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U.S. Army Medical Correspondence Course: Pharmaceutical Calculations - Basic Mathematics, Temperature Conversion, Ratio, Proportion, Metric, Systems of Measure, Formulas, Specific Gravity, Dilution

U.S. Government, Department of Defense, U.S. Army, Medical Department Center and School (Fort Sam Houston)

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One of the most important areas of study for the pharmacy specialist is pharmaceutical calculations. A person might know a great deal about pharmacology, but if he cannot perform a pharmaceutical calculation, that knowledge cannot be applied in a practical way. To prepare and dispense medications, you must be capable of performing a variety of pharmaceutical calculations. You must be constantly aware of one fact-an error made in a dosage calculation can harm a patient. The study of this subcourse will help give you the knowledge and skill required to perform many types of dosage calculations.

This subcourse is designed to focus on the systems of weights and measures commonly used in the pharmacy. Examples in the text include drugs actually dispensed in outpatient pharmacy settings.

Learning pharmaceutical calculations is like building a house; one part is dependent on the other and a good firm foundation supports it all. Memorizing the formulas and equivalents, developing a well-rounded knowledge of basic mathematics, and practicing what you are learning (that is, solving practice problems) will help you successfully complete this subcourse. Although not required, it is advisable for you to have completed Subcourse MD0801, Prescription Interpretation, before attempting this subcourse.

As you study this subcourse you will notice that practice problems are provided at the end of each section. It is important that you solve these practice problems before you go to the next section. Furthermore, you should complete each practice problem before you attempt to take the final examination.

CHAPTER 1 - PHARMACEUTICAL CALCULATIONS I * Section I. Review of Basic Mathematics * Section II. Temperature Conversions * Section III. Prescription Interpretation * Section IV. Ratio and Proportion * Section V. The Metric System * Section VI. Common Systems of Measure * Section VII. Reduction and Enlargement of Formulas * Exercises * CHAPTER 2 - PHARMACEUTICAL CALCULATIONS II * Section I. Specific Gravity * Section II. Percentage Preparations * Section III. Dilution of Stock Preparations * Section IV. Alligation * Exercises * CHAPTER 3 - PHARMACEUTICAL CALCULATIONS III

This subcourse is approved for resident and correspondence course instruction. It reflects the current thought of the Academy of Health Sciences and conforms to printed Department of the Army doctrine as closely as currently possible.

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