

# Maintaining an intact Cold Chain in community pharmacy



## Refrigerator/Freezer Selection

Medical refrigerators have numerous advantages, including:

- More stable temperature
- Better cabinet uniformity
- Door alarms
- Glass front
- Self-closing door design
- Thermostat controls

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## Receiving Vaccines

- Check package for signs of damage
- Unpack immediately!
- Double-check expiration dates
- Check the cold chain monitor (excursion indicator)

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## Handling an Excursion

Steps to take:

- Record current temperatures
- Label all exposed medications
- Move medicines to a backup unit, if required
- Inventory all exposed medications
- Call the manufacturer to obtain any off-label stability data
- Follow manufacturer's guidance

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### Checking Temperatures

Tips on checking temperatures:

- Check twice daily
- Track and record the min/max
- Reset the min/max after checking
- Do something if it's out of range!

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### Temperature Storage Requirements FAQ

This FAQ includes:

- Citations of supporting legislation
- A quick answer
- A longer detailed answer
- Answers across all 52 jurisdictions
- An editable Excel Workbook file



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### Transporting & Shipping

- For off-site clinics:
  - Max 8 hours total
  - Use a TMD
  - Ship vaccine directly to site, if possible
- When shipping:
  - Bubble wrap between the ice packs and the product
  - Include a cold chain monitor



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### Vaccine Coordinators

- Every site needs at least one primary and one alternate vaccine coordinator
- Vaccine coordinators should be trained in all aspects of management, including receiving, storage, and handling excursions
- Post their contact information in a conspicuous place (ex. The side of the refrigerator)



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### Temperature Monitoring Devices (TMDs)

- Use a digital data logger (DDL)
- When you first get it:
  - Set the date and time
  - Set the alarms (if not preset)
- TMDs expire! Check and track their certificate of calibration and replace the TMD before it expires
- A best practice is to have two TMDs in a unit at any given time



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### Placement in the Refrigerator/Freezer

For consumer models:

- Only use the middle shelf – no doors or drawers!
- Place jugs of water on the top shelf and in the doors to stabilize the temperature
- Do not use the freezer in combination units

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