

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

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Medical electrical equipment –

Part 1: General requirements for basic safety and essential performance

*This **English-language** version is derived from the original **bilingual** publication by leaving out all French-language pages. Missing page numbers correspond to the French-language pages.*



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Part 1: General requirements for basic safety and essential performance

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INTERNATIONAL ELECTROTECHNICAL COMMISSION

MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT –**Part 1: General requirements for basic safety
and essential performance**

FOREWORD

- 1) The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) is a worldwide organization for standardization comprising all national electrotechnical committees (IEC National Committees). The object of IEC is to promote international co-operation on all questions concerning standardization in the electrical and electronic fields. To this end and in addition to other activities, IEC publishes International Standards, Technical Specifications, Technical Reports, Publicly Available Specifications (PAS) and Guides (hereafter referred to as "IEC Publication(s)"). Their preparation is entrusted to technical committees; any IEC National Committee interested in the subject dealt with may participate in this preparatory work. International, governmental and non-governmental organizations liaising with the IEC also participate in this preparation. IEC collaborates closely with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in accordance with conditions determined by agreement between the two organizations.
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International Standard IEC 60601-1 has been prepared by subcommittee 62A: Common aspects of electrical equipment used in medical practice, of IEC technical committee 62: Electrical equipment in medical practice.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition published in 1988, its Amendment 1 (1991) and Amendment 2 (1995). This edition constitutes a technical revision. This edition has been significantly restructured. Requirements in the electrical section have been further aligned with those for information technology equipment covered by IEC 60950-1 and a requirement for including a RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS has been added. For an expanded description of this revision, see Clause A.3.

The text of this standard is based on the following documents:

FDIS	Report on voting
62A/505A/FDIS	62A/512/RVD

Full information on the voting for the approval of this standard can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above table.

This publication has been drafted in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

In this standard the following print types are used:

- Requirements and definitions: in roman type.
- *Test specifications: in italic type.*
- Informative material appearing outside of tables, such as notes, examples and references: in smaller type. Normative text of tables is also in a smaller type.
- TERMS USED THROUGHOUT THIS STANDARD THAT HAVE BEEN DEFINED IN CLAUSE 3 AND ALSO GIVEN IN THE INDEX: IN SMALL CAPITALS.

In referring to the structure of this standard, the term

- “clause” means one of the seventeen numbered divisions within the table of contents, inclusive of all subdivisions (e.g. Clause 7 includes subclauses 7.1, 7.2, etc.);
- “subclause” means a numbered subdivision of a clause (e.g. 7.1, 7.2 and 7.2.1 are all subclauses of Clause 7).

References to clauses within this standard are preceded by the term “Clause” followed by the clause number. References to subclauses within this standard are by number only.

In this standard, the conjunctive “or” is used as an “inclusive or” so a statement is true if any combination of the conditions is true.

The verbal forms used in this standard conform to usage described in Annex G of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2. For the purposes of this standard, the auxiliary verb:

- “shall” means that compliance with a requirement or a test is mandatory for compliance with this standard;
- “should” means that compliance with a requirement or a test is recommended but is not mandatory for compliance with this standard;
- “may” is used to describe a permissible way to achieve compliance with a requirement or test.

An asterisk (*) as the first character of a title or at the beginning of a paragraph or table title indicates that there is guidance or rationale related to that item in Annex A.

The committee has decided that the contents of this publication will remain unchanged until the maintenance result date indicated on the IEC web site under “<http://webstore.iec.ch>” in the data related to the specific publication. At this date, the publication will be

- reconfirmed;
- withdrawn;
- replaced by a revised edition, or
- amended.

INTRODUCTION

In 1976, IEC subcommittee 62A published the first edition of IEC/TR 60513, *Basic aspects of the safety philosophy for electrical equipment used in medical practice*. The first edition of IEC/TR 60513 provided the basis for developing:

- the first edition of IEC 60601-1 (the parent safety standard for MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT);
- the IEC 60601-1-xx series of collateral standards for MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT;
- the IEC 60601-2-xx series of particular standards for particular types of MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT; and
- the IEC 60601-3-xx series of performance standards for particular types of MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT.

