

# User conditions: The ATC/DDD methodology - ATC Index with DDDs and Guidelines for ATC classification and DDD assignment

## Background

The ATC Index with DDDs and the Guidelines are published by the WHO Collaborating Centre for Drug Statistics Methodology (the ATC/DDD Centre). The Centre follows the “Terms and conditions for WHO collaborating centres”, version February 2024.

The Centre has the following activities according to the Terms of References for the ATC/DDD Centre available in the redesignation documents from WHO:

- Assignment of new ATC codes and DDDs based on requests from users in different countries in collaboration with and under the guidance of WHO.
- Organize an annual meeting in the European Expert Group for ATCvet classification in collaboration with and under the guidance of WHO.
- Review and revise existing ATC codes and DDDs based on proposals from users of the ATC/DDD system in collaboration with and under the guidance of WHO.
- In collaboration with and under the guidance of WHO, handle consultation requests on the ATC/DDD methodology and guide users in using the system properly.
- To provide specialized training on the use of the ATC/DDD methodology in collaboration with and under the guidance of WHO and to provide technical support to countries in setting up their national medicines classification systems.

## Updates and versions

*The ATC Index with DDDs* and the *Guidelines* are updated annually with new versions valid from January 1<sup>st</sup> and available from the ATC/DDD Centre in December. Annual updates of ATC codes and DDDs are published ultimo November at the web site [www.whocc.no](http://www.whocc.no), see [Updates included in the ATC/DDD Index](#).

## Purpose and recommended use of the ATC/DDD Methodology

*The Guidelines* describe in detail the purpose of the ATC/DDD system and uses of the ATC/DDD methodology, including how to implement and maintain the ATC/DDD methodology. See [Guidelines for ATC classification and DDD assignment](#).

## Conditions for use of the ATC/DDD Index and the ATC/DDD methodology

The use of the ATC/DDD methodology should be in accordance with the Guidelines. The ATC/DDD Centre publishes official versions of the Index with DDDs and the Guidelines in English and Spanish only.

It is important that officially correct ATC codes and DDDs are implemented in national systems to enable consistent use of the methodology within a country and the possibility to compare drug utilisation between countries.

To assure correct versions of the Index and the Guidelines it is recommended that translations are performed by a national competent authority, preferably coordinated on a national basis. National and scientific consensus terms in chemistry, therapy and pharmacology terms should be used, and

the naming of the substance (ATC 5<sup>th</sup> level) should be in accordance with INN standards when available.

Prerequisites for correct and recommended use of the ATC/DDD methodology are annual updates of the national versions. There should always be a reference to version used, and the national annual updates should be available within a reasonable time in the year the version is valid. The ATC/DDD The ATC/DDD Centre encourage that the ATC/DDD is implemented in electronic health systems and databases. National versions should be free of charge for the users.

*The ATC/DDD Centre does neither take responsibility for the correctness of national translations nor the use of the ATC/DDD system in any electronic health system. These are solely the responsibility of the users of the methodology.*

The ATC/DDD Centre is available for consultations regarding ATC coding and DDD assignment.

**WHO Collaborating Centre for Drug Statistics Methodology**

Oslo, March 2024