EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE
U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

CPC NOTICE OF CHANGES 1815

DATE: JANUARY 1, 2026

PROJECT MP11676

The following classification changes will be effected by this Notice of Changes:

Action	**Subclass**	**Group(s)**
SCHEME:		
Titles Changed:	A61K	9/0009, 9/0021, 9/0051, 9/0053, 9/0097, 9/10, 9/2095, 9/5068, 9/5184
DEFINITIONS:		
Definitions New:	A61K	9/0009, 9/0021, 9/0051, 9/0053, 9/0097, 9/10, 9/2095, 9/5068
Definitions Modified:	A61K	9/00

No other subclasses/groups are impacted by this Notice of Changes.

This Notice of Changes includes the following*:*

1. CLASSIFICATION SCHEME CHANGES
   - ☒ A. New, Modified or Deleted Group(s)
   - ☐ B. New, Modified or Deleted Warning(s)
   - ☐ C. New, Modified or Deleted Note(s)
   - ☐ D. New, Modified or Deleted Guidance Heading(s)
2. DEFINITIONS
   - ☒ A. New or Modified Definitions (Full definition template)
   - ☐ B. Modified or Deleted Definitions (Definitions Quick Fix)
3. ☐ REVISION CONCORDANCE LIST (RCL)
4. ☐ CHANGES TO THE CPC-TO-IPC CONCORDANCE LIST (CICL)
5. ☐ CHANGES TO THE CROSS-REFERENCE LIST (CRL)

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1. CLASSIFICATION SCHEME CHANGES

A. New, Modified or Deleted Group(s)

SUBCLASS A61K - PREPARATIONS FOR MEDICAL, DENTAL OR TOILETRY PURPOSES

Type*	Symbol	Indent Level Number of dots (e.g. 0, 1, 2)	Title "CPC only" text should normally be enclosed in {curly brackets}**	Transferred to#
M	A61K9/0009	2	{involving or responsive to electricity, magnetism or acoustic waves; Galenical aspects of sonophoresis, iontophoresis, electroporation or electroosmosis}	
M	A61K9/0021	3	{Intradermal administration, e.g. through microneedle arrays or needleless injectors}	
M	A61K9/0051	3	{Ocular inserts or implants}	
M	A61K9/0053	2	{Mouth and digestive tract, i.e. intraoral and peroral administration}	
M	A61K9/0097	2	{Medicinal compositions released by microdevices, e.g. microelectromechanical systems [MEMS], microdevices comprising chips or microdevices on silicon}	
M	A61K9/10	1	Dispersions; Emulsions	
M	A61K9/2095	2	{Tabletting processes}	
M	A61K9/5068	5	{Cell membranes or bacterial membranes enclosing drugs (liposomes with additional exogenous lipids A61K 9/127)}	
M	A61K9/5184	6	{Virus capsids or envelopes enclosing drugs (liposomes with additional exogenous lipids A61K 9/127)}	

*N = new entries where reclassification into entries is involved; C = entries with modified file scope where reclassification of documents from the entries is involved; Q = new entries which are firstly populated with documents via administrative transfers from deleted (D) entries. Afterwards, the transferred documents into the Q entry will either stay or be moved to more appropriate entries, as determined by intellectual reclassification; T = existing entries with enlarged file scope, which receive documents from C or D entries, e.g. when a limiting reference is removed from the entry title; M = entries with no change to the file scope (no reclassification); D = deleted entries; F = frozen entries will be deleted once reclassification of documents from the entries is completed; U = entries that are unchanged.

NOTES:

- **No {curly brackets} are used for titles in CPC only subclasses, e.g. C12Y, A23Y; 2000 series symbol titles of groups found at the end of schemes (orthogonal codes); or the Y section titles. The {curly brackets} are used for 2000 series symbol titles found interspersed throughout the main trunk schemes (breakdown codes).

- U groups: it is obligatory to display the required "anchor" symbol (U group), i.e. the entry immediately preceding a new group or an array of new groups to be created (in case new groups are not clearly subgroups of C-type groups). Always include the symbol, indent level and title of the U group in the table above.
- All entry types should be included in the scheme changes table above for better understanding of the overall scheme change picture. Symbol, indent level, and title are required for all types.

