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Packaging for terminally sterilized medical devices — Guidance on the application of ISO 11607-1 and ISO 11607-2

*Emballages des dispositifs médicaux stérilisés au stade terminal —
Lignes directrices relatives à l'application de l'ISO 11607-1 et l'ISO
11607-2*



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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. 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. 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 meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 198, *Sterilization of health care products*.

Introduction

Sterile barrier systems need to ensure the sterility of their contents until opened for use and ensure aseptic presentation.

The sterile barrier system, depending on conditions of handling, distribution or storage, may provide adequate protection for the sterile medical device. In circumstances where the packaged and sterilized device undergoes repeated handling, additional protective packaging may need to be combined with the sterile barrier system to create a packaging system.

Each establishment should evaluate the performance of each sterile barrier system or packaging system before selection and implementation to ensure conditions for sterilization, storage, and handling can be met. Each establishment that manages sterile items should have a documented plan of education on how to store, handle and transport sterile items.

Regional differences in quality management systems and other requirements exist and these might involve different approaches to human resource management. In any case however a sound education process is a key element and facilities should ensure that its personnel are aware of the relevance and importance of their packaging and sterilization activities for the safety of the patient.

ISO 11607-1 specifies the requirements for materials, sterile barrier systems, and packaging systems, including the qualification of the packaging system design and evaluation of that design, ISO 11607-2 specifies the requirements for packaging process validation. Both of these documents provide standards to ensure medical device protection, the ability to sterilize, maintenance of sterile package integrity and aseptic presentation. The scope of each of these standards applies to health care facilities and wherever medical devices are packaged and sterilized. It is recognized that the circumstances of the application of these standards will be different when they are used in a health care facility from when they are used by a medical device manufacturer or reprocessor.

The conditions of use of this guidance may vary widely around the world. ISO 11607-1 and ISO 11607-2 and this guidance document provide a guideline for use, subject to interpretation by circumstance and regulatory environments. In some regions of the world health care facility compliance to the series ISO 11607 is a national or regional regulatory requirement, in some regions the series ISO 11607 is considered guidance for health care facilities. For instance, it is recognized that in certain regions or regulatory applications conformance to ISO 11607-1 may be demonstrated but not conformance to ISO 11607-2, which requires process validation by the user. In other regions, where compliance to both ISO 11607-1 and ISO 11607-2 is a national regulatory requirement, this document will also provide guidance on performing validation. [Clause 3](#) of this guidance document is applicable to health care facilities and [Clause 4](#) is applicable to industry. Further guidance is given in [Annexes A to S](#) that may be applicable to health care facilities and/or industry, as indicated.

In Europe ISO 11607-1 assists the conformity assessment procedure for manufacturers and is designed and used as a tool for demonstrating compliance with the relevant essential requirements of the Medical Device Directive. Compliance with the standard is always voluntary.

At the time of publication of this document, Amendments to ISO 11607-1 and ISO 11607-2 are in the ballot process. This guidance document already considers the revised versions with the understanding that specific references to numbering may have changed. Annex B of ISO 11607-1 on test methods has been extensively revised and should be considered when available.