

TIPS for Vaccine Storage and Handling

Assign Responsibility of Handling Vaccines

One person should take primary responsibility for handling vaccines, but a back-up person should also be designated. Every employee should know what to do if a vaccine shipment arrives.

Check Vaccine Shipments

Examine shipments carefully, checking the cooler and contents for physical damage. Compare contents to packing slips. Check the shipping date. Document vaccines received on inventory log.

Store in Appropriate Type of Refrigerator or Freezer

CDC recommends stand-alone units, meaning self-contained units that only refrigerate or freeze suitable for vaccine storage (no dorm-style refrigerators). Food and beverages should not be stored with vaccines!



Store in Appropriate Location in Refrigerator and Freezer

Vaccines should be stored in the center, allowing for proper ventilation. Do NOT store in doors, vegetable bins, loc-tight containers, on the bottom, or near the sides of the unit.

Keep Vaccines Organized

Rotate stock, routinely checking expiration dates. Label open vials. Keep VFC stock separate from privately purchased vaccines.

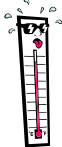
Check and Document Temperatures

VFC providers are required to check and record storage unit minimum and maximum temperatures at the start of each workday. If storage unit does not display **min** and **max** temperatures, then record the current temperature a minimum of 2 times per day (at the start and end of workday). This should be done even if there is a temperature alarm.

- Take all temperatures in *either* Fahrenheit or Celsius
- Record ambient room temperature as well (a standard household thermometer is sufficient for this purpose)
- Keep temperature log posted on refrigerator and keep records for at least 3 years

If Temperatures are Outside of Ranges for the Refrigerator and/or Freezer, Take Appropriate Actions

- Notify primary/alternate vaccine coordinator or immediate supervisor
- Store the vaccine under proper conditions as quickly as possible
- Temporarily mark exposed vaccines “DO NOT USE” until you have verified whether or not the vaccine may be used
- Phone manufacturer of vaccine or VFC (404-657-5013) to check on viability of vaccine. Do NOT immediately discard vaccine!
- Document the action taken



Have a Routine Vaccine S&H Plan/Emergency Vaccine Retrieval and Storage Plan

Identify alternate personnel, locations and equipment to provide temporary storage for vaccines in the event of a power failure or natural disaster. Update plan annually!

Take Other Preventive Measures

Avoid using power outlets with built-in circuit switches. Use a safety-lock or an outlet cover. Post warning signs at the plug and on the refrigerator/freezer units. Label fuses and circuit breakers. Install a temperature alarm. Use water bottles and frozen coolant packs. Check door seals. Clean the coils and motor. Install back-up generators.

Required Temperature Ranges					
Fahrenheit	Min	Max	Celsius	Min	Max
Freezer	-58	5	Freezer	-50	-15
Refrigerator	36	46	Refrigerator	2	8