

# Transporting Refrigerated Vaccine

## Guidelines for vaccine transport and short-term storage

- The procedure below for packing vaccine will keep all vaccines (**except varicella vaccine**) within recommended temperatures for 12 hours during transport and/or storage at room temperatures (inside a car, building, etc.). It will also maintain recommended temperatures if the cooler is exposed to outside temperatures as low as -4°F for one of those 12 hours.
- If the vaccine will be stored in refrigerators after transport, be sure those refrigerators have maintained temperatures between 35°F and 46°F for at least 3 to 5 days.

### Assemble packing supplies

1. **Cooler.** Use hard plastic Igloo-type coolers. Attach a “Vaccines: Do Not Freeze” label to the cooler.
2. **“Conditioned” cold packs.** Condition frozen gel packs by leaving them at room temperature for 1 to 2 hours until the edges have defrosted and packs look like they’ve been “sweating.” Cold packs that are not conditioned can freeze vaccine. **Do not use dry ice.**
3. **Thermometer.** Prepare the thermometer by placing it in the refrigerator at least 2 hours before you pack the vaccine.
4. **Packing material.** Use two 2-inch layers of bubble wrap. Not using enough bubble wrap can cause the vaccine to freeze.



## Pack vaccine

### 1. Cold packs

Spread conditioned cold packs to cover only half of the bottom of the cooler.



### 2. Bubble wrap

#### & Thermometer

Completely cover the cold packs with a 2-inch layer of bubble wrap. Then, place the thermometer/probe on top of the bubble wrap directly above a cold pack.



### 3. Vaccine

Stack layers of vaccine boxes on the bubble wrap. Do not let the boxes of vaccine touch the cold packs.



### 4. Bubble wrap

Completely cover the vaccine with another 2-inch layer of bubble wrap.



### 5. Cold packs

Spread “conditioned” cold packs to cover only half of the bubble wrap. Make sure that the cold packs do not touch the boxes of vaccine.



### 6. Form & display

Fill the cooler to the top with bubble wrap. Place the thermometer’s digital display and the *Return or Transfer of Vaccines Report* form on top. It’s ok if temperatures go above 46°F while packing.



### As soon as you reach the destination site, check the vaccine temperature. If the vaccine is:

- Between 35°F and 46°F, put it in the refrigerator.
- Below 35°F or above 46°F, contact your VFC Rep or the VFC program immediately at 1-877-243-8832. For H1N1 vaccine, call 1-888-867-6319. Then label the vaccine “Do Not Use” and put it in the refrigerator.