

International Nonproprietary Names (INN)

■ Contents :

The International Nonproprietary Names are intended to be used worldwide for the identification of a given pharmaceutical substance. So that the INNs are available everywhere for this envisaged use, they must be free of any protection of rights of ownership - hence the designation "nonproprietary".

The existence of an international nomenclature for pharmaceutical substances, in the form of INN, is important for the clear and unambiguous identification, regulation and dispensation of drugs to patients worldwide and for communication and the global exchange of information between health professionals and scientists. As unique names, each INN must have a distinct orthography and a pronunciation, and should not lead to confusion with other names.

INN are selected for substances that can be characterized unequivocally by a chemical name or formula, and exceptions to this rule are rare. The INN is designated for the active part of the molecule only. The INN program does not select names for mixtures or herbal substances.

Within the framework of the procedure to be followed for the choice of a recommended INN, the proposals are submitted to the World Health Organization (WHO) and are examined by a group of experts. If all the members of this group agree on a name, this name is published in "Who Chronicle" as a proposed name. Within 4 months from the publication of a proposed INN, any interested person may make opposition to this name. Where no opposition was made or all oppositions were withdrawn, the general manager of WHO makes a notification that the name was selected as being the recommended name. When it communicates a recommended INN to the Member States of WHO, the general manager of the Organization requests that this name be recognized as being the nonproprietary name of the substance concerned and asks that the Member States take measures necessary to prevent the acquisition of exclusive rights on the name, in particular prohibiting registering as a trademark or a commercial name. However, under its charter, the WHO is empowered simply to *recommend* specific actions or procedures to its Members States.

There are also national nonproprietary names, such as BAN (British Approved Name) for the United Kingdom, the DCF (Dénomination Commune Française) for France, the JAN (Japanese Accepted Names for Pharmaceuticals) for Japan, the USAN (United States Adopted Name) for the USA. Many of the national nonproprietary names are identical to the INN, and these national names are also specified in this register for each INN. In addition to the name of the INN, the register provides the INN number, the references of publication, the CASE (Chemical Abstract Service) number and the molecular formula.

For a complete search of all trade marks or names designating a pharmaceutical product, it is thus necessary to consult class 5 in all trademark registers - as well as the International Nonproprietary Names register.

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| ■ Language : | Search in: Latin, French, English, Spanish and with phonetics
Display in: Latin, French, English, Spanish, Arabic, Russian and Chinese. |
| ■ Facsimile of Gazette : | No |
| ■ Frequency of Updating : | With each publication of the proposed INN list and each publication of the recommended INN list. |
| ■ Source : | World Health Organisation (WHO) |