

American
National
Standard



ANSI/AAMI/
ISO 11137-2:
2013/(R)2019

Sterilization of health care
products—Radiation—
Part 2: Establishing the
sterilization dose

Objectives and uses of AAMI standards and recommended practices

It is most important that the objectives and potential uses of an AAMI product standard or recommended practice are clearly understood. The objectives of AAMI's technical development program derive from AAMI's overall mission: the advancement of medical instrumentation. Essential to such advancement are (1) a continued increase in the safe and effective application of current technologies to patient care, and (2) the encouragement of new technologies. It is AAMI's view that standards and recommended practices can contribute significantly to the advancement of medical instrumentation, provided that they are drafted with attention to these objectives and provided that arbitrary and restrictive uses are avoided.

A voluntary *standard* for a *medical device* recommends to the manufacturer the information that should be provided with or on the product, basic safety and performance criteria that should be considered in qualifying the device for clinical use, and the measurement techniques that can be used to determine whether the device conforms with the safety and performance criteria and/or to compare the performance characteristics of different products. Some standards emphasize the information that should be provided with the device, including performance characteristics, instructions for use, warnings and precautions, and other data considered important in ensuring the safe and effective use of the device in the clinical environment. Recommending the disclosure of performance characteristics often necessitates the development of specialized test methods to facilitate uniformity in reporting; reaching consensus on these tests can represent a considerable part of committee work. When a drafting committee determines that clinical concerns warrant the establishment of *minimum* safety and performance criteria, referee tests must be provided and the reasons for establishing the criteria must be documented in the rationale.

A *recommended practice* provides guidelines for the use, care, and/or processing of a medical device or system. A recommended practice does not address device performance *per se*, but rather procedures and practices that will help ensure that a device is used safely and effectively and that its performance will be maintained.

Although a device standard is primarily directed to the manufacturer, it may also be of value to the potential purchaser or user of the device as a frame of reference for device evaluation. Similarly, even though a recommended practice is usually oriented towards healthcare professionals, it may be useful to the manufacturer in better understanding the environment in which a medical device will be used. Also, some recommended practices, while not addressing device performance criteria, provide guidelines to industrial personnel on such subjects as sterilization processing, methods of collecting data to establish safety and efficacy, human engineering, and other processing or evaluation techniques; such guidelines may be useful to health care professionals in understanding industrial practices.

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All AAMI standards and recommended practices are *voluntary* (unless, of course, they are adopted by government regulatory or procurement authorities). The application of a standard or recommended practice is solely within the discretion and professional judgment of the user of the document.

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Despite periodic review and revision (at least once every five years), a standard or recommended practice is necessarily a static document applied to a dynamic technology. Therefore, a standards user must carefully review the reasons why the document was initially developed and the specific rationale for each of its provisions. This review will reveal whether the document remains relevant to the specific needs of the user.

Particular care should be taken in applying a product standard to existing devices and equipment, and in applying a recommended practice to current procedures and practices. While observed or potential risks with existing equipment typically form the basis for the safety and performance criteria defined in a standard, professional judgment must be used in applying these criteria to existing equipment. No single source of information will serve to identify a particular product as "unsafe". A voluntary standard can be used as one resource, but the ultimate decision as to product safety and efficacy must take into account the specifics of its utilization and, of course, cost-benefit considerations. Similarly, a recommended practice should be analyzed in the context of the specific needs and resources of the individual institution or firm. Again, the rationale accompanying each AAMI standard and recommended practice is an excellent guide to the reasoning and data underlying its provision.

In summary, a standard or recommended practice is truly useful only when it is used in conjunction with other sources of information and policy guidance and in the context of professional experience and judgment.

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Sterilization of health care products — Radiation — Part 2: Establishing the sterilization dose

Approved 2 July 2013 by
AAMI

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American National Standards Institute, Inc.

Abstract: Describes methods that can be used to determine the minimum dose necessary to achieve the specified requirement for sterility, including methods to substantiate 25 kGy as the sterilization dose.

