
**Sterilization of health care products —
Biological indicators —**

**Part 5:
Biological indicators for low-
temperature steam and formaldehyde
sterilization processes**

*Stérilisation des produits de santé — Indicateurs biologiques —
Partie 5: Indicateurs biologiques pour la stérilisation à la vapeur
d'eau et au formaldéhyde à basse température*

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ISO copyright office
Ch. de Blandonnet 8 • CP 401
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva, Switzerland
Tel. +41 22 749 01 11
Fax +41 22 749 09 47
copyright@iso.org
www.iso.org

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 198, *Sterilization of health care products*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 11138-5:2006), which has been technically revised.

A list of all parts of ISO 11138 can be found on the ISO website.

Introduction

ISO 11138-1 specifies production, labelling, test methods and performance requirements for the manufacture of biological indicators including inoculated carriers and suspensions intended for use in validation and monitoring sterilization processes. This document gives specific requirements for those biological indicators intended for use in low-temperature steam and formaldehyde sterilization processes.

[Annex B](#) gives rationale for the liquid-phase test method for low-temperature steam and formaldehyde biological indicators.

The ISO 11138 series represents the current “state-of-the-art” according to the experts representing manufacturers, users and regulatory authorities involved in developing the standard. The intent is not to promote the use of biological indicators where such use is not advised, but to provide common requirements for the production of those biological indicators that are known to be in use today.

A standard exists providing general requirements for the validation and control of low-temperature steam and formaldehyde sterilization processes (see ISO 25424).

NOTE It is possible that some countries or regions have published other standards covering requirements for sterilization or biological indicators.

Advice on selection, use and interpretation of results when using biological indicators can be found in ISO 14161.

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