3.1.4 DISPERSIBLE AND EFFERVESCENT TABLETS

These tablets are designed to dissolve in water and are normally used when a resident has difficulty swallowing solid dosage forms.

Effervescent tablets typically contain a high sodium, (salt), content and should be limited in residents with impaired renal function or heart conditions.

If the volume of water is not specified on the packaging or in the patient information leaflet, then use approximately half a glass or 2 inches of water. Allow the tablet to fully disperse or disintegrate and administer immediately, do not allow time for any suspended particles to settle on the bottom of the glass.

3.1.5 ORO-DISPERSIBLE TABLETS

These tablets must not be confused with dispersible tablets. Similar to buccal tablets the medication is dissolved in the mouth. However, the drug is not absorbed in the gums, rather broken down in the saliva to be absorbed as a liquid in the small intestine. The tablet is liquidised in the mouth through the saliva and swallowed.

Oro-dispersible tablets should be dissolved on the tongue. Depending on the type of tablet, dissolving time may vary from 1 minute to 3 minutes. This type of formulation is used to ease administration and for those with Gastro-intestinal issues. These tablets should not be crushed.

3.1.6 COATED TABLETS

Certain active ingredients can cause stomach irritation. Enteric-coated tablets are designed to stay intact in the acidic environment of the stomach. The coating determines where disintegration and dissolution of the tablet occurs, limiting the side effects on the stomach. Example: NSAIDs such as Naproxen E.C.

Enteric-coated medicines are generally recognised by prefixes attached to the drug name such as: EN or EC.

Medicines used for acid reflux called antacids should not be administered concomitantly with enteric-coated tablets as this could damage the coating and its benefits.

Film-coated tablets are designed to ease swallowing and mask any unpleasant taste the tablets may have.

3.1.7 SLOW RELEASE TABLETS/CAPSULES

Slow release medications are tablets and capsules that release medication into the bloodstream more slowly and at a steadier rate. This has the advantage of producing a prolonged therapeutic effect while reducing dosage frequency and fluctuations in circulating drug levels. This typically improves compliance and reduces administration and care time.

Doses are typically only required once or twice daily, it is important to remember that these formulations cannot be crushed or halved and should not be used if they are broken.

Slow release formulations can be defined in a number of ways:

- Slow release
- Sustained release
- Modified release
- Extended release

Prefixes used to describe slow release formulations: SR, MR, XL, LA, Chrono, Slow or Retard.