XLIV. STORAGE OF IN-PROCESS MATERIAL

At several stages during the manufacturing, the bulk material would have to be kept in quarantine, awaiting QC results, such as LOD measurement, content uniformity of tabletting mix, etc. The master formula should specify the conditions of storage and the length of a validated storage period. In some instances, silica gel is to be kept in the drums storing the product. Follow these instructions carefully. In most instances, the bulk should receive a final blending turnover before filling the compression hoppers; this is necessary in order to avoid any segregation of powders during storage or during transportation to and from the storage facility.

XLV. TABLET FRIABILITY

This friability determination of compressed, uncoated tablets is generally applicable to most compressed tablets. Measurement of tablet friability supplements other physical strength measurements, such as tablet crushing strength. For tablets with a unit mass equal to or less than 650 mg, take a sample of whole tablets corresponding to 6.5 g. For tablets with a unit mass of more than 650 mg, take a sample of 10 whole tablets. The tablets should be carefully dusted prior to testing. Accurately weigh the tablet sample, and place the tablets in the drum. Rotate the drum 100 times, and remove the tablets. Remove any loose dust from the tablets, as before, and accurately weigh. If tablet size or shape causes irregular tumbling, adjust the drum base so that the base forms an angle of about 10 degrees with the benchtop, and the tablets no longer bind together when lying next to each other, which prevents them from falling freely.

Effervescent tablets and chewable tablets may have different specifications as far as friability is concerned, and these tablets normally require special packaging. In the case of hygroscopic tablets, a humidity-controlled environment (relative humidity less than 40%) is required for testing.

XLVI. TABLET MANUFACTURING

Tablets are prepared by three general methods: wet granulation, dry granulation (roll compaction or slugging), and direct compression. The purpose of wet and dry granulation is to improve flow of the mixture and to enhance its compressibility. Dry granulation (slugging) involves the compaction of powders at high pressures into large, often poorly formed tablet compacts. These compacts are then milled and screened to form a granulation of the desired particle size. The advantage of dry granulation is the elimination of heat and moisture in the processing. Dry granulations can be produced by extruding powders between hydraulically operated rollers to produce thin cakes that are subsequently screened or milled to give the desired granule size.

Excipients are available that allow production of tablets at high speeds without prior granulation steps. These directly compressible excipients consist of special physical forms of substances, such as lactose, sucrose, dextrose, or cellulose, which possess the desirable properties of fluidity and compressibility. The most widely used direct-compaction fillers are microcrystalline cellulose, anhydrous lactose, spray-dried lactose, compressible sucrose, and some forms of modified starches. Direct compression avoids many of the problems associated with wet and dry granulations. However, the inherent physical properties of the individual filler materials are highly critical, and minor variations can alter flow and compression characteristics so as to make them unsuitable for direct compression.

XLVII. TABLETS

Tablets are solid dosage forms containing medicinal substances with or without suitable diluents. They may be classed, according to the method of manufacture, as compressed tablets or molded tablets. The vast majority of all tablets manufactured are made by compression, and compressed tablets are the most widely used dosage form in the United States. Compressed tablets are prepared by the application of high pressures, utilizing steel punches and dies, to powders or granulations. Tablets can be produced in a wide variety of sizes, shapes, and surface markings, depending upon the design of the punches and dies. Capsule-shaped tablets are commonly referred to as caplets. Boluses are large tablets intended for veterinary use, usually for large animals. Molded tablets are prepared by forcing dampened powders under low pressure into die cavities. Solidification depends upon crystal bridges built up during the subsequent drying process and not upon the compaction force. Tablet triturates are small, usually cylindrical, molded, or compressed tablets. Tablet triturates were traditionally used as dispensing tablets in order to provide a convenient, measured quantity of a potent drug for compounding purposes. Such tablets are rarely used today. Hypodermic tablets are molded tablets made from completely and readily water-soluble ingredients and formerly were intended for use in making preparations for hypodermic injection. They are employed orally, or where rapid drug availability is required, such as in the case of nitroglycerin tablets, sublingually. Buccal tablets are intended to be inserted in the Buccal pouch, and sublingual tablets are intended to be inserted beneath the tongue, where the active ingredient is absorbed directly through the oral mucosa. Few drugs are readily absorbed in this way, but for those that are (such as nitroglycerin and certain steroid hormones), there are a number of advantages. Soluble, effervescent tablets are prepared by compression and contain, in addition to active ingredients, mixtures of acids (citric acid, tartaric acid) and sodium bicarbonate, which release carbon dioxide when dissolved in water. They are intended to be dissolved or dispersed in water before administration. Effervescent tablets should be stored in tightly closed containers or moisture-proof packs and should be labeled to indicate that they are not to be swallowed directly.

Chewable tablets are formulated and manufactured so that they may be chewed, producing a pleasant-tasting residue in the oral cavity that is easily swallowed and does not leave a bitter or unpleasant aftertaste. These tablets have been used in tablet formulations for children, especially in multivitamin formulations, and for the administration of antacids and selected antibiotics. Chewable tablets are prepared by compression, usually utilizing mannitol, sorbitol, or sucrose as binders and fillers, and containing colors and flavors to enhance their appearance and taste.

Most compressed tablets consist of the active ingredient and a diluent (filler), binder, disintegrating agent, and lubricant. Approved FD&C and D&C dyes or lakes (dyes adsorbed onto insoluble aluminum hydroxide), flavors, and sweetening agents may also be present. Diluents are added where the quantity of active ingredient is small or difficult to compress.