Keywords: health care products, medical equipment, sterilization, radiation, gamma, electron beam, bremsstrahlung, x-ray, dose, dose-setting

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Contents

Page

Glossary of equivalent standards	v
Committee representation.....	vi
Background of ANSI/AAMI adoption of ISO 11137-2:2013	ix
Foreword.....	x
Introduction	xi
1 Scope.....	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms	1
3.1 Terms and definitions.....	1
3.2 Abbreviated terms.....	3
4 Definition and maintenance of product families for dose setting, dose substantiation and sterilization dose auditing	4
4.1 General	4
4.2 Defining product families	5
4.3 Designation of product to represent a product family for performance of a verification dose experiment or sterilization dose audit.....	6
4.4 Maintaining product families	7
4.5 Effect of failure of establishment of sterilization dose or of a sterilization dose audit on a product family	7
5 Selection and testing of product for establishing the sterilization dose	8
5.1 Nature of product	8
5.2 Sample item portion (SIP)	9
5.3 Manner of sampling	10
5.4 Microbiological testing	10
5.5 Irradiation.....	10
6 Methods of dose establishment	11
7 Method 1: dose setting using bioburden information.....	11
7.1 Rationale	11
7.2 Procedure for Method 1 for product with an average bioburden greater than or equal to 1.0 for multiple production batches.....	12
7.3 Procedure for Method 1 for product with an average bioburden greater than or equal to 1.0 for a single production batch	18
7.4 Procedure for Method 1 for product with an average bioburden in the range 0.1 to 0.9 for multiple or single production batches	20
8 Method 2: Dose setting using fraction positive information from incremental dosing to determine an extrapolation factor.....	21
8.1 Rationale	21
8.2 Procedure for Method 2A	22
8.3 Procedure for Method 2B	26
9 Method VD_{max} — Substantiation of 25 kGy or 15 kGy as the sterilization dose	29
9.1 Rationale	29

9.2	Procedure for Method VD_{max}^{25} for multiple production batches.....	30
9.3	Procedure for Method VD_{max}^{25} for a single production batch	35
9.4	Procedure for Method VD_{max}^{15} for multiple production batches.....	38
9.5	Procedure for Method VD_{max}^{15} for a single production batch	41
10	Sterilization dose audit.....	44
10.1	Purpose and frequency	44
10.2	Procedure for auditing a sterilization dose established using Method 1, Method 2A or Method 2B.....	44
10.3	Procedure for auditing a sterilization dose substantiated using Method VD_{max}^{25} or Method VD_{max}^{15}	47
10.4	Failure of a sterilization dose audit.....	52
11	Worked examples.....	52
11.1	Worked examples for Method 1	52
11.2	Worked examples for Method 2.....	55
11.3	Worked examples for Method VD_{max}	67
11.4	Worked example of a sterilization dose audit for a dose established using Method 1, the findings from which necessitated augmentation of the sterilization dose	69
11.5	Worked example of a sterilization dose audit for a dose established using Method 2A, the findings from which necessitated augmentation of the sterilization dose	70
11.6	Worked example of a sterilization dose audit for a sterilization dose substantiated using Method VD_{max}^{25}	71
	Bibliography	73

Glossary of equivalent standards

International Standards adopted in the United States may include normative references to other International Standards. AAMI maintains a current list of each International Standard that has been adopted by AAMI (and ANSI). Available on the AAMI website at the address below, this list gives the corresponding U.S. designation and level of equivalency to the International Standard.

www.aami.org/standards/glossary.pdf

Committee representation

Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation

Radiation Sterilization Working Group

The adoption of ISO 11137-2, Third edition, as an AAMI Standard was initiated by the U.S. TAG for ISO/TC 198 and the AAMI Radiation Sterilization Working Group, which also functions as the U.S. Technical Advisory Group to the relevant work in the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). U.S. representatives from the AAMI Radiation Sterilization Working Group (U.S. Sub-TAG for ISO/TC 198/WG 2, Radiation Sterilization) played an active role in developing the International Standard.

