

Microsphere Brachytherapy Sources and Devices

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Licensing Guidance – TheraSphere® and SIR-Spheres® Yttrium-90 Microspheres

Yttrium-90 (Y-90) microspheres are manual brachytherapy sources used for permanent implantation therapy. Y-90 microspheres are regulated under 10 CFR 35.1000 “Other Medical Uses of Byproduct Material or Radiation from Byproduct Material.”

The authorized user (AU) must meet the training and experience requirements of 10 CFR 35.390 or 10 CFR 35.490. The AU should have successfully completed training in the operation of the microsphere delivery system, safety procedures, and clinical use for each type of Y-90 microspheres for which authorization is sought. Additionally, the AU should have successfully completed supervised work experience including at least three cases for each type of Y-90 microspheres for which the individual is seeking AU status. The microsphere-specific training and experience requirements may be satisfied by satisfactory completion of a training program provided by the vendor for new users or by receiving training supervised by an AU who is authorized for the type of microsphere for which the individual is seeking authorization. The applicant must provide documentation for all of the above training and experience.

Leak tests are not required because the activity per microsphere (the sealed source) meets the criteria in 10 CFR 35.67(f); thereby relieving the licensee from the requirements of performing such tests.

The licensee shall follow all the requirements in 10 CFR Part 35 for brachytherapy sources and manual brachytherapy use except where the following licensing commitments provide regulatory relief:

- For Y-90 microspheres, “prescribed dose” means the total dose documented in the written directive.
- The written directive should include:

- 1) before implantation: the treatment site, the radionuclide (including the chemical/physical form [Y-90 microspheres]), the manufacturer, the dose in rad/Gray, and, if appropriate for the type of microsphere used, the statement “dose delivered at stasis”; and
 - 2) after implantation but before completion of the procedure: the radionuclide (including the chemical/physical form [Y-90 microspheres]), the manufacturer, treatment site, and the total dose to the treatment site. If the implantation was terminated because of stasis, then the total dose is the value of the total dose delivered when stasis occurred and the implantation was terminated.
- The written directive should specify the maximum dose that would be acceptable for a specified site (or sites) outside the primary treatment site to which the microspheres could be shunted (e.g. lung and gastrointestinal tract). The post-implantation written directive should specify the dose that will result to the specified site (or sites) due to shunting.
 - The semi-annual physical inventory of microspheres aggregates (e.g. vials) should include:
 - 1) the radionuclide and physical form,
 - 2) unique identification of each vial in which the microspheres are contained,
 - 3) the total activity of the vial(s), and
 - 4) the location of the vial(s).
 - Procedures should describe measures taken to ensure that radiation emissions, which may include bremsstrahlung, from each patient or human research subject permits his/her release in accordance with 10 CFR 35.75.
 - The following additional guidance applies when the Y-90 microspheres are placed in vials, syringes, or radiation shields that are not labeled by the manufacturer:
 - 1) Label vials and vial radiation shields with radionuclide and form (e.g., Y-90 microspheres).
 - 2) Label syringes and syringe radiation shields with the radionuclide, form, and therapeutic procedure (e.g., Y-90 microspheres, brachytherapy).

Microsphere brachytherapy treatment is usually conducted using a multi-disciplinary team approach. The authorized user should consult, as necessary, with individuals with expertise in:

- Cancer management (e.g. radiation or medical oncology)
- Catheter placement
- Radiation dosimetry
- Safe handling of unsealed byproduct material

One individual may satisfy more than one of the listed areas of expertise.

Notes to Licensees

Notification for Authorized Users.

NRC recognizes that if an AU satisfies the training and experience listed above and is currently listed on a Commission or Agreement State medical use license or permit for a specific type of microsphere, the AU should be allowed to work under a different license for the medical use of the same type of microsphere. A limited specific medical use applicant initially applying for authorization for the medical use of Y-90 microspheres or a licensee applying for an amendment may request authorization to notify the NRC that it has permitted an AU to work at its facility provided the following conditions are met:

- 1) The AU satisfies the training and experience listed above; and
- 2) The AU is currently listed on a Commission or Agreement State license, a permit issued by a Commission master material license, a permit issued by a Commission or Agreement State licensee of a broad scope, or a permit issued by a Commission master material license broad scope permittee; and
- 3) The licensee provides NRC a copy of the license or permit on which the AU was originally listed for the specific microsphere use; and
- 4) The licensee provides all required documentation to NRC for each AU no later than 30 days after the date that the licensee allows the AU to work as an authorized user for the specific type of microsphere.

