on the original manufacturer's bulk container or a six-month period from the date the drug is repacked, whichever is earlier (7).

According to the EU, GMP guideline stability data are necessary for comparator or reference drug products.

The following cases are differentiated:

The samples are repacked into packaging material that is as tight or tighter concerning moisture and light than the original packaging material. The original shelf life is used.

The samples are repacked into packaging material that is less tight than the original packaging material. Then the samples are tested for moisture sensitivity in the open at 25°C/60% r.h. and for photostability for 24 hours with the Xenon lamp (Suntest). Test criteria: average mass and appearance if no changes take place, the original shelf life is used; if changes take place, tighter or more protecting packaging material must be selected. Then the original shelf life is used.

Samples are reworked (tablets are ground and filled into capsules). There the stability protocol for phase I is applied with the difference that the samples are stored at 25°C/60% r.h. in the intended packaging material up to 18 months for phase II and 36 months for phase III (Table 22).

Table 22 Storage Conditions, Storage Period, and Testing Frequency for Reworked Comparators

Clinical phase	Minimum shelf life	Packaging material	Pretreatment	Storage conditions temp. (°C)	Storage conditions rel. hum. (%)	Storage frequency, storage period	
II	12–18 months	Twist-off	None	40	—	0 1 2 3 6	months
		Twist-off	25°C/60%	40	—	0 1 2 3 6	months
		Twist-off	None	25	60	12 18	months
		Intended packaging material	None	25	60	12 18	months
III	24–36 months	Twist-off	None	40	—	0 1 2 3 6	months
		Twist-off	25°C/60%	40	—	0 1 2 3 6	months
		Twist-off	None	25	60	12 18 24 36	months
		Intended packaging material	None	25	60	12 18 24 36	months

Testing specifications: Testing specification for release and stability testing of clinical samples.

5. STABILITY TESTING WITH PIVOTAL AND BIOEQUIVALENCE BATCHES

The stability information for a finished medicinal product is derived mainly from the primary data, i.e., the results obtained from the three registration batches. Usually these are representative pilot plant batches. After marketing authorization, three production batches are added.

Results from the development phase, supporting data, are also included in the application for marketing authorization to underpin the stability information.