Designation: F 648 – 00

Standard Specification for Ultra-High-Molecular-Weight Polyethylene Powder and Fabricated Form for Surgical Implants[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F 648; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ε) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This specification covers Ultra-High Molecular Weight Polyethylene powder (UHMWPE) and fabricated forms intended for use in surgical implants.

1.2 The requirements of this specification apply to UHMWPE in two forms. One is virgin polymer powder (Section 4). The second is any form fabricated from this powder from which a finished product is subsequently produced (Section 5). This specification addresses material characteristics and does not apply to the packaged and sterilized finished implant.

1.3 The provisions of Specification D 4020 apply. Special requirements detailed in this specification are added to describe material which will be used in surgical implants.

1.4 The biological response to polyethylene in soft tissue and bone has been well characterized by a history of clinical use **(1, 2, 3)**[2] and by laboratory studies **(4, 5, 6)**.

1.5 The following precautionary caveat pertains only to the test method portion, Section 7, of this specification: *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*

D 256 Test for Impact Resistance of Plastics and Electrical Insulating Materials[3]

D 638 Test Method for Tensile Properties of Plastics[3]

D 648 Test Method for Deflection Temperature of Plastics Under Flexural Load[3]

D 790 Test Methods for Flexural Properties of Plastics and Electrical Insulating Materials[3]

D 792 Test Methods for Specific Gravity (Relative Density) and Density by Displacement[3]

D 1505 Test Method for Density of Plastics by the Density-Gradient Technique[3]

D 1898 Practice for Sampling of Plastics[3]

D 4020 Specification for Ultra-High Molecular Weight Polyethylene Molding and Extrusion Materials[4]

F 619 Practice for Extraction of Medical Plastics[5]

F 748 Practice for Selecting Generic Biological Test Methods for Materials and Devices[5]

F 749 Practice for Evaluating Material Extracts by Intracutaneous Injection in the Rabbit[5]

F 756 Practice for Assessment of Hemolytic Properties of Materials[5]

F 763 Practice for Short-Term Screening of Implant Materials[5]

F 813 Practice for Direct Contact Cell Culture Evaluation of Materials for Medical Devices[5]

F 895 Test Method for Agar Diffusion Cell Culture Screening for Cytotoxicity[5]

F 981 Practice for Assessment of Compatibility of Biomaterials (Nonporous) for Surgical Implants with Respect to Effect of Materials on Muscle and Bone[5]

2.2 *ISO Standards*

ISO 527 Plastics: Determination of Tensile Properties[6]

ISO 3451-1 Plastics—Determination of Ash, Part 1: General Methods[6]

ISO 11542/2, Plastics—Ultra-High Molecular Weight Polyethylene (UHMWPE) Moulding and Extrusion Materials—Part 2: Preparation of Test Specimens and Determination[6]

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 *fabricated form*—any bulk shape of UHMWPE, fabricated from the virgin polymer powder, used during the process of fabricating surgical implants prior to packaging and sterilization.

3.1.1.1 *Discussion*—This form results from the application of heat and pressure to the virgin polymer powder, and the

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[2] The boldface numbers in parentheses refer to the list of references at the end of this specification.

[3] *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 08.01.

[4] *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 08.02.

[5] *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 13.01.

[6] Available from American National Standards Institute, 11 W. 42nd St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10036.

material characteristics of this form are subject to the applicable requirements of this specification. In present practice, this includes ram-extruded bars or molded blocks from which the final product form is machined, or a molded shape which is subsequently trimmed.

3.1.2 *generic property*—that property which is determined solely by the chemical composition and structure of the virgin polymer.

3.1.3 *morphology index (MI)*—material morphology quality shall be described by a morphology index (MI) defined as the ratio of the total number of Type A and Type B indications (See Annex A2) to the total surface area examined in cm^2.

3.1.4 *Type A non-fused flake*—a Type A non-fused flake (A2.4.1 and Fig. A2.1) is an indication visible under conditions described in A2.5.1 that has an essentially complete circumferential black boundary and a white center.

3.1.5 *Type B non-fused flake*—a Type B non-fused flake (A2.4.2 and Fig. A2.2) is an indication visible under conditions described in A2.5.1 that has a partially circumferential black boundary that appears to trace out 50 % to 99 % of a flake's perimeter.

3.1.6 *virgin polymer powder*—the form of UHMWPE as obtained from the powder manufacturer and prior to fabrication into a bulk shape.