- "Transferred to" column must be completed for all C, D, F, and Q type entries. F groups will be deleted once reclassification is completed.
- When multiple symbols are included in the "Transferred to" column, avoid using ranges of symbols in order to be as precise as possible.
- For administrative transfer of documents, the following text should be used: "<administrative transfer to XX>", "<administrative transfer to XX and YY simultaneously>", or "<administrative transfer to XX, YY, ...and ZZ simultaneously>" when administrative transfer of the same documents is to more than one place.
- Administrative transfer to main trunk groups is assumed to be the source allocation type, unless otherwise indicated.
- Administrative transfer to 2000/Y series groups is assumed to be "additional information".
- If needed, instructions for allocation type should be indicated within the angle brackets using the abbreviations "ADD" or "INV": <administrative transfer to XX ADD> , <administrative transfer to XX INV>, or <administrative transfer to XX ADD, YY INV, ... and ZZ ADD simultaneously>.
- In certain situations, the "D" entries of 2000-series or Y-series groups may not require a destination ("Transferred to") symbol, however it is required to specify "<no transfer>" in the "Transferred to" column for such cases.
- For finalization projects, the deleted "F" symbols should have <no transfer> in the "Transferred to" column.
- For more details about the types of scheme change, see CPC Guide.

2. A. DEFINITIONS (new)

A61K 9/0009

Definition statement

Pharmaceutical compositions in which the pharmaceutically active agent is released by electricity, magnetism or acoustic waves.

Galenical aspects of pharmaceutical compositions used in sonophoresis, iontophoresis, electroporation or electroosmosis.

References

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Medicinal compositions released by microdevices	A61K 9/0097
Medicinal preparations used in sonopheresis (i.e. ultrasonically-enhanced transdermal delivery) or electroporation of a pharmacologically active agent	A61K 41/0047
Medicinal preparations used in thermotherapy, hyperthermia, magnetic induction or induction heating therapy	A61K 41/0052

A61K 9/0021

Definition statement

This place covers:

Pharmaceutical compositions characterised by intradermal administration.

Drug-coated or drug-delivering microneedles with specific drugs, e.g. excipients that coat the microneedle with a drug or microneedles that are made of polymers that incorporate a drug.

References

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Devices for introducing media into, or onto, the body	A61M
Microneedles for introducing media into the body	A61M 37/0015

A61K 9/0051

Definition statement

This place covers:

Chemical aspects of ocular inserts or implants from which drugs are released.

Relationships with other classification places

Liquid compositions injected in the eye that do not form a depot or implant are classified in groups A61K 9/0048 or A61K 9/0019.

References

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Ocular inserts or implants for treatment of the eye	A61F 9/0017

A61K 9/0053

Definition statement

This place covers:

Intraoral or peroral administration of a pharmaceutical composition.

Relationships with other classification places

Intraoral or peroral administration of a pill, tablet or capsule are classified in groups A61K 9/20 or A61K 9/48.

References

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Rectal administration of a pharmaceutical composition	A61K 9/0031

A61K 9/0097

References

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Medicinal compositions delivered by intradermal microneedle arrays	A61K9/0021
Microelectromechanical systems [MEMS] in general	B81B 7/02

A61K 9/10

Definition statement

This place covers:

Pharmaceutical compositions comprising more than one phase where at least one of the phases consists of finely divided phase domains, often in the colloidal size range or dispersed throughout a continuous phase, e.g. emulsions, aerosols or liposomes.

Relationships with other classification places

Solid dispersions, i.e. intimate drug-carrier mixtures that are co-adsorbed, co-dried, co-solubilized, co-kneaded, co-milled, co-ground, co-precipitated, co-evaporated, co-extruded or co-melted are classified in group A61K 9/141.

References

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Ointments; Bases therefor	A61K 9/06
Medicinal composition of dispersions or emulsions	A61K 47/00

A61K 9/2095

Definition statement

This place covers:

Processes specifically adapted for pharmaceutical tablets or granules for example, compression of powders, elimination of solvents, melt extrusion or printing (3D printing).

References

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Devices or methods specially adapted for bringing pharmaceutical products into particular physical or administering forms, e.g. 3D printing	A61J 3/00

Special rules of classification

Tableting processes are classified when the process itself represents an addition to the state of the art, not merely because novel or inventive ingredients are used to make the tablet.

A61K 9/5068

Relationships with other classification places

Extracellular vesicles, e.g. exosomes, secreted by cells can be processed to enclose drugs, and these vesicles are classified in groups A61K 9/5068 or A61K 9/5184 depending on their size.

