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### **NLM Classification**

The *National Library of Medicine Classification* covers the field of medicine and related sciences. The scheme is a system of classification intended to be used for the shelf arrangement of all library materials, regardless of format. Designed as a broad classification, it is suitable for both large and small library collections and may be adapted to handle specialized collections of any size.

The *NLM Classification* is a system of mixed notation patterned after the Library of Congress (LC) Classification where alphabetical letters which denote broad subject categories are further subdivided by numbers. The *NLM Classification* utilizes schedules QS-QZ and W-WZ, permanently excluded from the LC Classification Schedules and is intended to be used with the LC schedules which supplement the *NLM Classification* for subjects bordering on medicine and for general reference materials. The LC schedules for Human Anatomy (QM), Microbiology (QR), and Medicine (R) are not used at all by the National Library of Medicine since they overlap the *NLM Classification*.

### **OUTLINE OF NLM CLASSIFICATION**

#### **Preclinical Sciences:**

- QS Human Anatomy
- QT Physiology
- QU Biochemistry
- QV Pharmacology
- QW Microbiology and Immunology
- QX Parasitology
- QY Clinical Pathology
- QZ Pathology

#### **Medicine and Related Subjects:**

- W Health Professions
- WA Public Health
- WB Practice of Medicine
- WC Communicable Diseases
- WD 100 Nutrition Disorders
- WD 200 Metabolic Diseases
- WD 300 Immunologic and Collagen Diseases. Hypersensitivity
- WD 400 Animal Poisons
- WD 500 Plant Poisons
- WD 600 Diseases and Injuries Caused by Physical Agents
- WD 700 Aviation and Space Medicine
- WE Musculoskeletal System
- WF Respiratory System
- WG Cardiovascular System
- WH Hemic and Lymphatic Systems
- WI Digestive System
- WJ Urogenital System

- WK Endocrine System
- WL Nervous System
- WM Psychiatry
- WN Radiology. Diagnostic Imaging
- WO Surgery
- WP Gynecology
- WQ Obstetrics
- WR Dermatology
- WS Pediatrics
- WT Geriatrics. Chronic Disease
- WU Dentistry. Oral Surgery
- WV Otolaryngology
- WW Ophthalmology
- WX Hospitals and Other Health Facilities
- WY Nursing
- WZ History of Medicine
- 19th Century Schedule

## **HISTORY**

**A preliminary edition of the Library's *Classification* was issued in 1948, and the first edition was published in 1951 as the *Army Medical Library Classification*. It firmly established the current structure of the classification as well as NLM's classification practices. The headings for the individual schedules are given in brief form (e.g., WE - Musculoskeletal System; WG - Cardiovascular System) and together they provide an outline of the subjects that constitute the *NLM Classification*. These headings are interpreted broadly and include the physiological system, the specialty or specialties connected with them, the regions of the body chiefly concerned and subordinate related fields. The *Classification* is hierarchical, and within each schedule, division by organ usually has priority. Each main schedule, as well as some sections within a schedule, begins with a group of form numbers ranging generally from 1-49 which are used to classify materials by publication type, e.g., dictionaries, atlases, laboratory manuals, etc.**

The main schedules QS-QZ, W-WY, and WZ (excluding WZ 220-270) are used to classify works published after 1913; the 19th century schedule is used for works published 1801-1913; and WZ 220-270 is used to provide century groupings for works published before 1801 and Americana. Geographic subdivision is provided for certain subjects in the NLM schedules by the application of Table G.

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