symbols agreed by consensus on an international basis.

The task of determining technical requirements to allow the use of specific symbols is best taken up by bodies expert in the relevant areas. ISO/TC 106/SC 4/WG 5, *Number coding system*, has taken up this responsibility by developing this International Standard.

This International Standard has been prepared to reduce the need for multiple translations of words into national languages, to simplify labelling wherever possible and to prevent separate development of different symbols to convey the same information.

This International Standard contains a series of symbols (pictograms) for use in dentistry. Their application should be considered in the literature, for the labelling and packaging of devices used in dentistry, on items of dental equipment and instruments. Their use is unlimited and a most helpful means of communication within dentistry.