



ALABAMA **Vaccines for Children** PROGRAM

Vaccine Storage and Handling Check List

I. Train your personnel

1. Designate one person and a backup person to be responsible for vaccine.
2. All staff who work with vaccine should know office protocols.
3. All staff should view, *Protect Your Patients: Storage & Handling of Vaccines* videotape.

II. Be ready to receive vaccines

1. Let staff know you order vaccine and open boxes immediately.
2. If any vaccine seems warm, if the ice pack is completely melted, or if the vaccine has a different lot number than what is recorded on the invoice, call the Alabama VFC Program immediately.
3. Refrigerate or freeze the vaccine immediately according to temperature guidelines.

III. Store and manage vaccines properly

1. Proper storage and handling guidelines should be posted for all staff to see.
2. Check expiration dates regularly.
3. **Rotate stock, use shortest expiration date first regardless of arrival dates.**
4. Never use outdated vaccine, call the Alabama VFC Program to return expired/spoiled vaccine.
5. Indicate on the label of each multi-dose vial the date & time first opened.

IV. Use reliable refrigerators and freezers

1. Store vaccines in the best refrigerator/freezer in the building, preferably not in a dormitory-style refrigerator.
2. **Keep in temperature range, 2-8C (35-46F) in the refrigerator and -15C (+5F) or colder in the freezer.**
3. **MMRV must be stored in the freezer ONLY!**
4. Post a warning sign: "Warning. Don't Unplug! Expensive Vaccine Inside".
5. Store all opened vials together and away from other drugs.
6. Use a plug guard to prevent anyone from unplugging the vaccine refrigerator/freezer.
7. Place ice packs in the freezer and filled plastic water jugs in the refrigerator to help stabilize temperatures.
8. Do not store food or beverages in a refrigerator/freezer with vaccines.
9. Store vaccine in the middle of the refrigerator or refrigerator or freezer, never in the door.
10. Store refrigerated vaccine far enough away from the freezer air circulation vent to prevent freezing.

V. Place thermometers inside refrigerators and freezers that store vaccine

1. Put Fisher Scientific thermometer supplied to you by the Alabama VFC Program in both refrigerator and freezer.
2. Check thermometer and record temperature twice a day.
3. Keep a daily temperature log on the door of refrigerator.
4. Analyze temperatures to keep track of how long out of range.

5. Check the refrigerator/freezer over holidays.
- VI. How to handle and store live vaccines
1. MMR - refrigerate or freeze, do not use warm and protect from light.
 2. Varicella - freeze only, must be administered within 30 minutes after reconstitution. Never freeze reconstituted vaccine and protect from light.
- VII. How to handle and store inactivated vaccines
1. All other vaccines must refrigerated and never frozen.
 2. Refrigerate immediately after receiving.
- VIII. Transport vaccines safely
1. Never transport varicella without dry ice.
 2. All other vaccine must be transported in an insulated container with cold packs on top to maintain proper temperature and prevent freezing.
- IX. Mishap in vaccine storage or handling
1. Publicize to all staff the importance of reporting any violation of handling protocol or any accidental storage problem.
 2. Contact the Alabama VFC Program immediately at 1-800-469-4599 to determine if vaccine is good.
 3. Do not assume vaccines cannot be salvaged.
 4. Record the temperature of refrigerator or freezer at the time of the incident.
 5. Mark affected vaccine until guidance is provided by the Alabama VFC Program.
- X. Expired/Spoiled vaccine
1. Transfer vaccine to another refrigerator or freezer, if necessary.
 2. Call the Alabama VFC Program immediately to determine if vaccine is good.
 3. Mail a completed Expired/Spoiled Vaccine Report using the business-reply label (shipped with vaccine) if it is determined that the vaccine is not good.
 4. Watch the *Protect Your Patients: Storage & Handling of Vaccines* video again to learn more about proper vaccine storage and handling.