Aware of the need and the urgency for a standard covering electrical equipment used in medical practice, the majority of National Committees voted in 1977 in favour of the first edition of IEC 60601-1, based on a draft that at the time represented a first approach to the problem. The extent of the scope, the complexity of the equipment concerned, and the specific nature of some of the protective measures and the corresponding tests for verifying them, required years of effort in order to prepare this first standard, which can now be said to have served as a universal reference since its publication.

However, the frequent application of the first edition revealed room for improvement. These improvements were all the more desirable in view of the considerable success that this standard has enjoyed since its publication.

The careful work of revision subsequently undertaken and continued over a number of years resulted in the publication of the second edition in 1988. This edition incorporated all the improvements that could be reasonably expected up to that time. Further developments remained under constant study. The second edition was amended in 1991 and then again in 1995.

The original IEC approach was to prepare separate BASIC SAFETY and performance standards for MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. This was a natural extension of the historical approach taken at the national and international level with other electrical equipment standards (e.g. those for domestic equipment), where BASIC SAFETY is regulated through mandatory standards but other performance specifications are regulated by market pressure. In this context, it has been said that, “The ability of an electric kettle to boil water is not critical to its safe use!”

It is now recognized that this is not the situation with many items of MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, and RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS have to depend on standards to ensure ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE as well as BASIC SAFETY. Such areas include the accuracy with which the equipment controls the delivery of energy or therapeutic substances to the PATIENT, or processes and displays physiological data that will affect PATIENT management.

This recognition means that separating BASIC SAFETY and performance is somewhat inappropriate in addressing the HAZARDS that result from inadequate design of MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. Many particular standards in the IEC 60601-2-xx series address a range of ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE requirements that cannot be directly evaluated by the RESPONSIBLE ORGANIZATION without applying such standards. (However, the current IEC 60601 series includes fewer requirements for ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE than for BASIC SAFETY).

In anticipation of a third edition of IEC 60601-1, IEC subcommittee 62A prepared a second edition of IEC/TR 60513 [12]¹⁾ in 1994. It was intended that the second edition of IEC/TR 60513 would provide guidance for developing this edition of IEC 60601-1, and for the further development of the IEC 60601-1-xx and IEC 60601-2-xx series.

In order to achieve consistency in international standards, address present expectations in the health care community and align with developments in IEC 60601-2-xx, the second edition of IEC/TR 60513 includes two major new principles:

- the first change is that the concept of “SAFETY” has been broadened from the BASIC SAFETY considerations in the first and second editions of IEC 60601-1 to include ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE matters, (e.g. the accuracy of physiological monitoring equipment). Application of this principle leads to the change of the title of this publication from “Medical electrical equipment, Part 1: General requirements for safety” in the second edition, to “Medical electrical equipment, Part 1: General requirements for basic safety and essential performance”;
- the second change is that, in specifying minimum safety requirements, provision is made for assessing the adequacy of the design PROCESS when this is the only practical method of assessing the safety of certain technologies such as programmable electronic systems. Application of this principle is one of the factors leading to introduction of a general requirement to carry out a RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS. In parallel with the development of the third edition of IEC 60601-1, a joint project with ISO/TC 210 resulted in the publication of a general standard for RISK MANAGEMENT of medical devices. Compliance with this edition of IEC 60601-1 requires that the MANUFACTURER have a RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS complying with ISO 14971 in place (see 4.2).

This standard contains requirements concerning BASIC SAFETY and ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE that are generally applicable to MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT. For certain types of MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, these requirements are either supplemented or modified by the special requirements of a collateral or particular standard. Where particular standards exist, this standard should not be used alone.

1) Figures in square brackets refer to the Bibliography.

MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT –

Part 1: General requirements for basic safety and essential performance

1 Scope, object and related standards

1.1 * Scope

This International Standard applies to the BASIC SAFETY and ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE of MEDICAL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT and MEDICAL ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS, hereafter referred to as ME EQUIPMENT and ME SYSTEMS.

If a clause or subclause is specifically intended to be applicable to ME EQUIPMENT only, or to ME SYSTEMS only, the title and content of that clause or subclause will say so. If that is not the case, the clause or subclause applies both to ME EQUIPMENT and to ME SYSTEMS, as relevant.

HAZARDS inherent in the intended physiological function of ME EQUIPMENT or ME SYSTEMS within the scope of this standard are not covered by specific requirements in this standard except in 7.2.13 and 8.4.1.

NOTE See also 4.2.

This standard can also be applied to equipment used for compensation or alleviation of disease, injury or disability.

In vitro diagnostic equipment that does not fall within the definition of ME EQUIPMENT is covered by the IEC 61010 series ²⁾. This standard does not apply to the implantable parts of active implantable medical devices covered by ISO 14708-1 ³⁾.

1.2 Object

The object of this standard is to specify general requirements and to serve as the basis for particular standards.

1.3 * Collateral standards

In the IEC 60601 series, collateral standards specify general requirements for BASIC SAFETY and ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE applicable to:

- a subgroup of ME EQUIPMENT (e.g. radiological equipment);
- a specific characteristic of all ME EQUIPMENT not fully addressed in this standard.

Applicable collateral standards become normative at the date of their publication and shall apply together with this standard.

NOTE 1 When evaluating compliance with IEC 60601-1, it is permissible to independently assess compliance with the collateral standards.

²⁾ IEC 61010 (all parts), *Safety requirements for electrical equipment for measurement, control, and laboratory use*

³⁾ ISO 14708-1, *Implants for surgery – Active implantable medical devices – Part 1: General requirements for safety, marking and for information to be provided by the manufacturer*

NOTE 2 When declaring compliance with IEC 60601-1, the declarer should specifically list the collateral standards that have been applied. This allows the reader of the declaration to understand which collateral standards were part of the evaluation.

NOTE 3 Members of IEC maintain a register of valid International Standards. Users of this standard should consult this register to determine which collateral standards have been published.

If a collateral standard applies to ME EQUIPMENT for which a particular standard exists, then the particular standard takes priority over the collateral standard.

1.4 * Particular standards

In the IEC 60601 series, particular standards may modify, replace or delete requirements contained in this standard as appropriate for the particular ME EQUIPMENT under consideration, and may add other BASIC SAFETY and ESSENTIAL PERFORMANCE requirements.

NOTE Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of valid International Standards. Users of this standard should consult these registers to determine which particular standards have been published.

A requirement of a particular standard takes priority over this standard.

2 * Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ATTENTION: Additional collateral standards of the IEC 60601 series, which are issued subsequent to publication of this standard, become normative at the date of their publication and shall be considered as being included among the normative references below. See 1.3.

NOTE Informative references are listed in the Bibliography on page 743.

IEC 60065:2001, *Audio, video and similar electronic apparatus – Safety requirements*

IEC 60068-2-2:1974, *Environmental testing – Part 2: Tests. Tests B: Dry heat*
Amendment 1 (1993)
Amendment 2 (1994)

IEC 60079-0, *Electrical apparatus for explosive gas atmospheres – Part 0: General requirements*

IEC 60079-2, *Electrical apparatus for explosive gas atmospheres – Part 2: Pressurized enclosures “p”*

IEC 60079-5, *Electrical apparatus for explosive gas atmospheres – Part 5: Powder filling “q”*

IEC 60079-6, *Electrical apparatus for explosive gas atmospheres – Part 6: Oil-immersion “o”*

IEC 60083, *Plugs and socket-outlets for domestic and similar general use standardized in member countries of IEC*

IEC 60085, *Electrical insulation – Thermal classification*

IEC 60086-4, *Primary batteries – Part 4: Safety of lithium batteries*

IEC 60112, *Method for the determination of the proof and the comparative tracking indices of solid insulating materials*