At the time this document was published, the **AAMI Sterilization Standards Committee** had the following members:

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NOTE--Participation by federal agency representatives in the development of this document does not constitute endorsement by the federal government or any of its agencies.

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Background of ANSI/AAMI adoption of ISO 11137-2:2013

As indicated in the foreword to the main body of this document (page x), the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies. The United States is one of the ISO members that took an active role in the development of this standard, which was developed by ISO Technical Committee 198, Sterilization of health care products, WG 2, Radiation sterilization.

U.S. participation in ISO/TC 198/WG 2 is organized through the U.S. Technical Advisory Group to ISO/TC 198/WG 2, administered by the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation. Experts from the United States made a considerable contribution to this standard.

ANSI/AAMI/ISO 11137-2:2013 was approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) on 10 July 2013.

The majority of the changes throughout the 2012 version of ISO 11137-2 were to harmonize parallel sections for the numerous Methods in order to provide improved clarity, readability and precision of terminology. Additional changes rationalized tolerances around Method 2 incremental doses and DD* and provided requirements for documenting rationale for actions following a dose audit failure requiring re-establishment of dose. This 2013 edition incorporates minor revisions, which are noted in the ISO foreword.

AAMI and ANSI procedures require that standards be reviewed every five years and, if necessary, revised to reflect technological advances that may have occurred since publication.

AAMI (and ANSI) have adopted other ISO standards. See the Glossary of Equivalent Standards for a list of ISO standards adopted by AAMI, which gives the corresponding U.S. designation and the level of equivalency with the ISO standard.

As used within the context of this document, “shall” indicates requirements strictly to be followed to conform to the standard. “Should” indicates that among several possibilities, one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required, or that (in the negative form) a certain possibility or course of action should be avoided but is not prohibited. “May” is used to indicate that a course of action is permissible within the limits of the standard. “Can” is used as a statement of possibility and capability. Finally, “must” is used only to describe “unavoidable” situations, including those mandated by government regulation.

The concepts incorporated in this standard should not be considered inflexible or static. This standard, like any other, must be reviewed and updated periodically to assimilate progressive technological developments. To remain relevant, it must be modified as technological advances are made and as new data come to light.

Suggestions for improving this standard are invited. Comments and suggested revisions should be sent to Standards Department, AAMI, 4301 N. Fairfax Dr, Suite 301, Arlington, VA 22203-1633.

NOTE—Beginning with the ISO foreword on page x, this American National Standard is identical to ISO 11137-2:2013.

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.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 11137-2 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 198, *Sterilization of health care products*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 11137 2:2012), of which it constitutes a minor revision with the following changes:

- addition of the word “and” in 9.1, second paragraph, third sentence;
- addition of the word “not” in 10.3.4.1, third paragraph;
- correction of the language used to describe requirements for interpretation of results during a verification dose experiment in the second paragraph in 7.2.6.2, 7.3.7.2, 9.2.6.3, 9.3.7.3, 9.4.6.3, and 9.5.7.3.

ISO 11137 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Sterilization of health care products — Radiation*:

- *Part 1: Requirements for development, validation and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices*
- *Part 2: Establishing the sterilization dose*
- *Part 3: Guidance on dosimetric aspects*

Introduction

This part of ISO 11137 describes methods that can be used to establish the sterilization dose in accordance with one of the two approaches specified in 8.2 of ISO 11137-1:2006. The methods used in these approaches are:

- dose setting to obtain a product-specific dose;
- dose substantiation to verify a preselected dose of 25 kGy or 15 kGy.

The basis of the dose setting methods described in this part of ISO 11137 (Methods 1 and 2) owe much to the ideas first propounded by Tallentire^{[19][20][21]}. Subsequently, standardized protocols were developed^{[10][11]}, which formed the basis of the dose setting methods detailed in the AAMI Recommended Practice for Sterilization by Gamma Radiation^{[6][8]}.

