

Transporting Vaccines

Guidance for storage, handling, preparing, and administering vaccine is different for each vaccine product. Health care professionals administering vaccines should be knowledgeable about requirements and best practices. It is critical that health care professionals and other staff are familiar with the vaccine products in their facility's inventory. Non-clinical staff members who receive vaccine deliveries as well as those who handle vaccines should be trained in vaccine storage and handling requirements and best practices.

Guidelines for transporting refrigerated vaccines

- Transport vaccine using a portable vaccine refrigerator or qualified pack out within refrigerator temperatures between 2°C and 8°C (36°F and 46°F).
- A digital data logger (DDL) with a probe designed to measure refrigerated temperatures should be used to monitor the temperature of the vaccine. Place the probe with or near the vaccine. A DDL with an external readout that can read minimum and maximum (min/max) temperatures is preferred.
- Document the min/max temperatures on a temperature log when transport begins once an hour and when you return to the facility.
- Providers must monitor for any temperature excursions (any out-of-range temperatures). Act on any out-of-range temperatures: Do not use vaccine. Contact vaccine manufacturer for guidance.

Guidelines for transporting frozen vaccines*

- Transport frozen vaccine with a portable freezer, cool cube cooler with freezer panels or qualified container that maintain vaccines within the frozen range -50°C to -15°C (-58°F and 5°F).
- A digital data logger (DDL) with a probe designed to measure freezer temperatures should be used to monitor the temperature of the vaccine. Place the probe with or near the vaccine. A DDL with an external readout that can read minimum and maximum (min/max) temperatures is preferred.
- Document the min/max temperatures on a temperature log when transport begins, every time the container is opened, and when you return to the facility.
- Providers must monitor for any temperature excursions (any out-of-range temperatures). Act on any out-of-range temperatures: Do not use vaccine. Contact vaccine manufacturer for guidance.

General guidelines for proper storage and handling

- A qualified pack out includes a container and supplies specifically designed for use when packing vaccines for transport. A qualified pack out is “qualified” through laboratory testing under controlled conditions to ensure it can achieve and maintain desired temperatures for a set amount of time.
- Soft-sided containers specifically engineered for vaccine transport are acceptable. Commercially available soft-sided food coolers are not acceptable because most are poorly insulated and are likely to be affected by room or outdoor temperatures.

TRANSPORTING VACCINES

- A punctured vial may be transported from one site to another by the same health care professional if the cold chain is properly maintained. However, a partially used vial cannot be transferred from one provider to another or across state lines.

Transporting vaccines

- Transport vaccines only inside the passenger compartment of a passenger vehicle (not in the trunk or the bed of a truck, which may be too hot or too cold).
- Move transport containers directly into a vehicle that is already at a comfortable temperature.
- Secure transport containers (brace or strap them) to prevent unnecessary movement.
- Keep containers out of direct sunlight.
- Never leave the container unattended in the vehicle.

Additional guidance for transporting vaccines can be found in CDC's Vaccine Storage and Handling Addendum in the [Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/storage-handling-toolkit.pdf) (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/storage-handling-toolkit.pdf).

*Transporting frozen vaccines is not routinely recommended. If transporting frozen vaccines use special care to maintain proper temperatures to ensure viability of the vaccine.

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414.