

normal form

A [SNOMED CT expression](#) in which none of the referenced [concepts](#) are [fully defined](#) and where there is no redundancy or duplication of meaning.

Notes

- In theory, an [expression](#) can be transformed to its *normal form* by replacing each reference to a [fully defined concept](#) with a nested [expression](#) that represents the definition of that [concept](#). However, this process often results in redundancy or duplication of meaning requiring removal of less specific [attribute values](#) and mergers of [attribute groups](#). Therefore, use of [description logic classifier](#) is more effective way to normalize and compare [expressions](#).

Change Notice

- Prior to the July 2019 [International Edition](#), two *normal form* expressions could be compared to determine whether they were logically equivalent [equivalence](#) or whether one [expression](#) was [subsumed](#) by the other. The July 2019 release included enhancements to the [description logic](#) used by [SNOMED CT](#). As a result of these enhancements, expression transformation is no longer a reliable option for [subsumption testing](#). Instead, postcoordinated expressions should be classified using a [description logic classifier](#) to determine subsumption.

Related Links

- [Canonical form](#)
- Description Logic Enhancements
 - [SNOMED CT Description Logic Profile Specification](#)
 - [SNOMED CT OWL Guide](#)