



PROVIDER UPDATE

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

August 17, 2015

“Don’t Wait, Vaccinate” Campaign

The Pennsylvania Secretary of Health Dr. Karen Murphy would like you to know that the Department of Health has launched the “Don’t Wait, Vaccinate” campaign, in partnership with the Department of Education, to urge all parents to make sure their children are properly vaccinated before they start school. Vaccines protect against potentially deadly diseases and are one of the most cost-effective preventative health measures. Below are some additional facts about vaccines.

- Vaccines help protect children against 14 serious childhood diseases, like whooping cough and measles.
- Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious, may require hospitalization, or can even be deadly especially in young children.

For more information please access the following hyperlink www.dontwaitvaccinate.pa.gov

New Shipping Containers

Merck warehouses have begun using new, smaller frozen shipping containers in an effort to reduce the number of containers currently being shipped. The smaller containers make it easier to handle and store with eventually less ending up in landfills. They require fewer cold packs needed per shipment. Despite these changes:

- Providers should not handle these shipping containers any differently than previous containers.
- The Merck colors and labeling on the outside of the container are not changing.
- The diluent will continue to be stored in the top cover of the container.

If you have any questions please call the Merck Vaccine Customer Center M–F from 8 am to 7 pm ET at 1-877-VAX-MERCK (1-877-829-6372).

Vaccine Inventory Management

An important part of inventory management is monitoring expiration dates. These dates vary depending on the type of vaccine/diluent and the lot number. Expired vaccine or diluent should NEVER be used. When the expiration date is printed with the month, day, and year, the vaccine or diluent expires at midnight that day.



If only month and year are indicated, the vaccine or diluent may be used up to and including the last day of that month. The expiration date apply as long as the vaccine or diluent has been stored and handled properly, is normal in appearance, has not been reconstituted, and does not have a different Beyond Use Date (BUD) indicated in the manufacturer's package insert. Please access the following hyperlink to check recently expired LOT numbers [Expiring Vaccines by LOT#](#).

Vaccines Updates

Earlier this year GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) acquired ownership of the Novartis vaccine Menveo (Meningococcal, Groups A, C, Y and W-135). Please direct all questions concerning Menveo to Glaxo SmithKline at Telephone - 1-888-825-5249.

There are two kinds of meningococcal vaccine available for ordering through the PA VFC Program Menactra from sanofi pasteur and Menveo from GSK. You may order either vaccine through the PA-SIIS or through the hardcopy version "Vaccine Order, Inventory & Accountability Form" located in PA VFC Provider Handbook, Section 6D or at [Vaccine Ordering Form](#) or call 1-888-646-6864.

Question of the Month?

Question: What is the proper temperature to store vaccines such as varicella and zoster?

Answer: Varicella containing vaccines such as varicella and zoster should be stored in a stand-alone freezer between -58°F and +5°F, or between -50°C and -15°C. MMRV also contains varicella vaccine virus and should be stored in a freezer. These vaccines can deteriorate quickly when you remove them from the freezer. MMR does not contain varicella vaccine virus, but it can be stored in either the freezer or the refrigerator.

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