

MAT 0026 and BSC 1086 Module

Topic: Determine proportions and
convert change in % to fractions to
prepare chemical solutions

Math lesson 2 – Lesson on determining change in % → fractions, finding an equivalent fraction, and converting words into an algebraic expression and simplifying.

Real World Application – Making chemical solutions for use in biomedical applications. Making dilutions of stock solutions for intravenous feeding into patients.

Background - Solutions are often calculated as weight per volume, that is, grams per liter. An often-used definition is a percent solution. So a 50% solution of a substance is defined as 50 g of a substance dissolved in 100 ml total volume of solvent (usually water). 30% solution would be 30 g/100 ml water.



Problem – if you wanted to make 1 liter (1000 ml) of a 10% solution of saline (NaCl), how many grams (g) of NaCl would you add to 1 liter of water?

Remember that our units are in g of substance per 100 ml of water. Start with converting 10% into a fraction with the correct units. Then write an equivalent fraction with a denominator of 1000 to get your result.



Part 2 - How much of the 10% solution would you use to make 1000 ml of 0.9% NaCl (physiological saline) for intravenous feeding of a patient?

In other words we want 0.9 out of 10 (the dilution factor) of 1000 ml. As an algebraic expression:

Amount of original needed for new solution =

total volume times the quotient of the concentration of the original divided by concentration of the final concentration needed.

- How many ml of the 10% solution will we use and how much water will we add to make a total of 1000 ml?