

The Role of the Vaccine Coordinator

Vaccines are expensive and sensitive to temperature and light. Appropriate vaccine management is essential to protecting vaccine supply.

Each office should have a vaccine coordinator who oversees the vaccine supply. The vaccine coordinator should have a backup coordinator who is responsible when the vaccine coordinator is not available.

Each facility needs to have and adhere to a detailed written Vaccine Storage and Handling Plan that is reviewed and signed by clinical staff annually. This plan should include all aspects of routine vaccine management, from ordering vaccines and managing inventory to storing vaccines and monitoring storage conditions. It should also include emergency plans for refrigerator or freezer malfunctions, power failures, natural disasters or other emergencies.

Vaccine management responsibilities include:

- Ordering vaccines
- Receiving vaccines
- Preparing for emergency actions
- Storing vaccines
- Monitoring vaccine temperatures



Monthly Care of Vaccine Storage Units

Regular maintenance is necessary to ensure that vaccine refrigerators and freezers work properly. Follow the three steps below to keep refrigerators and freezers clean. If you have a **commercial-grade** unit, follow the manufacturer's maintenance schedule in addition to the following recommendations. Do not turn off or unplug the unit during this maintenance.

1 Clean the inside of the storage units

Cleaning the inside of the refrigerator and freezer will help prevent the growth of bacteria and fungus. You do not need to remove the vaccines from the unit to clean it; just move the vaccine trays as you clean.

- Clean any spills.
- Wipe the inside of the compartment and the shelves with disinfectant or antibacterial wipes. Let it dry.
- Put the vaccine trays back where they were.

2 Check the door seals

Refrigerators and freezers have flexible door seals that keep cold air from escaping when doors are closed. If they do not seal completely, cold air escapes. This can cause temperatures to fluctuate in the unit.

- Locate the seals.
- Examine the seals.
 - They should not be torn or brittle.
 - When the unit is closed, there should be no gaps between the seals and the body of the unit.
- Put the vaccine trays back where they were.

3 Clean the coils

If the coils are easy to reach, use a duster to remove any visible dust. Keep coils two to three inches from the walls.