**Rule 3. Alphabetical Rule**

 If more than one code could be valid for a form, inconsistencies could result in the allocation of codes between countries. Therefore, in these cases the code with the higher sequence in the alphabet should be taken. That is, A will be used before B, B will be used before C, and so on. This rule should apply at the first and second levels of the NFC. For example, preparations for both the eye and the ear are classified as eye preparations with the first letter N. For the third letter, normally use the letter that provides the most specific information (e.g. if a product is an enteric coated tablet then use .BD not .BA) and only apply the Alphabetical Rule if there are two or more equally valid codes.

An exception to this rule applies for combination packs that are purely for promotional purposes e.g. packs where a normally available pack is packaged together with a second form as a bonus for the consumer. In this case, the combination pack should be classified with the NFC12 that is relevant to the primary pack i.e. the non-promotional component. The NFC3 should be Z to reflect that it is a combination pack.

For example, Fern Kiddimin is available as a 60ML syrup (NFC DGM) and, for a limited time, is available packaged together with 10 Fern C capsules (NFC ACA). The NFC for the promotional combination pack is DGZ to reflect that the syrup is the primary form.

If the primary form cannot be determined or if there is no primary form, then the standard alphabetical rule should be applied.

~~This methodology has been used in the Guidelines for the EphMRA Anatomical Classification in a similar way for many years.~~

**Rule 4. Oral Systemic Forms Which Require Modification Before Use**

Some oral forms have to be prepared before use, e.g. a dry syrup which requires the addition of water. The form of the product is solid, but the patient takes it as a liquid. In this case the first letter of the NFC should be "Oral Liquid". The second and third letters will indicate the dry form. This also applies to baby food which needs the addition of water before use, and so should have D..as the first letter.

The only exceptions to this rule are effervescent and soluble tablets which are classified as first letter A…

**VALID COMBINATIONS OF SECOND AND THIRD LETTERS AND DEFINITIONS**

**.A. TABLETS**

 **.AA TABLETS**

Tablets not otherwise specified, including pills. Coated pills should be in .BA. Vaginal tablets and pessaries in a compressed tablet format are classified TAA.

 **.AB ORALLY DISINTEGRATING TABLETS**

Tablets that disintegrate dissolve or melt quickly in the mouth without the need of taking them with liquid. Sublingual tablets that are specifically formulated in this way are classified here. They can be manufactured by freeze-drying (Lycos, Zydis) or any other process (Rapimelt, Schmeltztab). For those that disintegrate, the resulting particles may be plain, enteric coated or otherwise coated.

 **.AE BUCCAL TABLETS**

 Tablets for buccal use to be placed in the buccal pouch.

Muco-adhesive buccal tablets are also included here.

 **.AF SUBLINGUAL TABLETS**

 Tablets for sublingual use to be placed under the tongue.

Sublingual tablets that are specifically formulated to disintegrate, dissolve or melt quickly are classified in AAB.

 **.AG CHEWABLE TABLETS**

Tablets which are specially formulated to be chewed. Chewable

tablets which can also be sucked or swallowed are also in .AG.

 **.AH EFFERVESCENT TABLETS**

Tablets which dissolve in water with the formation of carbon dioxide.

**.DQ CAKES/CHOCOLATE/BARS/BISCUITS**

Medicinal cakes, chocolates, bars, biscuits are included here. Other forms for dietary purposes are included in .YH or .YG.

 **.DR. GLOBULI AND HOMEOPATHIC GLOBULI**

Very small globuli especially homeopathic globuli.

 **.DY OTHER SPECIAL SOLID FORMS**

Other special solid forms. Antibiotic chain beads and powders containing microspheres are classified MDY. Single large crystals are included here.

 **.DZ COMBINATION PACK SPECIAL FORMS**

Combination packs of special solid forms together with other forms in the same pack. This includes packs containing special solid forms with other forms which are classified with a lower alphabetical sequence.

**.E. POWDERS/GRANULES**

 **.EA POWDERS**

Powders not otherwise specified. ~~In Japan unit dose powders will also be in this class.~~

 **.EB GRANULES**

Granules not otherwise specified. ~~In Japan unit dose granules will also be in this class.~~ Granular crystals, crystalline mass and multiple crystal forms in one product forms are included here. Crystalline powders are classified in .EA (Powders) and single large crystals are classified in .DY (Other Special Solid Forms).

 **.EC DUSTING POWDERS**

Dusting powders, powders for dermatological use only.

 **.ED MEDICINAL/PHARMACEUTICAL SOLID SUBSTANCES**

Medicinal/pharmaceutical solid and semi-solid substances, intended for use in the pharmacist's laboratory. These are in VED

 **.EF SUBLINGUAL POWDERS/GRANULES**

Sublingual powders or granules for sublingual use. In Japan unit dose sublingual powders/granules will also be in this class.

 **.EH EFFERVESCENT POWDERS/GRANULES**

Effervescent powders or granules. Effervescent powders or granules in unit doses are in .EP. In Japan effervescent powders or granules in unit doses will also be in this class.

 **.EK SOLUBLE POWDERS**

Soluble powders or granules which have to be dissolved in water before use. Those in unit doses are in .EP. Powders which are reconstituted in the same container to make suspensions, syrups, solutions etc. will be classified in .GJ. Powders which are reconstituted for use in dialysis machines are in MEK. In Japan unit dose soluble powders will also be in this class.