Off-Site/Routine Vaccine Transport Guidance

Overview

Routine vaccine transport is the process of moving vaccines between providers or other locations over a short distance and time. It is appropriate for events like off-site or mobile clinics. It also applies to planned re-location of soon to expire vaccine stock.

Vaccines should not be routinely transported. If you must transport vaccine from your supply, take precautions and use appropriate packing materials that provide maximum protection.

Transport time, or transport plus clinic workday, must be eight hours maximum unless the manufacturer states otherwise. For example, if transport to an off-site clinic is one hour each way, the clinic may run for up to six hours.

Note: Instructions for routine transport may vary for some vaccines. Review manufacturer guidance for each vaccine product to ensure cold chain is maintained properly.

Materials Needed During Transport

- Portable vaccine refrigerator/freezer/ultra-cold freezer units (**preferred option**).
- Qualified containers and packouts.
- Frozen water bottles conditioned between 4° C and 5° C.
- Insulating materials like bubble wrap and corrugated cardboard enough to form two layers per container.
- Digital data logger.

Transporting Vaccines, Diluents, and Multi-Dose Vials

Transporting	Instructions
Vaccines	▪ A partially used vial may be transported between off-site/satellite facilities operated by the same provider, provided the cold chain is maintained. ▪ **Do not transfer partially used vials between providers or across state lines.**
Diluents	▪ Transport diluents with their corresponding vaccines to ensure equal amounts for reconstitution. ▪ Follow manufacturer guidance for specific temperature requirements. ▪ **Never freeze diluents, even during transport.**
Frozen Vaccines	▪ Use a portable vaccine freezer unit or qualified container. ▪ **Steps for transport:** 1. Place a data logger with a buffered probe close to the vaccines. 2. Immediately unpack vaccines and place them in a freezer maintaining proper temperatures.

	3. Record times and temperatures during the entire transport process. **4. Do not use dry ice, as it can expose vaccines to temperatures below -50°C.**

Transport Planning & Preparation

Staff & Vehicle Preparation:

- Identify trained staff for packing vaccines, along with primary and backup vehicles and drivers in advance.

Refrigerated Truck Option

- For larger vaccine inventories, renting a refrigerated truck is acceptable.

Packing and Handling

- Only open unit doors when necessary and after fully preparing to pack and move vaccines.
- Use the passenger compartment for transporting vaccines if using a company or personal vehicle.

Temperature Control

- Move transport containers directly into a pre-cooled vehicle to maintain appropriate temperatures.
- Upon arrival at the storage facility, check the vaccine temperature and immediately store vaccines at the recommended temperatures.

Temperature Monitoring During Transport

Temperature Monitoring Device (TMD)

- Use a temperature monitoring device (TMD), preferably a digital data logger that can measure minimum and maximum temperatures, to track temperature during transport. The digital data logger must have an accuracy of +/-0.5°C (+/-1°F).

Buffered Probe Placement

- Place a buffered probe in a sealed vial directly with the vaccines to ensure accurate temperature readings.

Display and Visibility

- Position the TMD display on top of the portable unit lid for easy visibility of the temperature throughout transport.

Recording Temperature Data

- Record the time and the minimum/maximum temperatures at the beginning of transport to maintain a proper log.

Beyond-Use Date

- Apply the beyond-use date as per the manufacturer's guidance when vaccines are packed by a healthcare provider, regardless of the transport method (e.g., car, professional carrier).

Temperature Monitoring After Transport

Storage Upon Arrival

- Vaccines must be immediately stored in an appropriate storage unit equipped with a TMD upon arrival at the clinic or facility.

Temperature Monitoring During Clinic

- Review and document temperature data every hour during the clinic day using an approved digital data logger while vaccines are at a temporary location.

Vial Management

- When using multi-dose vials at an off-site clinic, remove only one vial or up to 10 doses at a time for preparation and administration by each person administering vaccines.

Protocol After Clinic Day

- Assess temperature data prior to placing vaccines back into storage units to prevent inadvertent administration of vaccines that may have been compromised.
- Vaccines exposed to out-of-range temperatures must be labeled "**DO NOT USE**", store them at appropriate temperatures and contact the NCIP for viability to be assessed.
- All doses administered must be documented in NCIR by the end of the business day.

For assistance, contact the NCIR Help Desk by

Phone: 1.877.USE.NCIR (873-6247)

Email: ncirhelp@dhhs.nc.gov.