4. Virgin UHMWPE Powder Requirements

4.1 *Generic Properties*:

4.1.1 The virgin polymer shall be a homopolymer of ethylene in accordance with Specification D 4020.

4.1.2 The resin type and solution viscosity number requirements are listed in Table 1.

4.2 *Nongeneric Properties*:

4.2.1 When a 300 g sample is prepared and viewed in accordance with 7.1.2, there shall be no more particles of extraneous matter than that specified in Table 1.

4.2.2 To promote uniformity between different lots of polymer powder, concentration limits for trace elements have been established and are listed in Table 1.

4.2.3 When determined as described in ISO 3451-1, the mean ash of duplicate samples shall not exceed the limits established in Table 1.

5. UHMWPE Fabricated Form Requirements

5.1 *Compositional Requirements*:

5.1.1 No stabilizers or processing aids are to be added to the virgin polymer powder during manufacture of a fabricated form.

TABLE 1 Requirements for UHMWPE Powders

Property	Test Method	Requirement		
Resin Type		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
Viscosity Number, mL/g,	ASTM D 4020 (0.02 %)	2000-3200	>3200	>3200
Ash, mg/kg, (Maximum)	ISO 3451-1	150	150	300
Extraneous Matter, No. Particles, (Maximum)	4.2.1	5	5	25
Titanium, mg/kg, (Maximum)	7.1.3.1	40	40	150
Aluminum, mg/kg, (Maximum)	7.1.3.1	40	40	100
Calcium, mg/kg, (Maximum)	7.1.3.1	50	50	50
Chlorine, mg/kg, (Maximum)	7.1.3.2	20	75	90

5.2 *Physical Requirements*:

5.2.1 *Foreign Matter Requirements*:

5.2.1.1 When 3200 cm^2 is evaluated according to 7.2.2, there shall be no more than ten particles of extraneous matter visible on the surface when visually inspected by normal or corrected vision.

5.2.2 *Morphology Requirements*:

5.2.2.1 When evaluated according to Annex A2 the calculated morphology index (MI) and total surface area examined shall be reported.

5.3 *Mechanical Requirements*:

5.3.1 UHMWPE in fabricated form from which implants shall be made shall meet the requirements listed in Table 2.

5.3.2 The following mechanical tests may be conducted based on agreement between the vendor and purchaser:

5.3.2.1 Deflection temperature; Test Method D 648 (1.8 MPa), and Flexural modulus; Test Methods D 790 (secant, 2 % offset).

6. Sampling

6.1 Where applicable, the requirements of this specification shall be determined for each lot of powder and fabricated form by sampling sizes and procedures according to Practice D 1898, or as agreed upon between the purchaser and seller.

7. Test Methods

7.1 *UHMWPE Powder*:

7.1.1 Determine the solution viscosity number in accordance with the method given in Specification D 4020 at a concentration of 0.02 %.

7.1.2 Determine the amount of extraneous matter by the following procedure as agreed upon by the purchaser and seller.

7.1.2.1 A 300 g sample is divided into four 75 g samples. Place a 75 g sample in each of four 1000 mL Erlenmeyer flasks, add 400 mL isopropyl alcohol, shake 5 min, and let settle for 5 min. Count the total number of particles of extraneous matter in the four flasks.

TABLE 2 Requirements for UHMWPE Fabricated Forms

Property	Test Method	Requirement		
Resin Type		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
Density, kg/m^3	ASTM D 792 or D 1505	927-944	927-944	927-944
Ash, mg/kg, (Maximum)	ISO 3451-1	150	150	300
Tensile Strength, 23°C, MPa, (Minimum)[A]	ASTM D 638, Type IV, 5.08 cm/min			
Ultimate		35	27	27
Yield	ISO 527, 100 mm/min.	21	19	19
Elongation, %, (Minimum)[A]	ASTM D 638, Type IV, 5.08 cm/min ISO 527, 100 mm/min.	300	300	250
Izod Impact Strength, kJ/m^2, (Minimum)[B]	Annex A1	126	73	25
Charpy Impact Strength, kJ/m^2, (Minimum)[B]	ISO/CD 11542/2.3, Annex A2	180	90	30

[A] Either Test Method D 638 or ISO 527 may be used to determine tensile strength and elongation, however the ISO 527 method will be considered the referee method.

[B] Either Charpy or Izod impact strength may be determined, however, the Charpy test will be considered the referee method.

7.1.2.2 Visually examine (20/20 corrected vision if necessary) the four flasks and count the total number of particles of extraneous matter.

7.1.3 Determine the following trace element concentrations by the following methods, or by methods agreed upon by the purchaser and seller.

