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From: Rolf.Spang@swissmedic.ch  
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2002 9:45 AM  
To: grossm@cder.fda.gov  
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Subject: Bar Code Label Requirements for Human Drug Products



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attn.: Mrs Mary Gross  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,  
Food and Drug Administration /  
Re: 21 CFR Parts 201, 211, and 601 / Bar Code Label Requirements for  
Human  
Drug Products

Swiss experience with bar code for pharmaceuticals

This is to inform you that in Switzerland the former Intercantonal  
Office  
for the Control of Medicines (IKS) agreed in September 1987 to introduce  
an  
European Article Number (EAN) bar code for pharmaceutical products  
(human  
and veterinary) in Switzerland. Based on an agreement with the  
pharmaceutical industry the use of the bar code was introduced on a  
voluntary base.

The licensing number of the pharmaceutical product is contained in the  
EAN  
bar code, so that the product, the dosage form, the strength and the  
package  
size can be identified by scanning the bar code.

After 15 years of use of the EAN system bar code, these bar codes are  
today  
very widely used in the Swiss market to identify pharmaceuticals.

The Swiss EAN bar code for pharmaceuticals is a 13 digit No: (see  
attached  
file)

digit 1 and 2	(76)	is the Swiss Article Code Association
EAN-identifier		
digit 3 and 4	(80)	identifies pharmaceutical products
digit 5 to 9		identifies the IKS licensing No.
digit 10 to 12		identifies the package size (and
indirectly		
the strength)		
digit 13		is a check digit

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If you are interested in more details please feel free to get in touch  
with  
me.

Yours sincerely  
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