

Pills can also be coated in the retail prescription department with sugar.

The success in coating pills rests chiefly with the first process in mixing the *mass*. The state of dryness of the pills has the most influence on the operation of coating with sugar as well as with gelatine, and pills can be *thoroughly* dried only if they have been prepared with the proper excipients. Here we come to the most important part in making pills, the excipients used. The success of the "manufacturer" of pills is mainly due to the employment of the proper excipients, enabling him to dry the pills thoroughly.

A pill may be soft and yet be not as soluble as a hard pill. If we have gum resins or resinous extracts, and add a little spirit, we will produce a pill of softness and plasticity, but when we take such a pill between our fingers and try to mix it with water, we will find that it may adhere to the skin, and cannot be well washed off without using alcohol or some other solvent of resin. On the other hand, if we take compound cathartic pills, prepared strictly as the U. S. Pharmacopœia directs, by using the different substances in the form of powders, and having beaten them into mass with water, we shall have a pill which will fall into powder again when put into water. The excipient should be such as will not *combine* much with the resinous or other ingredients, but form rather a *layer* between the powders employed. A layer of soluble substances between powders less soluble in water (such as gum-resins or resinous extracts), will produce a pill that can be dried to become perfectly *hard*, and yet that will fall into powder when put into water, the water washing out the layer. Soft pills are apt to lose shape; and pills containing moisture cannot be kept in well-closed bottles, lest they become mouldy.

The success in making pills is based on the excipient used.

Pills which have been thoroughly dried can be coated with sugar as follows: boil 32 ounces of best white sugar, with 12½ ounces of distilled water to a syrup, and use enough of this syrup (temp. 120° to 150°) to moisten the pills in a small copper kettle or pan, exposing it to a heat sufficient to dry the pills while kept in motion and worked with the hand. After this first coat is dry, the operation is repeated until the pill is covered with sugar sufficiently. A very soluble coating for pills is the following composition: 1 ounce of flaxseed, ¼ ounce of Irish moss; boil with eight fluid ounces of water, strain, add 4 ounces of sugar, boil and use in the same manner as a solution of gelatine is used for coating pills.

If pills in very small quantities are to be made and coated with sugar or gelatine, in a retail prescription department, the mass should be made as *hard* as it possibly can be made, and allow cutting; after being cut it should be exposed to a draft of dry air so long as time will allow. Thus pills can be made and coated in small quantities within an hour or less time.