7.1.3.1 The elements Ti, Al, and Ca may be determined by atomic absorption (AA) or emission spectroscopy (ES); inductively coupled plasma mass spectroscopy (ICP/MS); or inductively coupled plasma spectroscopy (ICP).

7.1.3.2 The element chlorine (Cl) may be determined potentiometrically, titrametrically, by neutron activation analysis, by inductively coupled plasma mass spectroscopy (ICP/MS), or by the oxygen bomb combustion/UV-Vis spectroscopy method.

7.2 *UHMWPE Fabricated Form*:

7.2.1 The requirement that there will be no addition of any stabilizer or processing aid during fabrication of the fabricated form shall be met by certification of the fabricator.

7.2.2 Determine the amount of extraneous matter by the following procedure.

7.2.2.1 Prepare a number of test specimens from the fabricated form as agreed upon by the purchaser and seller.

7.2.2.2 Visually examine (20/20 corrected vision if necessary) a total area of 3200 cm^2 taken from locations within the fabricated form agreed upon by the purchaser and seller.

7.2.3 Determine the density in accordance with Test Methods D 792 or D 1505.

7.2.4 Determine specific mechanical properties in accordance with the methods listed in Table 2. Mechanical test specimens shall be produced by methods that represent those used to produce the fabricated form.

7.2.5 Unless otherwise specified, the testing described in Table 2 (except for ash) shall be conducted under standard conditions of 23 ± 2°C after storage of the test specimens for at least 16 h.

8. Biocompatibility

8.1 This material has been shown to produce a well characterized level of biological response following long term clinical use in laboratory animals. The results of these studies and the clinical history indicate an acceptable level of biological response in the applications in which the material has been utilized. When new applications of the material, or modification to the material or physical forms of the materials are being contemplated, the recommendations of Practice F 748 should be considered and testing considered as described in Practices F 619, F 749, F 756, F 763, F 813, and F 981 as well as Test Method F 895.

9. Keywords

9.1 fabricated forms; powdered form; ultra-high molecular weight polyethylene

ANNEXES

(Mandatory Information)

A1. IMPACT STRENGTH

A1.1 General Description

A1.1.1 This test method covers the determination of the impact resistance of Ultra-High Molecular Weight Polyethylene (UHMWPE) which is extremely impact resistant. When tested according to Test Method D 256, Method A, UHMWPE generally gives the NBF type for failure, rendering the test result invalid. This test method specifies the same type of pendulum impact test machine as given in Test Method D 256 but introduces a much higher degree of stress concentration into the specimen by double notching with a razor blade. It is advised that the user be familiar with Test Method D 256 before attempting to use this test method.

A1.2 Apparatus

A1.2.1 The Izod type impact machine which conforms to the requirements of Test Method D 256, including the calibration and checking methods, shall be used.

A1.3 Test Specimen

A1.3.1 The geometry and dimensions of the specimen are given in Fig. A1.1.

A1.3.2 The specimens shall be made from the fabricated form.

A1.3.3 Each specimen shall be free of twist and shall be bounded by mutually perpendicular pairs of plane parallel surfaces, free from scratches, pits, and sink marks.

A1.4 Notching of Specimens

A1.4.1 Notching shall be done on the sides parallel to the direction of application of molding pressure; if applicable.

