



Practice Briefs

What type of thermometer should I use when monitoring our facility medication refrigerator temperatures? What do I document, and how often?

For Vaccine refrigerators, CDC recommends a specific temperature monitoring device (TMD):

CDC recommends the use of a specific type of TMD known as a digital data logger (DDL) for continuous temperature monitoring and recording. The DDL should be set to measure and record temperatures no less frequently than every 30 minutes and should have a current and valid Certificate of Calibration Testing (also known as a Report of Calibration). Unlike a simple minimum/maximum thermometer, which only shows the coldest and warmest temperatures reached in a unit, DDLs provide detailed information on all temperatures recorded at preset intervals. Many DDLs use a buffered temperature probe, which is the most accurate way to measure actual vaccine temperatures. Temperatures measured by a buffered probe match vaccine temperatures more closely than those measured by standard thermometers, which tend instead to reflect air temperature. DDLs provide the most accurate storage unit temperature information, including details on how long a unit has been operating outside the recommended temperature range (referred to as a temperature excursion). http://www.hospitalrefrigerators.com/CDC-Vaccine-Storage-Requirements/temp_monitoring.pdf. Accessed 3.29.18
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/downloads/temp-fridge.pdf>. Accessed 3.29.18

For refrigerators storing medications other than vaccines, a simple minimum/maximum thermometer can be used. You will record temps daily, preferably in the morning and then again in the evening, depending on how long your facility is open. See examples of both refrigerator and freezer logs at the following links:

<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3038f.pdf>. <http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3038f.pdf>.
Accessed 3.29.18

See entire document on vaccine storage at this link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/storage/toolkit/index.html>. Accessed 3.29.18

ICAP is a cooperative effort of UNMC/Nebraska Medicine and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. "ICAP Practice Briefs" are intended to provide evidence-based guidance on infection prevention issues; check linked references directly for the most current and more detailed information.