Liposomes of groups A61K 9/127 or A61K 47/6911 have similarities to extracellular vesicles, but the compositions classified in groups A61K 9/5068 or A61K 9/5184 contain substantially more biological components.

Limiting references

This place does not cover:

Liposomes with additional exogenous lipids	A61K 9/127

Informative references

Attention is drawn to the following places, which may be of interest for search:

Virus envelopes enclosing drugs	A61K 9/5184

2. A. DEFINITIONS (modified)

A61K 9/00

Replace: The existing Definition statement text with the following updated text.

Definition statement

This place covers:

Pharmaceutical compositions which are characterised by the following galenical aspects:

- The form, e.g. tablets.
- The site of application, i.e. the body location where they are administered, e.g. oral, nasal or rectal compositions.
- The drug release technique, e.g. effervescent compositions or osmotic delivery systems.
- Processes of making such compositions.
- Medical uses characterised by any of the above galenical aspects, e.g. dosage form, site of application or release technique.
- Excipients for use in a specific dosage form, e.g. tableting excipients.

In subclass A61K, "Galenic" form" relates to pharmaceutical (drug delivery) compositions in general. "Galenical" aspects relate to aspects of pharmaceutical technology of pharmaceutical compositions, i.e. aspects of pharmaceutical compositions other than the active ingredient per se, e.g. physical form, excipients or dosage.

It is sufficient to say “pill”, “capsule” or “particle” for classification. The pill or the like does not require further elaboration to warrant classification in A61K 9/00. Any concrete, well-defined pharmaceutical composition disclosed in the examples is considered to be characterised by a physical form. Also classified are independent claims defining galenical aspects of a pharmaceutical composition or a medical use. For example, the following forms are considered to be characterised by a physical form: a suppository, ointment, solution, dispersion, emulsion, aerosol, foam, liposome, powder, granulate, micro/nanosphere, pill, tablet, capsule, micro/nanocapsule, web, sheet or filament. This list is not exhaustive. A borderline case is an animal test where the galenical aspect of the composition is not further defined, e.g. intravenous injection, per os administration, unless it is absolutely clear that the test represents the intended mode of administration.

Replace: The existing Relationships text with the following updated text.

Relationships with other classification places

Galenical aspects of pharmaceutical compositions are usually classified with a combination of groups A61K 9/00 and A61K 47/00. The last place rule does not apply between groups A61K 9/00 and A61K 47/00 - A61K 47/46. Excipients can be classified in groups A61K 47/00 or in A61K 9/00, depending on the situation: group A61K 47/00 is used to classify excipients in compositions for which group A61K 9/00 does not provide information on excipients. No group of A61K 47/00 is given if group A61K 9/00 already provides information on excipients, e.g. tablet excipients are only classified in group A61K 9/20. New excipients per se are additionally classified in group A61K 47/00.

Conjugates, i.e. compounds comprising a non-active ingredient bound to the active ingredient, are classified in group A61K 47/50. Pharmaceutical compositions comprising conjugates may in addition be classified in group A61K 9/00.

The active ingredients in pharmaceutical compositions are classified in groups A61K 31/00 - A61K 45/00 or A61K 48/00 - A61K 51/00.

Bandages for treatment of wounds are classified in subclass A61L. These bandages may comprise active agents, e.g. anti-inflammatory or antibacterial agents to enhance the action of the bandage.

Compositions comprising an active agent for wound healing which are neither bandages nor form bandages (e.g. spray-on bandages) are classified in group A61K 9/00. These compositions, e.g. lotions, are classified according to:

- the site of application, in group A61K 9/0014;
- the form, in groups A61K 9/06 or A61K 9/08;
- the excipients used, in group A61K 47/00.

Bandages for wound treatment should not be confused with transdermal patches, the main function of which is (usually systemic) drug delivery rather than the treatment of wounds. Transdermal patches are classified in group A61K 9/7023. Bandages also should not be confused with medicated film (forming) compositions that are not for wound healing; these are classified in groups A61K 9/7007 and A61K 9/7015.