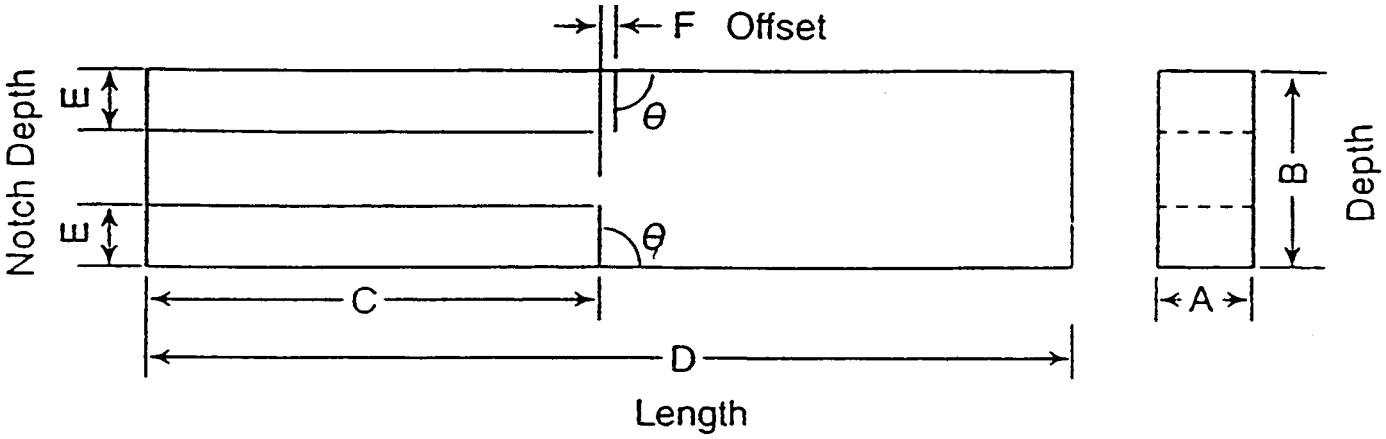
A1.4.2 A 4.57± 0.076 mm (0.180 ± 0.003 in.) deep notch shall be made with a suitable machine by pressing in a 0.25 mm (0.010 in.) thick single edge razor blade with a 15° included angle at the cutting edge. The notching speed shall be less than 508 mm/min. (20 in./min.). A new blade shall be used after notching 40 specimens.

A1.4.3 The calibration of the notching machine shall be checked by direct measurement of the notch depth, perpendicularity, and offset of the two notches. One of the possible measurement methods is given in A1.8.

A1.5 Conditioning

A1.5.1 *Conditioning*—Condition the notched specimens at 23 ± 2 °C (73 ± 4 °F) for not less than 16 h prior to test.

A1.5.2 *Test Conditions*—Conduct the test in the standard laboratory atmosphere of 23 ± 2 °C (73 ± 4 °F).



	mm		in.
A	6.35 ± 0.38	A	0.250 ± 0.015
B	12.70 ± 0.10	B	0.500 ± 0.004
C	31.75 ± 0.25	C	1.250 ± 0.010
D	63.50 ± 0.38	D	2.500 ± 0.015
E	4.57 ± 0.08	E	0.180 ± 0.003
F	0.00 ± 0.13	F	0.000 ± 0.005
O	90° ± 2°	O	90° ± 2°

FIG. A1.1 Dimensions of Double Notched Izod Test Specimen

A1.6 Procedure

A1.6.1 At least five and preferably ten individual determinations of impact value must be made on each sample to be tested under the conditions prescribed.

A1.6.2 Measure the width of each specimen in the area between notches twice with a micrometer to the nearest 0.025 mm (0.001 in.) and record its average width. Carefully measure the distance between the notch roots on the two sides of the specimen. Use of an optical microscope may improve the accuracy of this measurement. Record the average value and multiply this number by the width of the specimen to get the remaining unnotched cross section area, AR. Also record the identifying markings of the specimen.

A1.6.3 Estimate the breaking energy for the specimen and select a pendulum of suitable energy. Start the test with a pendulum of 11 J (8 ft.-lb), if no prior test data is available. Use the lightest standard pendulum that is expected to break each specimen in the group with a loss of not more than 85 % of its energy.

A1.6.4 Before testing the specimens, perform the operations on the machine.

A1.6.4.1 With the excess energy indicating pointer in its normal starting position but without a specimen in the vise, release the pendulum from its normal starting position and note the position the pointer attains after the swing as one reading of Factor A.

A1.6.4.2 Without resetting the pointer, raise the pendulum and release again. The pointer should move up the scale an additional amount. Repeat this procedure until a swing causes no additional movement of the pointer and note the final reading as one reading of Factor B.

A1.6.4.3 Repeat the above two operations several times and calculate and record the average A and B readings.

A1.6.5 Position the specimen precisely and rigidly but not too tightly clamped in the vise. The relationship of the vise, specimen, and striking edge of the pendulum to each other is given in Fig. A1.2. Note that the top plane of the vise shall be 0.13 ± 0.13 mm (0.005± 0.005 in.) below the notches.

A1.6.6 Release the pendulum and note and record the excess energy remaining in the pendulum after breaking the specimen.

A1.6.7 From the breaking strength of the specimen and Factors A and B, determine the energy loss of the pendulum due to windage and friction using the correction charts from the commercial testing machine supplier. If these charts are not available, then use the method given in Appendix X2 or X3 of Test Method D 256. Subtract the correction so calculated from the indicated breaking strength of the specimen. If a pendulum of improper energy was used, discard the result and make additional tests on new specimens with the proper pendulum. If the proper pendulum was used, divide the net value so found