Handling a Temperature Excursion in Your Vaccine Storage Unit

Any temperature reading outside ranges recommended in the manufacturers’ package inserts is considered a temperature excursion. Identify temperature excursions quickly and take immediate action to correct them. This can prevent vaccine waste and the potential need to revaccinate patients.

» Notify the primary or alternate vaccine coordinator immediately or report the problem to a supervisor.

» Notify staff by labeling exposed vaccines, “DO NOT USE,” and placing them in a separate container apart from other vaccines in the storage unit. Do not discard these vaccines.

» Document details of the temperature excursion:
  • Date and time
  • Storage unit temperature (including minimum/maximum temperatures during the time of the event, if available)
  • Room temperature, if available
  • Name of the person completing the report
  • General description of the event (i.e., what happened)
  • If using a digital data logger (DDL), determine the length of time vaccine may have been affected
  • Inventory of affected vaccines
  • List of items in the unit other than vaccines (including water bottles)
  • Any problems with the storage unit and/or affected vaccines before the event
  • Other relevant information

» Contact your immunization program and/or vaccine manufacturer(s) for guidance per your standard operating procedures (SOPs).

» Be prepared to provide the manufacturer or immunization program with documentation and DDL data so they can offer you the best guidance.

» Document contact correct:

Contact manufacturer for excursions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merck</td>
<td>1-800-672-6372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanofi Pasteur</td>
<td>1-800-822-2463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GlaxoSmithKline</td>
<td>1-888-825-5249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pfizer</td>
<td>1-800-438-1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seqirus</td>
<td>1-855-358-8966</td>
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» If the temperature alarm goes off repeatedly, do not disconnect the alarm until you have determined and addressed the cause.

» Check the basics, including:
  • Power supply
  • Unit door(s)
  • Thermostat settings

» If the excursion was the result of a temperature fluctuation, refer to the chapter, "Vaccine Storage and Temperature Monitoring Equipment," in CDC’s Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit for detailed guidance on adjusting storage unit temperature to the appropriate range.

» If you believe the storage unit has failed, implement your emergency vaccine SOPs. Never allow vaccines to remain in a nonfunctioning unit.