

IS YOUR VACCINE STORAGE UNIT RELIABLE?

In preparation for H1N1 you may want to ensure your vaccine storage unit is CDC acceptable. This will assure that your H1N1 vaccines, as well as your privately purchased vaccines and medications are stored in a manner to assure viability. In addition, certified, calibrated thermometers are required. For more information on vaccine storage go to: <http://www2a.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/shtoolkit/>

In evaluating or choosing your vaccine storage unit look for:

- Is it able to maintain required vaccine storage temperatures year-round (35-46° F),
- Is it large enough to hold the year's largest inventory (without crowding or touching the sides or back of the unit),
- Is it dedicated to the storage of vaccines and medications (no food allowed), and
- Does it have certified/calibrated thermometers?

Reminder: vaccines are not to be stored in the crisper drawers or in the doors

Acceptable Vaccine Storage Units Are:



- Commercial or lab styles are the most reliable but may be costly.
- Combination refrigerator/freezer unit sold for home use (not apartment size or smaller) are very reliable and moderately priced (\$600-\$700) and are acceptable as long as the refrigerator and freezer compartments each have a separate external door and separate temperature controls.
- Counter high refrigerators only are acceptable if they are lab style.
- Single thermostat units- Household-style refrigerators with a single thermostat are strongly discouraged. This type of refrigerator/freezer is acceptable only if storing vaccine in refrigerator *or* freezer, but not both. A single thermostat makes it difficult to maintain recommended temperatures in both sections. Do not purchase one of these. If you currently have a regular size combination refrigerator/freezer with only one control it may be reliable for refrigerator only storage.

Unacceptable Vaccine Storage Units Are:

The following units are unacceptable for vaccine storage at any time or duration, including daily use:



- "Dorm-style" or household-grade under-the-counter units provide poor temperature control and often freeze vaccines that require refrigeration, resulting in immediate and irreversible damage.
- "Dorm-style" units are defined as small refrigerator/freezer combination units with a single external door and an evaporator plate or cooling coil that forms a small freezer compartment within the unit or is pulled across the internal back wall of the unit.
- Counter high *refrigerator only* household grades are unacceptable.
- Any household refrigerator unit over 10 years old.

For questions call: Linda Platz RN, 775-684-5913

HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS FOR 2009 H1N1 VACCINE

VACCINE RECEIPT INFORMATION:

Upon receipt of the package, the below steps should be followed:

- Inspect the package and contents for damage.
- Review the temperature monitor card in the package IMMEDIATELY.
- If package is damaged or if there are any concerns about vaccine integrity, please call McKesson Customer Service at 877-TEMP123 (877-836-7123) or your state/local immunization program right away.
- If the contents are in satisfactory condition, receive and process documents in accordance with the following procedures.
 - Count vials/product and place vaccine in monitored refrigerator immediately.
 - If the doses that you have received do not match the packing list, please contact your state/local immunization program right away.

Note: If multiple boxes are received, segregate the vaccine by box. Annotate box and temperature monitors/indicators to identify which temperature monitors belong to which box of vaccine (each box will contain a cold monitor and a warm monitor). The purpose of this is to be able to identify which vials or sprayers were affected if one of the boxes has become compromised in shipment.

VACCINE STORAGE INFORMATION:

- 2009 H1N1 vaccine must be maintained at a temperature of 2 to 8 degrees Celsius (35.6 to 46.4 degrees Fahrenheit). The vaccine must be kept at this temperature at all times.
- The vaccine **MUST NOT BE EXPOSED TO FREEZING TEMPERATURES!** The temperature monitoring device in your refrigerator must have a temperature reading capability to ensure the efficacy of the vaccine prior to administration. Temperature monitoring devices should be appropriately calibrated and methods used for calibration should have stated traceability to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards. For more information on NIST traceability, open the following link.
http://ts.nist.gov/Traceability/SupplMatls/suppl_matls_for_nist_policy_rev.cfm#FAQ_General. It is the receiving provider's responsibility to maintain proper storage temperature until vaccine administration.
- Any refrigerator used for vaccine storage must be dedicated to storage of biologics (i.e., food or beverages should not be stored in vaccine storage units). Refrigerators should have sufficient usable space to store the largest number of vaccine doses expected at one time without overloading. Vaccines stored in combination refrigerator/freezer units should NEVER be stored in areas directly underneath air vents, in deli-crispers/vegetable bins, or in the doors. Bottles of water can be added to these areas to create thermal mass, thus stabilizing refrigerator temperature. **Dorm-style refrigerator units (freezer and refrigerator with shared exterior door) provide poor temperature control and often freeze vaccines, therefore should not be used to store vaccines any longer than the length of a clinic for a particular clinical day (i.e., vaccines should not be stored overnight in dorm-style refrigerators).**
- The refrigerator storage unit must be electronically alarmed or manually monitored; temperatures should be recorded at a minimum of every 12 hours.
- A record of these readings should be maintained at the location of the vaccine storage unit, for example on the door. Refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit for further guidance. This site can be accessed at the following link:
<http://www2a.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/shtoolkit/pages/resources.htm>.