Methods 1 and 2 and the associated sterilization dose audit procedures use data derived from the inactivation of the microbial population in its natural state on product. The methods are based on a probability model for the inactivation of microbial populations. The probability model, as applied to bioburden made up of a mixture of various microbial species, assumes that each such species has its own unique D_{10} value. In the model, the probability that an item will possess a surviving microorganism after exposure to a given dose of radiation is defined in terms of the initial number of microorganisms on the item prior to irradiation and the D_{10} values of the microorganisms. The methods involve performance of tests of sterility on product items that have received doses of radiation lower than the sterilization dose. The outcome of these tests is used to predict the dose needed to achieve a predetermined sterility assurance level (SAL).

Methods 1 and 2 can also be used to substantiate 25 kGy if, on performing a dose setting exercise, the derived sterilization dose for an SAL of 10^{-6} is less than or equal to 25 kGy. The basis of the method devised specifically for substantiation of 25 kGy, Method VD_{max} , was put forward by Kowalski and Tallentire^[16]. Subsequent evaluations involving computational techniques demonstrated that the underlying principles were soundly based^[15] and field trials confirmed that Method VD_{max} is effective in substantiating 25 kGy for a wide variety of medical devices manufactured and assembled in different ways^[18].

A standardized procedure for the use of VD_{max} for substantiation of a sterilization dose of 25 kGy has been published in the AAMI Technical Information Report *Sterilization of health care products — Radiation sterilization — Substantiation of 25 kGy as a sterilization dose — Method VD_{max}* ^[7], a text on which the method described herein is largely based. Method VD_{max} is founded on dose setting Method 1 and, as such, it possesses the high level of conservativeness characteristic of Method 1. In a similar manner to the dose setting methods, it involves performance of tests of sterility on product items that have received a dose of radiation lower than the sterilization dose. The outcomes of these tests are used to substantiate that 25 kGy achieves an SAL of 10^{-6} .

To link the use of VD_{max} for the substantiation of a particular preselected sterilization dose, the numerical value of the latter, expressed in kilograys, is included as a superscript to the VD_{max} symbol. Thus, for substantiation of a sterilization dose of 25 kGy, the method is designated Method VD_{max}^{25} .

Method VD_{max}^{15} is based on the same principles as Method VD_{max}^{25} . The test procedure is similar to that of Method VD_{max}^{25} , but Method VD_{max}^{15} is limited to product with an average bioburden less than or equal to 1.5. The outcomes of the associated tests of sterility are used to substantiate that 15 kGy achieve a sterility assurance level of 10^{-6} .

This part of ISO 11137 also describes methods that can be used to carry out sterilization dose audits in accordance with ISO 11137-1:2006, Clause 12. Following establishment of the sterilization dose, sterilization dose audits are performed routinely to confirm that the sterilization dose continues to achieve the desired SAL.

Sterilization of health care products — Radiation —

Part 2: Establishing the sterilization dose

1 Scope

This part of ISO 11137 specifies methods for determining the minimum dose needed to achieve a specified requirement for sterility and methods to substantiate the use of 25 kGy or 15 kGy as the sterilization dose to achieve a sterility assurance level, SAL, of 10^{-6} . This part of ISO 11137 also specifies methods of sterilization dose audit used to demonstrate the continued effectiveness of the sterilization dose.

This part of ISO 11137 defines product families for sterilization dose establishment and sterilization dose audit.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 11137-1:2006, *Sterilization of health care products — Radiation — Part 1: Requirements for the development, validation and routine control of a sterilization process for medical devices*

ISO 11737-1, *Sterilization of medical devices — Microbiological methods — Part 1: Determination of a population of microorganisms on products*

ISO 11737-2, *Sterilization of medical devices — Microbiological methods — Part 2: Tests of sterility performed in the definition, validation and maintenance of a sterilization process*

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 11137-1 and the following apply.

3.1 Terms and definitions

3.1.1

batch

defined quantity of product, intended or purported to be uniform in character and quality, which has been produced during a defined cycle of manufacture

[ISO/TS 11139:2006, definition 2.1]