

How to protect vaccine in a power outage

Strategies for vaccine cold chain management

A cold chain breach is when vaccine is stored outside the recommended temperature range of 2° to 8°Celsius, this may occur during a power outage.

Equipment for a power outage

- a sign reading “Keep the fridge door closed and do not use vaccine until further notice.”
- ice bricks wrapped in bubble wrap or newspaper
- bubble wrap, thick cardboard or a blanket and tape to secure this to a fridge with a glass door
- esky® to fit the vaccine stock if following the alternative option below
- min/max thermometer or data logger for use in an esky® and the alternative fridge

When the power goes off

Ideally

- **Leave the vaccine in the fridge with the door closed.**
- Place ice bricks in the spaces in the fridge, away from direct contact with any vaccine packaging.
- For fridges with a glass door, tape thick bubble wrap or cardboard over the door.
- Place a sign on the door of the fridge that says ‘*Keep the fridge door closed and do not use vaccine until further notice*’ and lock the fridge if possible.

Alternative option

- Transfer the vaccine to another **temperature monitored fridge** such as in your local hospital or pharmacy. Transfer the vaccine in the esky® with ice bricks wrapped in bubble wrap or newspaper so that the ice bricks are not in direct contact with the vaccine packaging.

NEVER move vaccine to another fridge or esky® where the temperature is not monitored with a min/max thermometer or data logger.

When the power returns

- **Record and reset** the minimum and maximum temperatures for the fridge.
- If the temperature readings are outside **2° to 8°Celsius**, download the cold chain breach report form at: www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/cold-chain-management.htm
- Complete the cold chain breach form and fax to 1300 768 088 or email immunisation@health.vic.gov.au
- **Do not use vaccine or discard vaccine until you receive advice from the Immunisation Section.**

For further information please call the Immunisation Section, Victorian Department of Health on 1300 882 008, Monday to Friday 9am-12pm and 2pm-3pm.

Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne.