

**BNF Classification  
and  
Pseudo Classification  
Used by the NHS  
Prescription Services**

**Incorporating Changes  
up to and including  
BNF Number 68  
September 2014**

## BNF Classification and Pseudo Classification used by the NHS Prescription Services

Whilst the NHS Prescription Services uses a therapeutic classification system based on and closely following the BNF, there are occasions when this is not possible.

The chapter, paragraph etc headings and the classification of drugs and appliances used by the NHS Prescription Services for PACT, ePACT.NET, PCA and the Prescribing Toolkit has to cover all items prescribable on the NHS in England. They may therefore not always equate exactly with the British National Formulary (BNF).

### Three potential areas of difference

- The BNF chapter and section headings may be slightly modified, especially to cope with the limited space on the paper reports.
- Items detailed in the BNF may be classified by the NHS Prescription Services under pseudo BNF classifications.
- Additional Pseudo BNF chapters, sections, paragraphs etc have been created by the NHS Prescription Services to either reclassify items e.g. appliances which are shown in appendices of the BNF, to accommodate preparations not listed in the BNF including unlicensed medicines, or to further sub classify within existing BNF chapters, paragraphs etc.

Where products are discontinued and result in complete paragraphs being deleted from the BNF, NHS Prescription Services based classification remains in order that historical data is available.

A number of products are shown in more than one chapter of the BNF. These will be shown as a single entry under the main therapeutic indication.

### NHS Prescription Services Code Structure

The structure used by the NHS Prescription Services encompasses four levels

- A two digit chapter heading with leading zero where required
- A two digit section heading with leading zero where required
- A two digit paragraph heading with leading zero where required
- A single digit sub paragraph heading.

Where the BNF does not extend to all these levels, the record is filled with zeros.

### Drugs not Covered by the BNF

Pseudo Chapter 19 headed 'Other Drugs and Preparations' includes many drugs and preparations under various paragraph headings which are occasionally prescribed either individually or as an ingredient of an extemporaneously prepared preparation. Similarly other products occasionally prescribed are classified under a number of paragraph headings e.g. 'Alcohol, wines and spirits', 'Homeopathic preparations', 'Poisoning antidotes', 'Disinfectants' and 'Lubricating jellies'.

## Annual Amendments

Amendments to section headings and item classifications are made once each year to take effect from prescriptions dispensed from that January. They reflect the changes, which have taken place in the two editions of the BNF issued during the previous year.

The information detailed from January 2014 therefore reflects differences up to and including BNF edition 68 issued September 2014.

## For Further Information

Questions relating to this booklet and the classification used by the NHBBSA Prescription Services should be raised with the Medicine Data Services Team.

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BNF Chapter and Section Headings  
that have been Slightly Modified  
(Apart from abbreviations)

Chapter	BNF Heading	NHS Prescription Services Heading
02:02:04	Potassium-sparing diuretics with other diuretics	Potassium Sparing Diuretics & Compounds
02:05:05	Drugs affecting the renin-angiotensin system	Renin-Angiotensin System Drugs
02:06	Nitrates, calcium-channel blockers & other antianginal drugs	Nit,Calc Block & other Antianginal Drugs
02:10	Stable angina, acute coronary syndromes, and fibrinolysis	Stable Angina, Acute Crnry Synd&Fibrin
02:10:01	Management of stable angina and acute coronary syndromes	N/A
03:02	Corticosteroids	Corticosteroids (Respiratory)
03:03	Cromoglicate and related therapy, leukotriene receptor antagonists, and phosphodiesterase type-a inhibitors	Cromoglycate, Rel, Leukotriene Antagonists
03:04	Antihistamines, hyposensitisation and allergic emergencies	Antihist, Hyposensit & Allergic Emergen
04:04:00	CNS Stimulants and drugs used for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	CNS Stimulants and drugs used for ADHD
04:05:01	Anti-obesity drugs acting on the gastro-intestinal tract	Gastro-Intestinal Anti-Obesity Drugs
04:07:01	Non-opioid analgesics and compound analgesic preparations	Non-Opioid Analgesics And Compound Prep
04:09:01	Dopaminergic drugs used in Parkinson's disease	Dopaminergic Drugs Used in Parkinsonism
05:01:06	Clindamycin	Clindamycin and Lincomycin
05:01:11	Metronidazole and Tinidazole	Metronidazole, Tinidazole & Ornidazole
06:01:05	Treatment of Diabetic Nephropathy and Neuropathy	Diabetic Nephropathy & Neuropathy
06:01:06	Diagnostic and monitoring agents for diabetes mellitus	Diabetic Diagnostic (Monitoring Agents)
06:03	Corticosteroids	Corticosteroids (Endocrine)
07:03:02:3	Intra-uterine Progesterone-only device	IUD Progesterone-only Device

Chapter	BNF Heading	NHS Prescription Services Heading
08:01:02	Anthracyclines an other cytotoxic antibodies	Anthracyclines & Cytotoxic Antibiotics
09:05:01:02	Hypercalcaemia + Hypercalcuria	Hypercalcaemia
09:05:04	Zinc	Zinc & Other Minerals
10:01:03	Drugs which suppress the rheumatic disease process	Rheumatic Disease Suppressant Drugs
10:03	Drugs for the treatment of soft-tissue disorders and topical pain relief	Soft-Tissue Disorders & Topical Pain Rel
12:01:03	Removal of Ear Wax	Removal of Ear Wax and other Substances
13:01	Management of Skin Conditions	Vehicles and Emulsifying Agents
13:01:01	Vehicles	Vehicles and Emulsifying Agents
13:11:04	Iodine	Chlorine & Iodine
13:13	Topical circulatory preparations	Wound Management Products
14:03	Storage and Usage	Diagnostic Vaccines
15:01:06	Drugs for Reversal Neuro-Muscular Blockade	Anticholinesterases used in Anaesthesia
15:01:07	Antagonists for central and respiratory depression	Antagonists for Respiratory Depression

Items Detailed in the BNF that have been classified  
by the NHS Prescription Services under Pseudo BNF Classifications

BNF Chapter	BNF Heading	NHS Prescription Services Chapter	NHS Prescription Services Classification
01:08	Stoma Care	23	contains all stoma care appliances (DT Part IXC)
03:01:05	Peak Flow Meters, Inhaler devices and Nebulisers	21:12	Peak Flow Meters
		21:01:02:03 21:01:10:0	Inhaler devices
		-	Nebulisers in BNF are not prescribable.
06:01:01:3	Hypodermic Equipment	21:01:09	Hypodermic Equipment (DT Part IXA)
07:03:04	Contraceptive Devices	21:04:00	Contraceptive Devices
13:11	Skin cleansers and antiseptics	21:16	Irrigation Fluids
App 5	Wound management products and elastic hosiery.	20	Drug Tariff Dressings
		21	Drug Tariff Appliances (ex Dressings)
		13:13:01	Medicated Stockings
		13:13:02	Surgical Adhesive removers
		13:13:08	Gel and Colloid dressings

Pseudo BNF Chapters, Sections, Paragraphs etc which have been created by the NHS Prescription Services to either reclassify items, to accommodate preparations not listed in the BNF or to sub-classify within existing BNF chapters etc.

Chapter	NHS Prescription Services Title	Comments
01:03:00	Test for Helicobacter pylori	Sub-section heading only in BNF
1:03:06	Other Antisec Drugs+Mucosal Protectants	Not used by BNF
01:08:01:0	Local Care of Stoma	Inc products previously classified as Stoma Adjuncts in the Drug Tariff Part IXC and are discontinued
02:05:06	Ganglion-Blocking Drugs	Original BNF chapter. Deleted version 52
02:05:07	Tyrosine Hydroxylase Inhibitors	Original BNF chapter. Deleted version 52
02:05:08	Other Adrenergic Neurone Blocking Drugs	New Sub-section heading added BNF 56
02:06:05	Flosequinan	Original BNF chapter. Deleted version 33
02:06:07	I(F) Channel Blockers	Not used by BNF
02:06:10	Other Vasodilators for Angina	Not used by BNF
03:04:02:1	Diagnostic Skin testing Agents	Not used by BNF
07:01:02:1	Mifepristone/ Misoprostol	Not used by BNF
07:03:01:0	Combined Hormonal Contraceptives	Not used by BNF
07:03:01:1	Combined Hormonal Systems	Not used by BNF
09:05:04:1	Zinc	BNF 09:05:04 – Zinc has been subdivided to cover other minerals etc.
09:05:04:2	Chromium	
09:05:04:3	Dolomite	
09:05:04:4	Kelp	
09:05:04:5	Manganese	
09:05:04:7	Selenium	Selenium has now been added to BNF 54 in 09:05:05.
09:05:04:8	Other Mineral Formulations	
09:06:01:1	Vitamin A	BNF 09:06:01 – Vitamin A has been subdivided to cover different presentations of Vitamin A
09:06:01:2	Beta-Carotene	
09:06:01:7	Other Vitamin A preparations	

Chapter	NHS Prescription Services Title	Comments
09:06:02:1	Cyanocobalamin (B12)	BNF 09:06:02 – Vitamin B has been subdivided into different forms of Vitamin B. This also includes the various healthfood type vitamin B supplements
09:06:02:2	Nicotinamide (B7)	
09:06:02:3	Pantothenic Acid (Calc Pantotethenate)	
09:06:02:4	Pyridoxine Hydrochloride (B6)	
09:06:02:5	Riboflavine (B2)	
09:06:02:6	Thiamine Hydrochloride (B1)	
09:06:02:7	Vitamin B Compound	
09:06:02:8	Other Vitamin B Preparations	
09:06:02:9	Laetrile (Vitamin B17)	
09:06:03:1	Vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid)	BNF 09:06:03 – Vitamin C has been subdivided into different forms of Vitamin C. This includes healthfood type Vitamin C supplements
09:06:03:2	Vitamin C & Bioflavonoids	
09:06:03:3	Other Vitamin C Preparations	
09:06:04:0	Vitamin D	BNF 09:06:04 Vitamin D has been subdivided to cover healthfood type Vitamin D supplements
09:06:04:8	Other Vitamin D Preparations	
09:06:05:0	Vitamin E	BNF 09:06:05- Vitamin E has been subdivided to cover healthfood type Vitamin E supplements
09:06:05:8	Other Vitamin E Preparations	
09:06:08	Other Vitamin Formulations	
09:09	Foods	excludes special diets
09:10	Compound Vit/Mineral Formulations	
09:11	Health Supplements	
09:11:01	Amino Acids & Nutritional Agents	
09:11:02	Enzymes	
09:11:03	Glandular	
09:11:04	Digestive Aids	
09:12	Other Health Supplements	Excludes those covered above in 09:11
11:08:03	Other Eye preparations	Not used by BNF
11:08:05	Preparations for Cataracts	Not used by BNF



Chapter	NHS Prescription Services Title	Comments
12:03:04:1	Breath Fresheners/Disclosing preparations	Not used by BNF
13:02:03	Dusting Powders	Was quoted in BNF. However when Talc Dusting Powder, Zinc Starch & Talc Dusting Powder and Zeasorb were moved, this subparagraph was deleted from BNF 37
13:05:00	Preparations For Eczema + Psoriasis	Not used by BNF
13:06:00	Preps for Acne	Not used by BNF
13:13:01	Medicated Stockings	Covered in Appendix 5 of BNF
13:13:02	Surgical Adhesive Removers	
13:13:08	Gel & Colloid Dressings	See 20:03 for Wound management products
13:14	Topical Circulatory Preparations	Listed in BNF Chapter 13:13
13:15:00:0	Miscellaneous Topical Preparations	Not used by BNF
15:02:01	Local Anaesthetics	BNF 15:02 split into two pseudo chapters
15:02:02	Adjuncts to intractable pain spasticity	
18	Preparations used in Diagnosis	Not used by BNF
18:01	Urine Testing Reagents	
18:02	Blood Testing Reagents	
18:03	X-Ray Contrast media	
18:04	Diagnostic Agents	
18:05	Special Sanctions Reagents	
19	Other Drugs and Preparations	Not used by BNF
19:01	Alcohol, Wines and Spirits	
19:02:01	Individually formulated preparations bought in	
19:02:02	Individually formulated preparations prepared Extemporaneously	
19:02:03	Homeopathic Preparations	
19:02:05	Household and other Over The Counter Lines	
19:02:07	Poisoning Antidotes	
19:03	Adjuncts to Dispensing	

Chapter	NHS Prescription Services Title	Comments
19:04	Single Substances	
19:05	Other Preparations	
19:06	Acids	
19:06:01	Concentrated Waters	
19:06:02	Essences	
19:06:03	Extracts	
19:06:04	Infusions	
19:06:05	Oils	
19:06:06	Tinctures	
19:06:07	Syrups	
19:07	Bases/Dil/Susp Agents/Stabilisers	
19:08	Colouring, Flavouring & Sweetening Agents	
19:09	Disinfectants, Preserv & Sterilising Agents	
19:10	Polysorbates & Tweens	
19:11	Lubricating Jelly/Pessaries	Now in Part IX of DT see also 21:14
19:12	Electrode/Ultrasonic Gels	
19:13	Cordials/Soft Drinks	
19:14	Waters	
19:14:01	Sterile Water	
19:04:02	Purified Water	
19:04:03	Tap Water	
19:04:04	Spring/Mineral & Soda Waters	
19:15	Other Gases	
20	Drug Tariff Dressings	
20:01	Absorbant Cottons	
20:02	Arm Slings/Bandages	
20:03	Wound Management & Other Dressings	
20:04	Gauzes & Gauze Tissue	
20:05	Tracheostomy & Laryngectomy Appliances	
20:06	Foam	
20:07	Lints	
20:08	Plasters	
20:09	Stockinette	
20:10	Surgical Adhesive Tape	
20:11	Surgical Sutures	
20:12	Swabs	
20:13	Unspecified Dressing	
20:14	Skin Closure Strips, Sterile	
20:15	Skin Adhesive, Sterile	
20:16	Tapeless Holders	

Chapter	NHS Prescription Services Title	Comments
20:17	Cervical Collar	
20:18	Cellulose Wadding BP 1988	
20:20	Silk Garments	
21	Drug Tariff Appliances	DT Part IXA excluding Dressings
21:01	Other Appliances	Not covered by specified sections
21:02	Catheters	
21:03	Chiropody Appliances	
21:04	Contraceptive Devices	See BNF 07:03:04
21:05	Suprapubic appliances	
21:06	Trusses	
21:07	Elastic Hosiery	
21:08	Oxygen Masks	
21:09	Special Sanction Authorisations	
21:10	CAPD Administration Equipment	
21:11	Special Authorisation in Guernsey	
21:12	Peak Flow Meters	See BNF 03:01:05
21:13	Catheter Maintenance Solutions	See BNF 07:04:04
21:14	Lubricant Gels	In Part IX of DT – others see 19.11
21:16	Irrigation Solutions	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:17	Nasal Device	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:18	Vacuum Pumps For Erectile Dysfunction	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:19	Oral Film Foaming Agents	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:20	Venous Ulcer Compression System	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:21	Dry Mouth Products	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:22	Emollients	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:23	Vaginal Moisturisers	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:24	Nasal Products	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:25	Vaginal Dilators	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:26	Leg Ulcer Wrap	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:27	Lymphoedema Garments	Drug Tariff Part IXA

Chapter	NHS Prescription Services Title	Comments
21:28	Anal Irrigation System	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:29	Plantar Pressure Offloading Device	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:30	Eye Products	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:31	Cycloidal Vibration Accessories	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:32	Inhalation Solutions	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:33	Indwelling Pleural Cath Drain System	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:34	Vaginal PH Correction Gels	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:35	Acne Treatment	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:36	Adhesive Dressing Remover Ster Silicone	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:37	Pelvic Toning Devices	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:38	Low Friction Products	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:39	Prosthetic Adhesives	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:40	Bacterial Decolonisation Products	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:41	Physical Debridement Pad	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:42	Jaw Rehabilitation Device	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:43	Micro-Enema – Sodium Citrate	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:44	Dev For Adjunctive Tt Of Hypertension	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:45	Douches	Drug Tariff Part IXA
21:46	Hernia Support Garments	Drug Tariff Part IXA
22	Incontinence Appliances	DT Part IXB
23	Stoma Appliances	DT Part IXC

Changes made between BNF Versions  
65/66 and 67/68 that are reflected in the current NHS Prescription  
Services Classification

Version 65/66		Version 67/68	
BNF	Title	BNF	Entry
01:06:07	5HT <sub>4</sub> -receptor agonists and guanylate cyclase-C receptor agonists	01:06:07	Other drugs used in constipation
N/A	NA	07:04:06	Drugs for premature ejaculation
N/A	N/A	13:06:03	Topical preparations for rosacea

Note, the above shows the changes made to the BNF chapters. The table should be read in conjunction with the previous tables to show variations in the headings used in the NHS Prescription Services database.

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