



Designation: E825 – 98 (Reapproved 2023)

Standard Specification for Phase Change-Type Disposable Fever Thermometer for Intermittent Determination of Human Temperature¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E825; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This specification covers phase change-type clinical thermometers that are designed and intended for one-time use.

1.2 *This international standard was developed in accordance with internationally recognized principles on standardization established in the Decision on Principles for the Development of International Standards, Guides and Recommendations issued by the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committee.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*²

E344 Terminology Relating to Thermometry and Hydrometry

2.2 *Other Standards:*

National Formulary, Volume XIII Code of Federal Regulations, Title 21, Section 191, II 1971

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*—The definitions given in Terminology **E344** apply.

3.2 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.2.1 *intermittent determination of human temperature, n*—determination of human body temperature that is made periodically by a series of entirely separate measurements.

3.2.2 *manufacturing lot, n*—in the case of a continuous manufacturing process, a lot is a specific identified quantity or amount produced in a unit of time made in a manner that ensures its having uniform character and quality within specified limits. In the case of a batch process, a lot means a batch or specific identified portion of a batch having uniform character and quality within specified limits.

¹ This specification is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee **F04** on Medical and Surgical Materials and Devices and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee **F04.33** on Medical/Surgical Instruments.

Current edition approved Feb. 1, 2023. Published February 2023. Originally approved in 1981. Last previous edition approved in 2016 as E825 – 98 (2016). DOI: 10.1520/E0825-98R23.

² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

3.2.3 *measurement time, n*—length of time required from the time of patient contact to the time when the thermometer may be removed to read within its stated accuracy.

3.2.4 *predictive thermometer, n*—any thermometer that provides an indication of the final stabilized temperature of the measurement site in advance of the time for the sensing part of the thermometer to reach the equilibrium temperature of that site.

3.2.5 *storage package, n*—smallest package intended by the manufacturer for long-term storage at the user's facility.

3.2.6 *suitable packaging unit, n*—unit(s) of packaging to which a specific requirement of marking and labeling is logically applicable. It shall not be less than the smallest unit intended for sale by the manufacturer or distributor to the final user.

3.2.7 *temperature offset, n*—designed difference in predictive thermometer readings and water bath test temperatures.

4. Classification

4.1 Phase change disposable thermometers for the intermittent determination of human temperature.

NOTE 1—The requirements of this specification shall not preclude the manufacture and sale of special thermometers having different temperature ranges and degrees of subdivision designed for specific medical uses. Packaging on any “special” thermometers shall state that the thermometer is a special one intended for a specific use and, therefore, is not necessarily in compliance with this specification. In addition, the special thermometer must be marked in such a way as to identify it as “special.”

4.2 *Scales, Celsius and Fahrenheit.*

NOTE 2—The Fahrenheit temperatures given in parentheses throughout this specification are not necessarily exact Celsius conversions but are the values to be used when testing thermometers with Fahrenheit scales for conformance with this specification.

5. Requirements

5.1 *General*—All thermometers represented as complying with this specification shall meet all of the requirements specified herein. Terms are defined in Section 3.

5.2 *Temperature Range*—The instrument shall cover the minimum range from 35 to 40.4 °C (96 to 104.8 °F) unless otherwise obviously labeled. If any thermometer does not meet

the range 35 to 40.4 °C (96 to 104.8 °F), it shall additionally be obviously marked as “Limited Range” on suitable packaging units.

5.3 *Accuracy*—The accuracy of the thermometer shall be in conformance with **Tables 1 and 2** when tested in accordance with **6.2** at any point on the temperature scale of the thermometer.

5.4 *Measurement Retention*—A measurement meeting the accuracy requirements of **5.3** will be maintained for a minimum of 1 min when tested in accordance with **6.2.4**.

5.5 *Operating Environment*—When used in an environment in which the temperature is in the range from 18 to 33 °C (64 to 92 °F), the thermometers, when tested in accordance with **6.3**, shall meet the requirements of **5.3**. Any thermometer product not meeting this requirement shall be marked on a suitable packaging unit or other labeling of the thermometers with a cautioning statement indicating the ambient temperature range in which it can be used with specified accuracy.

