



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:

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.