



## Managing a Cold Chain Breach

**Cold chain breach:** the exposure of vaccines to temperatures outside the recommended range of **+2°C to +8°C**.

Refer to the cold chain breach protocol of the [National vaccine storage guidelines – Strive for 5](#)

### If a cold chain breach has occurred:

1. Immediately **ISOLATE** the vaccines
2. Label **'DO NOT USE'**
3. **DO NOT DISCARD vaccines**

### Remember!

Always keep vaccines refrigerated between +2°C to +8°C.

**Report all government-funded vaccines involved in a breach to your Public Health Unit.** Use the information below to guide you:

Complete the online Vaccine incident reporting form. To access the form and for more information visit: <https://www.health.wa.gov.au/coldchainbreach>

To complete the form, you will need the following information:

- Vaccine product(s) and dose quantities (include information for vaccines involved in prior breaches). Do not include any private vaccines in this form.
- Date(s) and duration of the breach (hours and/or minutes).
- Temperature range of the breach (minimum and maximum temperatures).
- Your data logger results for the period(s) of the breach in table view (pdf or '.csv' format).
- Your daily temperature monitor chart (pdf format).
- Details of any previous breaches that the vaccine(s) may have been involved in (inc. date, length and temperature range).

**My local Regional Immunisation Coordinator contact number is:**

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For privately purchased vaccines, you will need to contact the manufacturer directly.



## **If necessary, prepare to transfer vaccines into temporary monitored vaccine storage.**

Refer to 'Freezing and conditioning ice packs and gel packs' and 'How to pack a cooler' of the **National vaccine storage guidelines – Strive for 5**

- 1. Condition the ice and/or gel packs.**
- 2. Chill the inside of the cooler** before use by placing ice packs/gel packs in it for a few hours, and then removing the ice packs/gel packs.
- 3. Place polystyrene chips or other suitable insulating material at the bottom of the container.** If using bubble-wrap, avoid wrapping the vaccines tightly.
- 4. Place vaccine stock on top of the insulating material.**
- 5. Place a minimum/maximum or data logger** in the centre of the vaccine stock. Place the thermometer probe in an empty vaccine box (with the product information intact) to protect it from lying directly on ice.
- 6. Surround the vaccines with packing material** that allows cold air to circulate.
- 7. Place the conditioned ice packs/gel packs on top of the insulating material,** and close and seal the lid of the cooler. If using a larger cooler, place conditioned ice packs/gel packs around the sides of the cooler as well as on top.
- 8. Ensure that vaccine stock is not in direct contact with the ice packs/gel packs,** to minimise the risk of freezing.
- 9. Place the display screen of the minimum/maximum thermometer on the outside of the cooler** for easy monitoring and recording of vaccine temperatures.
- 10. Commence monitoring** before leaving for the session. Monitor the temperature every 15 minutes for the first 2 hours, and then at least hourly throughout the immunisation session, and before administering vaccines.