The licensee should also provide documentation stating that the AU has satisfactorily completed the training and experience listed above; and

If this authorization is approved, these notification conditions will be incorporated as license conditions in the licensee's license.

Change in physical conditions of use.

If the physical conditions of use exceed those reported in the Sealed Source and Device (SSD) certificate, the limited specific medical use licensee should request an amendment for the new conditions, and broad scope licensee should perform its own engineering and radiation safety evaluation addressing those differences.

Use of other Y-90 microspheres.

The SSD safety evaluation for a specific manufacturer's Y-90 microspheres does not cover the use of any other Y-90 microspheres, including the preparation of Y-90 on other microspheres by a commercial nuclear pharmacy, the medical use licensee's authorized nuclear pharmacist, or a physician authorized user qualified to prepare radioactive drugs. The medical use of such a source will require a new SSD certificate (or safety evaluation by the broad scope medical use licensee) that addresses the conditions of use, safety of the new Y-90 microspheres, and compatibility of the new microspheres with microsphere delivery system(s).

The SSD safety evaluation for a manufacturer's Y-90 microsphere delivery system does not cover the use of any other delivery system with the Y-90 microsphere brachytherapy device. Before authorization, the medical use of such a delivery system will require a new SSD certificate (or safety evaluation by the broad scope medical use licensee) that addresses the conditions of use, safety of the microsphere delivery system, and compatibility of the new delivery system with the Y-90 microspheres.

TheraSphere® use outside Humanitarian Device Exemption (HDE) restrictions.

The MDS Nordion TheraSphere® Y-90 microspheres are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under the provisions of a "Humanitarian Device Exemption" (HDE No. H9800006), which includes unique restrictions on the medical use of the devices. Nothing in the NRC license relieves the licensee from complying with those FDA requirements.

If the Institutional Review Board that is required to approve and monitor the use of the MDS Nordion TheraSphere® Y-90 microspheres determines that the particular use of TheraSphere® Y-90 microspheres is for research purposes, the licensee must meet the requirements in 10 CFR 35.6, "Provisions for research involving human subjects." (Note: One of the conditions of approval for an HDE is that there be an Institutional Review Board initial review and approval before a humanitarian use device is used at a facility, as well as continuing review of its use.)

Revision of Y-90 Microsphere Radiation Safety programs to conform to changes in this licensing guidance.

The above licensing guidance may be revised as additional experience is gained regarding the medical use of TheraSphere® and SIR-Spheres® Y-90 microspheres. A licensee currently authorized to use these products that is committed by license condition to following provisions in this guidance existing at the time of commitment must apply for and receive an amendment to its license in order to make changes to conform with the revised provisions.

An applicant initially applying for authorization for the medical use of TheraSphere® and SIR-Sphere® Y-90 microspheres, or a licensee applying for an amendment to conform with revisions in this guidance, may request authorization to allow future changes to its radiation safety program, provided the following conditions are met:

- the revision is in compliance with the regulations;
- the revision is based upon NRC's current guidance for TheraSphere® and SIR-Spheres® Y-90 microspheres 35.1000 use posted on the NRC Web site;
- the revision has been reviewed and approved by the licensee's Radiation Safety Officer and licensee's management;
- the affected individuals are instructed on the revised program before the change is implemented;
- the licensee will retain a record of each change for five years; and
- the record will include a copy of the appropriate website guidance, the old procedure, the new procedure, the effective date of the change, and the signature of the licensee management that reviewed and approved the change.

If this authorization is approved, these conditions will be incorporated as license conditions in the licensee's license.

Waste Disposal Issues

In March 2007 NRC staff issued an Information Notice (IN 2007-10) to alert all medical licensees of the presence of radioactive contaminants and possible issues with disposal with the two variations of commercially available Y-90 labeled microspheres, TheraSphere[®] and SIR-Spheres[®]. Depending on the contaminants, licensees may need to:

- hold the remaining microspheres longer in decay-in-storage in accordance with 10 CFR 35.92;
- return the microspheres to the manufacturer, if the manufacturer is authorized to receive Y-90 microspheres; or
- transfer the microspheres to an authorized recipient.

IN 2007-10 is available on the NRC public website at

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/gen-comm/info-notices/2007/>