Chemical composition of materials used, or use of such materials, for prostheses or grafts or for coating prostheses or grafts is classified in subclass A61L. A pharmaceutical composition formulated as an injectable implant is classified in group A61K 9/0024, but the following subject matter is classified in group A61L 27/00:

materials for tissue engineering such as scaffolds; fillers for tissue regeneration or augmentation such as bone and soft tissue fillers; injectable compositions for regenerating a cartilage; chemical aspects of surface treatment or modification of prostheses or grafts; spinal implants, e.g. spinal spacers, fusion cages, intervertebral discs; nerve implants, nerve conduits or nerve regeneration devices.

References

Replace: The existing Special rules text with the following updated text.

Special rules of classification

Classification in group A61K9/00 requires a concrete, well-defined pharmaceutical composition as set forth in examples or independent claims. Galenical aspects of a pharmaceutical composition or a medical use are classified in group A61K9/00 when disclosed in the examples or set forth in independent claims.

All relevant galenical aspects must be classified.

The one dot groups of A61K 9/00 do not follow the last place rule.

In principle all examples are classified, also 'standard' examples in documents describing, e.g. a new medical use.

In principle all examples are classified, also 'standard' examples in documents describing, e.g. a new medical use. However, systematically classifying all excipients in the examples is not necessary, and is often undesirable. Excipients which are described as being important for the invention or are identified as having an important function, e.g. for sustained release, are always classified. For 'standard' compositions, the examiner should choose one or a few excipients to classify. (Note: A 'standard' example is an example that is simple and does not appear to be part of the invention. For instance, in a document relating to the new medical use of a (new) chemical compound, often some compositions are given which are 'standard' (if not hypothetical): a tablet with, e.g. lactose, microcrystalline cellulose and magnesium stearate or an injection solution with NaCl.

In any case, such examples should be classified, whether considered 'standard' or not. In how far all excipients in such compositions are classified is left to the classifier's discretion.

When there are too many examples, they can sometimes be covered by a more general group. However, head groups should not be used for this.

A "head" group does not have the same meaning as a main group. With "head group" is meant a group which is further subdivided in such a way that classification can always be made in one of the lower groups. For instance: group A61K 9/2004 is a head group, group A61K 9/0012 is a head group, as well as group A61K 9/0002. In principle, such head groups should be empty.

Group A61K 9/0002 is the head group for the drug release techniques. Only its subgroups are used for classification, when relevant. Group A61K 9/0002 is empty; there is no general sustained release group.

Animal tests to study pharmacokinetic properties of a drug are not classified, unless it is absolutely clear that they represent the intended mode of administration. (Note: What is meant here, are pharmacokinetic tests in animals, e.g. by injection or gavage). Such tests usually say nothing about the final intended dosage forms but are necessary, e.g. for regulatory purposes. The value of their pharmaceutical/galenical information is therefore very low. Exceptions are perhaps inhalation tests in animals, as these are normally only done with drugs intended to be inhaled.

Processes for preparing a composition, even when claimed, are only classified if they appear of interest.

The description and dependent claims are not classified. However, if the document as a whole focuses on one clearly preferred embodiment, this embodiment may be classified, even in the absence of relevant examples or independent claims. The intention here is primarily to avoid that all lists in the dependent claims are fully classified (e.g. all tablet excipients for sustained release, while only one is used in the examples).

If a specific subcombination is claimed, such a subcombination will usually be reflected in the examples, which should in any case be classified. And if this subcombination is not reflected in examples, but clearly forms the invention (following e.g. the description), then it also should be classified. In all other cases, the specific subcombination is probably not inventive, so no need to classify.

In general, information relating to the invention is classified using invention information symbols, while additional information is classified using additional information symbols. This is largely up to the discretion of the examiner. Please note, however, the following special situations:

- Normally, only final compositions are classified, not intermediates. However, it may be useful to classify intermediates as additional information (e.g. a tablet comprising microcapsules; a multicoated microparticle). If the intermediates are claimed separately, they must be classified as invention information.

- If, in the classification scheme, a group refers out to another group, an additional information symbol may still be given for the first group (e.g. oral mucoadhesive film).

Replace: The existing Glossary of terms table with the following updated table.

Glossary of terms

In this place, the following terms or expressions are used with the meaning indicated:

microemulsion	any emulsion with a particle size below 1 µm
microparticle	particle having a size between 1 µm and about 3 mm
microsphere	homogenous or multi-nuclear particle having a size between 1 µm and about 3 mm
microcapsule	capsule or coated particle having a size between 1 µm and about 3 mm
nanoparticle, nanocapsule	(coated) particle or capsule having a size below 1 µm