

Zone Contacts

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“Cold chain” refers to all equipment and procedures used to ensure that vaccines are protected from inappropriate temperatures and light, from the time of transport from the manufacturer to the time of administration (CIG, 7th ed., 2006).

Vaccines are fragile, sensitive biological materials that are easily subject to loss of stability and potency when they are exposed to temperatures outside the recommended storage conditions of +2°C to +8°C. Excessive heat or cold exposure damages vaccine, resulting in loss of potency. Once the vaccine potency is lost, it may never be restored and the vaccine becomes non-effective. Vaccine quality controls ensure that your clients or patients get the potent biological product which protects them against disease.

For more detailed information on Cold Chain Management, please visit the following web-sites: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/2007/nvshqjp-ldemv/index-eng.php or www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/p01-08-eng.php

Reporting Process When Cold Chain is Compromised

1. Report cold chain breach event to your local Zone Contact immediately.
2. Submit the Alberta Health Services (AHS) Cold Chain Break Report Form immediately by faxing the completed report to your local Zone Contact.
3. **Do not automatically discard the compromised vaccines.**
4. Place the compromised vaccines in a paper bag and mark them as “**DO NOT USE**”.
5. Continue to store the compromised vaccines under proper cold chain conditions until the integrity of the vaccine is determined.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Is it safe to administer thimerosal containing influenza vaccine to pregnant women and young children?

A1. YES. Large studies have demonstrated there is no association between immunization with thimerosal containing vaccines and neurodevelopmental outcomes.

www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/ccdr-rmtc/11vol37/acs-dcc-5/index-eng.php

Q2. Can individuals with an egg allergy receive influenza immunization?

A2. YES. Egg allergy is no longer considered a contraindication for influenza immunization. Immunizers will need to assess the risk for severe allergic reaction to determine the method of immunization. Please refer to the Seasonal Influenza Immunization Clinical Guidelines www.albertahealthservices.ca/Diseases/hi-dis-flu-2011-2012-clinical-guidelines-influenza.pdf

Q3. Can community providers offer influenza immunization to students in schools?

A3. NO. Onsite influenza immunization for students in schools is out of scope for all community providers for the 2011-2012 influenza season. AHW and AHS will continue to explore opportunities for immunization delivery in the future.

Planning Update

- Influenza vaccine was received in vaccine depots across Alberta the last week of September.
- Vaccine distribution to community providers began the first week of October.
- All providers will receive vaccine prior to the provincial start date of October 17 provided the vaccine agreement and order has been received in advance.
- **We recommend influenza immunization of your clients begin with the provincial launch on October 17, 2011.**
- The vaccine agreement for the 2011/2012 Influenza Immunization Program has been posted on the AHS website at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/2824.asp>. AHS requires all community providers to sign the agreement in order to receive influenza vaccine. Instructions for completion and submission of the agreements can be found on the AHS website.