



PA VFC PROVIDER

Pennsylvania Department of Health,
Bureau of Communicable Diseases, Division of Immunizations

July 15, 2016

Transporting Vaccine

The following materials for transporting vaccines must be readily available at your PA VFC facility at all times.

Cooler: The CDC recommends hard sided coolers or the reuse of original vaccine shipping containers. Have available the proper number of coolers available to transport your typical supply of refrigerated and/or frozen vaccine. A label attached to outside of cooler should state “keep refrigerated” or “keep frozen” vaccine type, quantity, date, time, and originating facility.

Temperature monitoring: The CDC recommends digital data loggers for all temperature monitoring. The buffered probe of the monitoring device should be kept refrigerated. When using a digital data logger the date, time, and temperature must be recorded at the beginning and end of transport. Remember, as always hourly temperature documentation is required.

Coolant: The CDC’s new recommendation is to use conditioned frozen water bottles. Frozen water bottles should be prepped in freezer at all times in case of immediate need. Frozen water bottles are conditioned by placing in a sink of lukewarm water until the ice inside the bottle spins freely when rotated in your hand.

Note: CDC is now recommending conditioned frozen water bottles versus conditioned ice packs.

Insulating Materials: Premeasure: (2) pieces of corrugated cardboard and (2) one inch layers of bubble wrap or packing foam for each cooler. When using cold packs two inch layers of insulating materials are necessary.

The 2016 “Transporting Refrigerated Vaccines” document can be accessed at:
http://www.health.pa.gov/My%20Health/Immunizations/Vaccines-for-Children/Documents/Transporting_Refrigerated_Vaccines_2016.pdf

Important Update Regarding Vaccine Temperature Ranges

All vaccines supplied by the PA VFC Program must be stored in accordance with CDC's new Fahrenheit temperature range guidance. The new recommended Fahrenheit temperature range is between 36° F and 46° F (previously between 35° F and 46° F). The Celsius temperature range (between 2° C and 8° C) remains unchanged, as stated in manufacturer package inserts for routinely recommended vaccines.

By August 1, 2016, PA VFC facilities currently using Fahrenheit temperature monitoring, should begin documenting refrigerated temperatures by using the new temperature log form in accordance with CDC's new Fahrenheit temperature range guidance. Please find attached the new temperature log form.

PA VFC will continue to provide education to comply with CDC's new Fahrenheit temperature guidance during the remainder of 2016.

By January 2017, all VFC providers will be required to follow the new Fahrenheit temperature range 36° F to 46° F. The Celsius temperature range remains unchanged between 2° C and 8° C.

The frequently asked questions (FAQ) document can be found at [Q&A - Adjustment to CDC's Recommended Fahrenheit Temperature Range for Refrigerated Vaccine Storage](#). The updated Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit, released in June 2016, is the first CDC resource to reflect the adjusted Fahrenheit temperature range guidance and can be accessed at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/index.html>. All applicable PA VFC Handbook documents have been updated on the PA VFC Program's webpage at <http://www.health.state.pa.us/VFCHandbook>.

If you have questions, please contact the Division of Immunizations at 888-646-6864.

2016 VFC Annual Training Requirement

Annually, VFC providers must complete educational trainings on proper storage and handling of VFC vaccine. The CDC requirements stipulate facilities complete annual educational training prior to the end of each year. **Both the VFC contact and the Back-up Contact are required to complete annual education.**

Ways to meet the CDC requirement for annual education:

1. During current calendar year, receive one VFC site visit which could be:

- Having a VFC compliance visit with the immunization nurse, or
- Requesting an annual provider training with the immunization nurse

2. By **October 1, 2016**, complete **both** of the following 2016 CDC required provider annual educations:

- View both CDC "You Call the Shots" programs, and printing credentials from CDC website

- Vaccines For Children (<http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/isd/ycts/mod1/courses/vfc/ce.asp> scroll to bottom of page and click "continue" to start program and next view
- Vaccine Storage and Handling <http://www2a.cdc.gov/nip/isd/ycts/mod1/courses/sh/ce.asp> scroll to bottom of page and click "continue" to start program.

3. By **October 1, 2016**, complete the Annual Provider Training and upon completion access the SurveyMonkey hyperlink provided on PA VFC website at [VFC Annual Provider Training 2016](#). After completing each survey simply print the provided certificates fax or email a copy to your immunization nurse, next you must document the training in the “**Education Roster**” (Section 6A) of the PA VFC Provider Handbook and retain for three years.

Rounding Temperatures Readings

Digital data logger (DDL) thermometers provide continuous monitoring during times when offices are closed. Proper temperature monitoring is key to proper cold chain management. They help providers and drug manufacturers make critical decisions on the viability of vaccines in the event of an excursion.

Most DDL’s measure in decimals for example, a temperature displayed as 35.8° F should not be rounded-up or down. Rounding is not permitted when recording daily temperature monitoring. In this example, the manufacture of the vaccine must be contacted and a “Vaccine Incident Report and Worksheet Form” must be completed. This is considered a vaccine cold chain failure.

Exposure of vaccines to temperatures outside the recommended ranges can affect potency adversely, thereby reducing protection from vaccine-preventable diseases. Ultimately, the manufacturer will makes the final decision concerning the vaccines viability.

If you have questions, please contact the Division of Immunizations at 888-646-6864.

Question of the Month?

Question:

Why didn't my Varicella arrive with the other vaccines in my order?

Answer:

Varicella-containing vaccines must be kept frozen; therefore, they are shipped separately from all other vaccines. Varicella-containing vaccines are shipped directly to your practice by the manufacturer, Merck & Co. All other vaccines are shipped by VFC's national vaccine distributor, McKesson Specialty.