



BC Centre for Disease Control
AN AGENCY OF THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

May 6, 2005

ATTN: Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

**Re: Revisions to Communicable Disease Control Manual:
Chapter II- Immunization Program**

Please note the following revisions:

Section VI - Management of Biologicals:

The section is revised and reformatted. Key changes to the guidelines include the following:

Section 1.0, Introduction: Page 1:

- A Vaccine Stability Chart is available as a resource tool to assist the field in making decisions concerning vaccine stability following a cold chain failure.

Sub-section 2.1, Refrigerators: Page 2:

- Bar type refrigerators are **not** recommended for public health vaccine storage, as they do not maintain adequate temperatures.

Sub-section 2.2, Thermometers: Page 3:

- Recommendation to record the ambient (room) temperature and the dial setting of the refrigerator, as well as recording the refrigerator temperature twice daily on a Vaccine Temperature Log.
- Recommendation to use (minimum/maximum) thermometers in insulated containers (coolers) that are used to store vaccines for several hours, for example, during off-site mass clinics.

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Sub-section 2.3, Insulated containers: Page 4:

- Hard or soft sided insulated containers (coolers) are acceptable for use, providing that the recommended temperature of +2°C and +8°C can be maintained.

Sub-section 2.4, Ice Packs: Page 4:

- Recommendation to set ice packs on their edge instead of stacking on top of each other. This decreases the risk of partial freezing of the ice packs.

Sub-section 2.5, Insulating Materials: Page 5:

- Flexible insulating blankets are a new insulating material for vaccine transport.

Sub-section 3.2, Ordering Vaccines: Page 6:

- Guidelines for ordering appropriate quantities of vaccines, to minimize wastage.

Sub-section 3.3, Principles of Handling Vaccines: Page 6:

- Recommendation to use small insulated container (coolers) at mass clinics to reduce the number of times the larger insulated containers are opened.

Sub-section 3.4, Transporting and Shipping of Vaccines: Page 9:

- Diluent that will be transported with biological products in an insulated cooler should be refrigerated for 24 hours prior to transport, so that diluent and biological products are at the same temperature when packed. Diluent that is not cooled should be transported separately from biological products.

Section 5.0, Vaccine Stability Chart Information: Pages 13 & 14

This is a new section, outlining a change in the process of making decisions regarding vaccine stability following a breach in the cold chain.

- The Vaccine Stability Chart will assist the Biological Products Coordinator or designated individual to make decisions at the field level about vaccine use, following vaccine exposure to temperatures outside the cold chain parameters.
- Consultation with BCCDC Vaccine and Pharmacy Services remains available to assist field staff in assessing vaccine stability.

Section 6.0, Resources: Page 15:

This section lists resources to assist with the management of biological products. Materials for immunizing physicians and for Public Health use are available on the BCCDC web site, at www.bccdc.org. The materials include guidelines for handling refrigerator temperatures that are outside the acceptable range, a Handle Vaccines with Care tip sheet, illustrations for packing insulated coolers and refrigerators properly, and guidelines for management of vaccines at mass clinics.



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Please delete and destroy the following from Chapter II- Immunization Program of the Communicable Disease Control Manual:

Section VI – Management of Biologicals
TOC and Pages 1-7

Dated November 2002

Please insert the following replacement pages:

Section VI: Management of Biologicals
TOC and Pages 1 – 16

Dated May 2005

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Cheryl McIntyre, Associate Nurse Epidemiologist, @ telephone (604)660-6061, fax (604)660-0197 or by email cheryl.mcintyre@bccdc.ca

Sincerely,

David Patrick
Director
Epidemiology Services
BC Centre for Disease Control

DMP/kka

pc: Dr Perry Kendall
Provincial Health Officer
Ministry of Health Services

Dr. Eric Young
Deputy Provincial Health Officer
Ministry of Health Services

Dr. Bob Fisk
Medical Consultant
Non-Communicable Disease
Ministry of Health Planning

Warren O'Briain
Executive Director
Comm Disease and Addiction Prevention
Ministry of Health Services

Valery Dubenko
Manager, Communicable Disease Prevention --Immunization
Communicable Disease and Addiction Prevention
Ministry of Health Services