IEC 60127-1, *Miniature fuses – Part 1: Definitions for miniature fuses and general requirements for miniature fuse-links*

IEC 60227-1:1993, *Polyvinyl chloride insulated cables of rated voltages up to and including 450/750 V – Part 1: General requirements*⁴⁾

Amendment 1 (1995)

Amendment 2 (1998)

IEC 60245-1:2003, *Rubber insulated cables – Rated voltages up to and including 450/750 V – Part 1: General requirements*

IEC 60252-1, *AC motor capacitors – Part 1: General – Performance, testing and rating – Safety requirements – Guide for installation and operation*

IEC 60320-1, *Appliance couplers for household and similar general purposes – Part 1: General requirements*

IEC 60335-1:2001, *Household and similar electrical appliances – Safety – Part 1: General requirements*

IEC 60364-4-41, *Electrical installations of buildings – Part 4-41: Protection for safety – Protection against electric shock*

IEC 60384-14:2005, *Fixed capacitors for use in electronic equipment – Part 14: Sectional specification: Fixed capacitors for electromagnetic interference suppression and connection to the supply mains*

IEC 60417-DB:2002, *Graphical symbols for use on equipment*⁵⁾

IEC 60445, *Basic and safety principles for man-machine interface, marking and identification – Identification of equipment terminals and of terminations of certain designated conductors, including general rules for an alphanumeric system*

IEC 60447, *Basic and safety principles for man-machine interface, marking and identification – Actuating principles*

IEC 60529:1989, *Degrees of protection provided by enclosures (IP Code)*⁶⁾
Amendment 1 (1999)

4) There exists a consolidated edition 2.2 including IEC 60227-1:1993 and its Amendment 1 (1995) and Amendment 2 (1998).

5) "DB" refers to the joint ISO-IEC on-line database.

6) There exists a consolidated version 2.1, including IEC 60529:1989 and its Amendment 1 (1999).

IEC 60601-1-2, *Medical electrical equipment – Part 1-2: General requirements for safety – Collateral standard: Electromagnetic compatibility – Requirements and tests*

IEC 60601-1-3, *Medical electrical equipment – Part 1: General requirements for safety – 3. Collateral standard: General requirements for radiation protection in diagnostic X-ray equipment*

IEC 60601-1-6, *Medical electrical equipment – Part 1-6: General requirements for safety – Collateral standard: Usability*

IEC 60601-1-8, *Medical electrical equipment – Part 1-8: General requirements for safety – Collateral standard: General requirements, tests and guidance for alarm systems in medical electrical equipment and medical electrical systems*

IEC 60664-1:1992, *Insulation coordination for equipment within low-voltage systems – Part 1: Principles, requirements and tests* ⁷⁾

Amendment 1 (2000)

Amendment 2 (2002)

IEC 60695-11-10, *Fire hazard testing – Part 11-10: Test flames – 50 W horizontal and vertical flame test methods*

IEC 60730-1:1999, *Automatic electrical controls for household and similar use – Part 1: General requirements* ⁸⁾

Amendment 1 (2003)

IEC 60825-1:1993, *Safety of laser products – Part 1: Equipment classification, requirements and user's guide* ⁹⁾

Amendment 1 (1997)

Amendment 2 (2001)

IEC 60851-3:1996, *Winding wires – Test methods – Part 3: Mechanical properties* ¹⁰⁾

Amendment 1 (1997)

Amendment 2 (2003)

IEC 60851-5:1996, *Winding wires – Test methods – Part 5: Electrical properties* ¹¹⁾

Amendment 1 (1997)

Amendment 2 (2004)

IEC 60851-6:1996, *Winding wires – Test methods – Part 6: Thermal properties*

Amendment 1 (1997)

IEC 60878:2003, *Graphical symbols for electrical equipment in medical practice*

7) There exists a consolidated edition 1.2 including IEC 60664-1:1992 and its Amendment 1 (2000) and Amendment 2 (2002).

