

## **Certification of Substances Division**

FML/CB

### **PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

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## **Certification of suitability to the Monographs of the European Pharmacopoeia**

# **The use of carrier oils for antioxidants in Omega-3 Type Substances**

## **Introduction**

The EDQM Certification Division has received applications and granted CEPs for substances such as omega-3-acid ethyl esters, where tocopherol is used as an antioxidant. This is foreseen by the monographs of such substances, which state "A suitable antioxidant may be added". However it has now become apparent that it is not always the pure form of tocopherol that is added to the final substance, but tocopherol may be present in a carrier oil. Such oils are of vegetable origin and may vary in nature.

The result is that in the final substance, not only will the antioxidant be present, but there may also be traces of carrier oil present. Such levels would vary depending on the chosen concentration of the antioxidant added, and of course the concentration of the antioxidant in the carrier oil.

The aim of this document is to provide guidance on the approach taken by EDQM when a carrier oil is used in conjunction with an antioxidant in Omega-3 type substances. This is important as the presence of even traces of such oils should be taken into consideration in the assessment of the medicinal product to ensure that NCAs can apply the requirement to declare excipients in the product information for the final product, and also in reference to declaration of specific excipients listed in the annex of ENTR/F2/BL D(2003) Volume 3B Guidelines (Excipients in the label and package leaflet of medicinal products for human use).

## **Policy**

### **In the application dossier:**

- The use of a carrier oil (generally of vegetable origin) to add an antioxidant is acceptable for omega-3 type substances (e.g. Omega-3- acid ethyl esters 90, omega-3-acid triglycerides and omega-3-acid ethyl esters 60). It should be made clear by the applicant that a carrier oil is being used.
- The type of carrier oil should be specified (e.g. sunflower oil, soybean oil etc.).
- The quality of the antioxidant used should be pharmacopoeial grade where applicable; however in cases where no Ph. Eur monograph exists, the quality should be justified.
- The quality of the carrier oil used should be pharmacopoeial grade where applicable however in cases where no Ph. Eur monograph exists, the quality should be justified (e.g. food grade).
- A suitable specification for the antioxidant in the carrier oil should be provided such that the concentration of the antioxidant present in the oil is controlled and then the content of the antioxidant which will be present in the Omega-3 type substance will be controlled as well.

### **On the CEP:**

- The CEPs mention the use of the antioxidant, the allowed concentration range and test method for same.
- If a carrier oil is used, a statement is included on the CEP to alert users of the CEP that such a carrier oil is present.

### **Implementation of the policy**

This policy applies to all new applications and at the time of renewal for currently valid CEPs which have yet to be renewed.

This policy is applied retrospectively for older CEPs where the renewal has already been completed.