5.6 *Graduation*—The thermometer shall be graduated in intervals no greater than 0.1 °C (0.2 °F). As a minimum, appropriate numerals shall be placed at every degree graduation for Celsius scale thermometers and at every even degree graduation for Fahrenheit scale thermometers.

5.7 *Workmanship*—There shall be no constructional defects that would prevent the measurement of temperature within the accuracy requirements of **5.3**.

5.8 *Stability*—Thermometers shall meet all requirements of this specification over their shelf life. If the shelf life of the product is less than five years when stored in compliance with the manufacturer’s instructions, an uncoded expiration date shall be displayed on the labeling of the product.

5.9 *Storage Environment*—When tested in accordance with **6.4**, thermometers shall meet the requirements of **5.3** after they have been stored for one day at any point in an environment of –18 to 38 °C (0 to 100 °F) and at relative humidities from 15 to 90 %. When tested in accordance with **6.4**, thermometers shall also meet the requirements of **5.3** after they have been stored for one month at any point in an environment of 15.5 to 32 °C (60 to 90 °F) and 30 to 75 % relative humidity. Any thermometer product not meeting this requirement shall be marked on a suitable packaging unit or other labeling of the thermometers with a cautioning statement indicating the storage temperature range that is applicable.

5.10 *Marking and Labeling:*

5.10.1 *Identification*—Suitable packaging units of the thermometers shall bear in legible characters the name or trademark, or both, of the manufacturer or distributor and a designation, either a serial number or a code, to indicate the

TABLE 2 Accuracy of Thermometers with a Fahrenheit Scale

Temperature Range, °F	Maximum Error, °F
Below 98	±0.4
98 to 102	±0.2
Above 102	±0.4

specific manufacturing lot. Suitable packaging units and other labeling shall also bear a statement that the thermometers are intended for single use only.

5.10.2 *Operating Instructions*—Operating instructions must be provided. When space limitations dictate, the operating instructions on an individual thermometer may be omitted if detailed instructions are provided on or with a suitable packaging unit.

5.10.3 *Additional Marking and Labeling*—Additional marking and labeling that may be required by **5.2**, **5.5**, **5.8**, **5.9**, and **6.2.3** shall be clear, concise, and adequate for the intended purpose. The temperature measurement offset shall be included in the labeling of the thermometers.

5.11 *Toxicity*—When the thermometer is used as specified by the manufacturer, its parts intended for contact with anatomical sites during patient use and its melting point chemicals shall be nontoxic as determined by **6.5**.

6. Test Methods for Performance Verification

6.1 *Significance and Use*—This section describes the principles, apparatus, and procedures to be used to determine the conformance of disposable thermometers to the requirements of this specification. Each manufacturer or distributor who represents his products as conforming to this specification may use statistically based sampling plans that are appropriate. He shall keep such essential records as are necessary to document his claim that all the requirements of this specification are met. This section does not include any procedure for requirements that can be verified by visual inspection (such as **5.2**).

6.2 *Accuracy Test:*

6.2.1 *Test Equipment Required*—The test equipment shall include constant-temperature water baths, the temperatures of which are uniform and are known to be within ±0.03 °C (±0.05 °F), as measured by a thermometer or thermometry system for which the temperature calibration is traceable to the International Temperature Scale of 1990 (ITS-90) as maintained by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) or other appropriate National Standards Laboratory. The volume of each bath shall be a minimum of 1 L.

6.2.2 *Procedure*—Insert the thermometers into the water bath and test in accordance with the manufacturer’s specified procedures. Use at least 20 points distributed throughout the temperature range on the scale of the thermometer for obtaining data. Do not use a given thermometer for obtaining more than one datum point.

6.2.3 *Sampling*—Statistically based sampling of manufacturing lots is required for the determination of accuracy because of the destructive nature of the test as applied to a disposable thermometer. Use a minimum of 200 measurements in the accuracy determination for a manufacturing lot with not

TABLE 1 Accuracy of Thermometers with a Celsius Scale

Temperature Range, °C	Maximum Error, °C
Below 35.8	±0.3
35.8 to 36.9	±0.2
37.0 to 39.0	±0.1
39.1 to 41.0	±0.2
Above 41.0	±0.3