8) There exists a consolidated edition 3.1, including IEC 60730-1:1999 and its Amendment 1 (2003)

9) There exists a consolidated edition 1.2, including IEC 60825-1:1993 and its Amendment 1 (1997) and Amendment 2 (2001).

10) There exists a consolidated edition 2.1, including IEC 60851-3:1996 and its Amendment 1 (1997).

11) There exists a consolidated edition 3.2, including IEC 60851-5:1996 and its Amendment 1 (1997) and Amendment 2 (2004).

IEC 60884-1, *Plugs and socket-outlets for household and similar purposes - Part 1: General requirements*

IEC 60950-1:2001, *Information technology equipment – Safety – Part 1: General requirements*

IEC 61058-1:2000, *Switches for appliances – Part 1: General requirements* ¹²⁾
Amendment 1 (2001)

IEC 61558-1:1997, *Safety of power transformers, power supply units and similar – Part 1: General requirements and tests* ¹³⁾
Amendment 1 (1998)

IEC 61558-2-1, *Safety transformers, power supply units and similar – Part 2: Particular requirements for separating transformers for general use*

IEC 61672-1, *Electroacoustics – Sound level meters – Part 1: Specifications*

IEC 61672-2, *Electroacoustics – Sound level meters – Part 2: Pattern evaluation tests*

IEC 61965, *Mechanical safety of cathode ray tubes*

ISO 31 (all parts), *Quantities and units*

ISO 780, *Packaging – Pictorial marking for handling of goods*

ISO 1000, *SI units and recommendations for the use of their multiples and of certain other units*

ISO 1853, *Conducting and dissipative rubbers, vulcanized or thermoplastic – Measurement of resistivity*

ISO 2878, *Rubber, vulcanized – Antistatic and conductive products – Determination of electrical resistance*

ISO 2882 ¹⁴⁾, *Rubber, vulcanized – Antistatic and conductive products for hospital use – Electrical resistance limits*

ISO 3746, *Acoustics – Determination of sound power levels of noise sources using sound pressure – Survey method using an enveloping measurement surface over a reflecting plane*

ISO 3864-1:2002, *Graphical symbols – Safety colours and safety signs – Part 1: Design principles for safety signs in workplaces and public areas*

¹²⁾ There exists a consolidated edition 3.1, including IEC 61058-1:2000 and its Amendment 1 (2001)

¹³⁾ There exists a consolidated edition 1.1, including IEC 61558-1:1997 and its Amendment 1 (1998).

¹⁴⁾ ISO 2882 was withdrawn on 1 February 2005 and no replacement standard has been identified.

ISO 5349-1, *Mechanical vibration – Measurement and evaluation of human exposure to hand-transmitted vibration – Part 1: General requirements*

ISO 7000-DB:2004 ¹⁵⁾, *Graphical symbols for use on equipment – Collection of symbols*

ISO 7010:2003, *Graphical symbols – Safety colours and safety signs – Safety signs used in workplaces and public areas*

ISO 9614-1, *Acoustics – Determination of sound power levels of noise sources using sound intensity – Measurement at discrete points*

ISO 10993 (all parts), *Biological evaluation of medical devices*

ISO 11134, *Sterilization of health care products – Requirements for validation and routine control – Industrial moist heat sterilization*

ISO 11135, *Medical devices – Validation and routine control of ethylene oxide sterilization*

ISO 11137, *Sterilization of health care products – Requirements for validation and routine control – Radiation sterilization*

ISO 13852, *Safety of machinery – Safety distances to prevent danger zones being reached by the upper limbs*

ISO 14971:2000, *Medical devices – Application of risk management to medical devices*

ISO 15223, *Medical devices – Symbols to be used with medical device labels, labelling and information to be supplied*

ISO 23529, *Rubber – General procedures for preparing and conditioning test pieces for physical test methods*

¹⁵⁾ "DB" refers to the joint ISO-IEC on-line database.