

Receiving and Unpacking Vaccine Shipments

Receiving Vaccine Shipments

Arrange for vaccine deliveries to be made only when the vaccine coordinator or backup person is on duty. All staff members who accept vaccine deliveries must be aware of the importance of maintaining the cold chain and of the need to **immediately notify** the vaccine coordinator or backup person of the arrival of the vaccine shipment so that it can be handled and stored appropriately.



All staff members who accept vaccine deliveries must be aware of the importance of maintaining the cold chain and of the need to immediately notify the vaccine coordinator or backup person upon arrival.

Picking Up Vaccine Shipments

In some states, providers pick up vaccine from public depots and might be required to supply their own coolers for vaccine transport. In this case, the state health department immunization program will provide guidance regarding the appropriate coolers. When picking up vaccine shipments, do not place vaccine in the trunk of the vehicle. The temperature inside the trunk cannot be regulated and could become too hot or too cold for the vaccine. Deliver the vaccine directly to the facility and unpack and store it upon arrival (see [Checking the Condition of a Shipment](#) in this section).



When transporting vaccine in ordinary vehicles use the passenger compartment—not the trunk.

Checking the Condition of a Shipment

When you receive your vaccine shipment, it should be examined immediately.

- Examine the shipping container and its contents for any signs of physical damage.
- Determine if the shipping time was less than 48 hours. If the interval between shipment from the supplier and arrival of the product at the provider's office was more than 48 hours, the vaccine could have been exposed to excessive heat or cold that might have altered its integrity.
- Crosscheck the contents with the packing slip to be sure they match.
- Check the vaccine expiration dates to ensure that you have not received any vaccine or diluent that is already expired or that has a short expiration date (see [Expiration Dates](#) in the Vaccine Inventory Management section for details).
- Check that lyophilized (freeze-dried) vaccine has been shipped with the correct type and quantity of diluent for reconstitution.
- Examine the vaccine and diluent for heat or cold damage:
 - Check the cold chain monitor(s) (CCM) to see if the vaccine or diluent has been exposed to temperatures outside the recommended range during transport.
 - Check that inactivated vaccines are cold but not frozen. Refrigerated packs should still be cold. Frozen packs can be melted but the package should still be cold. Vaccines should not be in direct contact with refrigerated/frozen packs. There should be an insulating barrier between the vaccine and the refrigerated/frozen packs, such as crumpled brown packing paper, bubble wrap, or some other barrier.
 - Check that measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine is cold or frozen.
 - Check that MMRV, varicella, and zoster vaccines are frozen and that dry ice is present in the shipping container. Dry ice must be handled carefully (see [Handling Dry Ice](#) in the Resources section for details).
 - Check that diluent is cool or at room temperature. Diluent should not be in direct contact with refrigerated/frozen packs. There should be an insulating barrier between the diluent and the refrigerated/frozen packs, such as crumpled brown packing paper, bubble wrap, or some other barrier. The diluent for varicella vaccine may be shipped with its vaccine but should not be placed in the container with the dry ice.

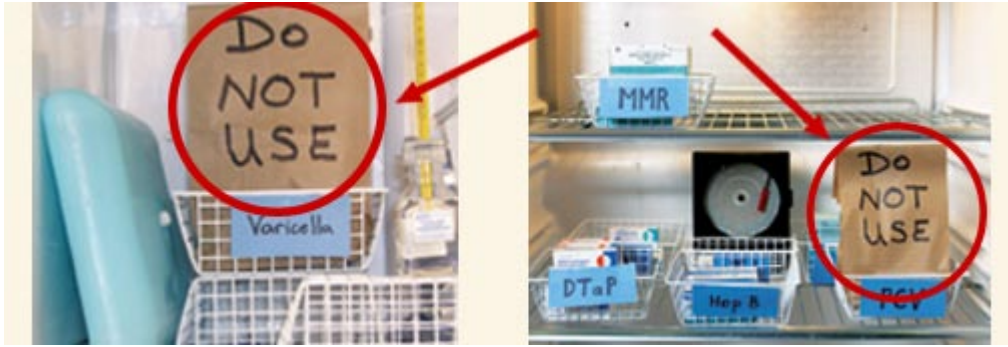


Examine the shipping container and its contents for any signs of physical damage.



Crosscheck the contents with the packing slip to be sure they match.

If there are any discrepancies with the packing slip or concerns about the shipment, immediately notify the primary vaccine coordinator (or the backup person), mark the vaccine and diluent as "DO NOT USE," and store them in proper conditions apart from other vaccine supplies until the integrity of the vaccine and diluent is determined.



If there are any discrepancies with the packing slip or concerns about the shipment, immediately mark the vaccine and diluent as “DO NOT USE,” and store them in proper conditions.

Contact the vaccine manufacturer and the state health department immunization program for further guidance (see [Handling Inappropriate Vaccine Storage Conditions \[Light and Temperature\]](#) in the Storage Troubleshooting section for details).

Storing and Documenting Vaccine Shipments Upon Arrival

All staff who may accept packages for the clinic must be aware that vaccine shipments require immediate attention.

After the vaccine shipment has been checked according to the procedures described in this section (see [Checking the Condition of a Shipment](#)), immediately store the vaccine and diluent at the recommended temperatures and record the arrival of each vaccine and diluent noting all the details as outlined in the [stock records](#) (see section on Vaccine Inventory Management). Do not leave the shipment unattended. The vaccines inside might warm to inappropriate temperatures and become unusable. All staff who may accept packages for the clinic must be aware that vaccine shipments require **⚠ immediate attention**. Staff who do not routinely handle vaccines but who accept vaccine shipments should alert the primary vaccine coordinator (or the designated backup person) as soon as vaccine shipments arrive so that they may be stored properly.

<http://www2a.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/shtoolkit/pages/shipments.htm>