

**ENTERIC COATED MAGNESIUM CHLORIDE**

This is a continuation of application Ser. No. 581,541, filed May 28, 1975, now abandoned.

**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

This invention relates to the administration of magnesium chloride in the treatment of various human disorders and deficiencies.

**BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION**

The presence of magnesium in the human body is essential for the normal functioning of many enzyme reactions. It is the most important intra-cellular mineral after potassium and forms part of a multitude of actions with cellular enzymes. It also serves a number of functions in the human body such as in energy storing and releasing actions involved in oxidation phosphorylation. Indirectly, therefore, it affects all anabolic and catabolic reactions involving carbohydrate, fat and protein. It is an essential co-factor for some peptidases, ribonucleases, glycolic and cocarboxylation reactions. A lack of magnesium chloride in the body can, therefore, give rise to a wide variety of disorders.

At the same time, magnesium chloride serves as a useful therapeutic agent in the treatment of a number of disorders, particularly disorders arising out of a magnesium imbalance. Such disorders include, for instance, idiopathic steatorrhea, resection of the bowel, ulcerative colitis and, in certain forms of chronic diarrhoea, rapid transition of food through the small intestine.

One of the difficulties encountered in the administration of magnesium chloride is that it is highly deliquescent. If exposed to the atmosphere, the powder is eventually dissolved in the moisture absorbed by it from the atmosphere. For this reason it is not practical to supply magnesium chloride in powder or tablet form.

Furthermore, magnesium chloride in both powder and tablet form is most unpalatable and can lead to nausea. Difficulty has been experienced in the past in coating the magnesium chloride in a palatable coating because moisture is still absorbed by it through the coating, leading to flocculation and eventual breakdown of the tablet.

The problem arising from the deliquescence of magnesium chloride cannot be overcome through administering it in solution form because not only is the solution unpalatable, leading to nausea, but magnesium chloride can be a stomach irritant causing retching and loss of the administered dosage.

Where there has been a sufficient intake of magnesium chloride for purposes of treatment, it has been found that as much as eighty per centum of the administered dosage can be excreted in the faeces. Generally, it is not possible, for this reason to administer sufficient magnesium chloride to obtain absorption of the chemical by the body in desired amounts.

An object of the present invention is the provision of magnesium chloride in a suitable dosage form in which the abovementioned problems are overcome to a large extent.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

According to the invention there is provided a tablet including 150 to 350 milligrams magnesium chloride contained in an enteric coating.

Preferably, the magnesium chloride is provided in its hexahydrate form.

In one form of the invention, the enteric coating is derived from a solution of cellulose acetate phthalate, castor oil, alcohol and acetone.

Further according to the invention, a sub-coating is provided below the enteric coating, the sub-coating being derived from a solution of polyvinylpyrrolidone in alcohol.

The invention is also directed towards a method of treating human disorders including the steps of administering a tablet as set out above.

**DESCRIPTION**

By way of example only a preferred form of the invention will now be described.

A dry mixture of 13,375 kilograms hexahydrate magnesium chloride and 6,875 kilograms of calcium carbonate is made up and passed through a sieve. The dry mixture so obtained is then transferred to a champion mixer and one kilogram of lump-free polyvinylpyrrolidone is added to the dry mixture. After mixing for ten minutes, one and one-half liters ethyl alcohol 95%, one and one-half liters acetone and 6 grams of an emulsifier and surface acting agent sold under the trade name Tween 80, are added to the dry mixture. Mixing is continued for ten minutes until the mixture is uniformly damp. At this stage the mixture has a crumb constituency and is sieved through a number eight sieve and placed on trays in a drying oven where it is dried at a temperature of 130° F. for twelve hours.

The granules so obtained are then passed through a number eighteen sieve. To these granules are added 300 grams of talc and 125 grams of magnesium stearate. Both the talc and the magnesium stearate act as lubricants.

The tablets are now formed on a 12 millimeter normal concave punch. These tablets are then sub-coated five times with a sub-coating solution comprising 30% polyvinylpyrrolidone USP by weight made up in alcohol.

Thereafter the tablets are provided with an enteric coating derived from a solution made up as follows:

cellulose acetate phthalate—6%  
castor oil—0,2%  
alcohol absolute—35%  
acetone—100% by weight.

After coating, the tablets are dried at 120° F. for six hours.

The tablets are now again sub-coated five times using the sub-coating solution referred to above, and rolled in talc before being dried at 120° F. for six hours.

Finally, the tablets are coated with a geranium rose solution to give them a pleasing appearance. The tablets are then dried in an oven at 120° F. for six hours and stored in sealed drums before being packed under humidity controlled conditions with silica gel sachets.

It has been found that in most instances a dosage of two to eight tablets per day provides relief. These may either be administered before retiring at night or at fixed intervals during the day, for instance, on awakening and on retiring to bed at night. In particular circumstances it may be necessary to administer a dosage above the level provided by eight tablets.

Magnesium chloride tablets manufactured according to the above process display the pharmacological properties of the magnesium ion when fully absorbed. The pharmacological properties of magnesium are three-fold. It depresses nerve conduction, impairs vascular tone and cardiac function and accentuates the action of