

oral mucosa. They enable oral absorption of drugs that are destroyed by the gastric juice and/or are poorly absorbed from the gastrointestinal tract. Buccal tablets are designed to erode slowly, whereas those for sublingual use (such as nitroglycerin [NTG]) dissolve promptly and provide rapid drug effects. *Lozenges* or *troches* are disc-shaped solid dosage forms containing a medicinal agent and generally a flavoring substance in a hard candy or sugar base. They are intended to be slowly dissolved in the oral cavity, usually for local effects, although some are formulated for systemic absorption. An example would be Mycelex troches (Bayer Consumer Care).

Chewable Tablets

Chewable tablets, which have a smooth, rapid disintegration when chewed or allowed to dissolve in the mouth, have a creamy base, usually of specially flavored and colored mannitol. Chewable tablets are especially useful for administration of large tablets to children and adults who have difficulty swallowing solid dosage forms. Examples include Pepcid AC chewable tablets (J&J Merck) and Roloids chewable tablets (Pfizer Consumer Healthcare).

Effervescent Tablets

Effervescent tablets are prepared by compressing granular effervescent salts that release gas when in contact with water. These tablets generally contain medicinal substances that dissolve rapidly when added to water. The “bubble action” can assist in breaking up the tablets and enhancing the dissolution of the active drug. Examples include Alka-Seltzer Original tablets (Bayer Consumer Care) and Zantac EFFERdose (GlaxoSmithKline).

Molded Tablets

Certain tablets, such as tablet triturates, may be prepared by molding rather than by compression. The resultant tablets are very soft and soluble and are designed for rapid dissolution.

Tablet Triturates

Tablet triturates are small, usually cylindrical, molded, or compressed tablets containing small amounts of usually potent drugs. Today, only a few tablet triturate products are available commercially, with most of these produced by tablet compression. Since tablet triturates must be readily and completely soluble in water, only a minimal amount of pressure is applied during their manufacture. A combination of sucrose and lactose is usually the diluent. The few tablet triturates that remain are used sublingually, such as NTG tablets.

Pharmacists also employ tablet triturates in compounding. For example, triturates are inserted into capsules or dissolved in liquid to provide accurate amounts of potent drug substances.

Hypodermic Tablets

Hypodermic tablets are no longer available in the United States. They were originally used by physicians in extemporaneous preparation of parenteral solutions. The required number of tablets was dissolved in a suitable vehicle, sterility attained, and the injection performed. The tablets were a convenience, since they could be easily carried in the physician's medicine bag and injections prepared to meet the needs of the individual patients. However, the difficulty in achieving sterility and the availability of prefabricated injectable products, some in disposable syringes, have eliminated the need for hypodermic tablets.

Dispensing Tablets

Dispensing tablets are no longer in use. They might better have been termed *compounding tablets* because the pharmacist used them to compound prescriptions; they were *not* dispensed as such to the patient. The tablets contained large amounts of highly potent drug substances, so the pharmacist could rapidly obtain premeasured amounts for compounding multiple dosage units. These tablets had the dangerous potential of being inadvertently dispensed as such to patients.