

Transporting Refrigerated Vaccine

Guidelines for vaccine transport and short-term storage

- This procedure will keep all vaccines except varicella and MMRV within the recommended temperature range for up to 12 hours during transport and/or storage outside the primary storage unit (e.g. in the building, inside a car, etc.). If the storage cooler is exposed to temperatures as low as -4°F (e.g. inside a car trunk), this procedure will safeguard vaccines for up to 1 hour.
- If the vaccine will be stored in refrigerators after transport, be sure those refrigerators have maintained temperatures between 35°F and 46°F for at least 3 to 5 days.

Assemble packing supplies and documents

1. **Cooler.** Use a hard-sided cooler. Attach a “Vaccines: Do Not Freeze” label to the cooler.
2. **“Conditioned” cold packs.** Condition frozen gel packs by leaving them at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours until the edges have defrosted and packs look like they’ve been “sweating.” Cold packs that are not conditioned can freeze vaccine. **Do not use dry ice.**
3. **Thermometer.** Prepare a VFC-compliant thermometer by placing it in the refrigerator at least 2 hours before you pack the vaccine. If you normally use a continuous-read monitoring system, you will need a portable thermometer for vaccine transport.
4. **Packing material.** Use two 2-inch layers of bubble wrap. Not using enough bubble wrap can cause the vaccine to freeze.
5. **Transport Log.** Complete a Refrigerated Vaccine Transport Log (IMM-1132) to document the duration and temperature monitoring information.



Pack vaccine and prepare for transport

1. Cold packs

Spread conditioned cold packs to cover only half of the bottom of the cooler.



2. Bubble wrap

& Thermometer

Completely cover the cold packs with a 2-inch layer of bubble wrap. Then, place the thermometer/probe on top of the bubble wrap directly above a cold pack.



3. Vaccine

Stack layers of vaccine boxes on the bubble wrap. Do not let the boxes of vaccine touch the cold packs.



4. Bubble wrap

Completely cover the vaccine with another 2-inch layer of bubble wrap.



5. Cold packs

Spread “conditioned” cold packs to cover only half of the bubble wrap. Make sure that the cold packs do not touch the boxes of vaccine.



6. Form & display

Fill the cooler to the top with bubble wrap. Place the thermometer’s digital display and the Refrigerated Vaccine Transport Log on top. It’s okay if temperatures go above 46°F while packing.



Unpack vaccine

When you reach the destination site, record the temperature in the cooler on the Transport Log before removing the vaccine. If it is:

- Between 35°F and 46°F (2°C and 8°C), unpack the vaccine and put it in the refrigerator.
- Below 35°F (2°C) or above 46°F (8°C), call your VFC Representative or the VFC Program immediately at 877-243-8832. Then label the vaccine “Do Not Use” and place it in the refrigerator.