



FAQs

PHARMACY COMPOUNDING

Q1. What is pharmacy compounding?

Pharmacy compounding is the mixing of pharmaceutical products (drugs) for patient use.

Q2. Who carries out pharmacy compounding?

There are two main types of 'compounders'. Pharmaceutical companies compound commonly used drug products, this tends to be on a large scale. Hospitals also compound products in a dedicated pharmacy often located within the hospital, this tends to be on a smaller scale and is often patient-specific. Sometimes a hospital pharmacy can be a separate facility which supplies several hospitals.

Q3. Is pharmacy compounding the same as the pre-filled syringe sector?

No – the pre-filled syringe market place is the large-scale automated filling of syringes with a specific drug eg insulin. The syringes tend to be specifically developed to be compatible with the drug.

Q4. What drugs are made in pharmacy compounding?

There is a wide range of drugs made in pharmacy compounding used to treat various medical conditions. It is not possible for Micronclean to know of all the drugs being compounded and therefore cannot test for compatibility with our syringe to cover all cases.

Q5. How do we know our syringe is suitable?

We ensure that our syringes (BD Plastipak range) meets all of the requirements of a medical device including performance, accuracy and biocompatibility. End users normally carry out their own stability studies on specific drugs.

Q6. How are drugs actually compounded?

A range of techniques are used, normally involving drawing up a liquid ingredient from a vial into a syringe then dispensing into another vial, drip bag or syringe and repeating with other ingredients. Needles or spikes/pins are used for drawing up and connectors are used to connect two syringes. These components are available in Micronclean's sterile packs range.

Q7. Are the needles Micronclean sell used for patient injection?

No – Micronclean's scope of activities only covers compounding and therefore the needles are intended to be used for drawing up only. Needle packs display a warning 'For compounding use only' for this reason.

Q8. What type of environment does pharmacy compounding take place in?

Normally compounding takes place in an isolator or in a clean air cabinet to try to prevent contamination of the drug product. The background environment is also normally controlled and operators will wear special cleanroom garments and clean the area with cleanroom compatible cleaning materials.

Q9. Are Micronclean's sterile packs suitable for being sanitised?

Almost always, yes. The two main types of sanitising packs before use are to spray and wipe the pack with an alcohol solution or to 'gas' with vaporised hydrogen peroxide (VHP) gas. The packs are compatible with both of these methods.

Q10. Why do Micronclean offer triple wrapping of sterile packs?

Triple wrapping can assist end users in avoiding sanitisation steps as the two inner wraps remain sterile up to the point of unwrapping.

