

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling for COVID-19 Vaccine

Revised: September 15, 2023

*This policy is evergreen and will be updated as new evidence becomes available.*

## Objectives:

- Protect vaccine safety and efficacy and ensure a potent and safe vaccine is administered; and
- Minimize and reduce the cost of vaccine wastage due to cold chain excursions.

See the [Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling for Provincially Funded Vaccines](#) for:

- Accountabilities, roles and responsibilities for staff and immunizers in maintaining vaccine viability for vaccines; and
- Cold chain (storage, transport, and handling) requirements for staff and immunizers.

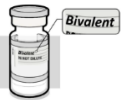

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# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

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## Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent ULTRA FROZEN VACCINE

	Comirnaty for 12 years and older Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Grey cap) – NO DILUTION
	Comirnaty for 5 to 11 years Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Orange cap)

## VACCINE STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

### Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

#### Vaccines that require ultra-low temperature (-75°C) for long term storage

- Vaccine should be stored at -90°C to -60°C in a laboratory grade ultra-low temperature freezer.
- Vaccine can be stored for 18 months from the date of manufacture at -90°C to -60°C.
- Vaccine can be stored at +2°C to +8°C for up to 10 weeks.
- Vaccines should remain in the freezer until ready to immunize.
- Minimize exposure to room light and avoid exposure to direct sunlight and UV light.
- Vaccine must be thawed prior to use.  
(See Thawing/Thawed section)


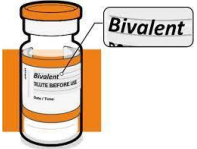
See [www.CVDvaccine.ca](http://www.CVDvaccine.ca) for additional information.

<b>Storage temperature monitoring requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must have an alarm setting that provides audible sound in the event that the temperature of the unit deviates beyond the alarm set points or if the door is left ajar.</li><li>• Must have adjustable alarm set points/range.</li><li>• Should have adjustable temperature set points or temperature controls.</li><li>• Should have a digital temperature display on front that displays current temperature to 1°C resolution.</li></ul>
<b>Ultra-frozen Laboratory grade ultra-low temperature freezers</b>	<u>Storage at -90°C to -60°C</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long term storage for up to 18 months from the date of manufacture.</li><li>• Must continuously keep temperature at -75°C within +/- 15°C in a laboratory grade ultra-low temperature freezer.</li></ul>

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## Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

<p><b>Thawing/Thawed</b></p> <p><b>Storage between 2°C to +8°C</b></p>  <p>Grey cap</p>	<p><u>Thawing and storage between +2°C and +8°C and thawing at room temperature</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be stored at +2°C to +8°C for up to 10 weeks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The time in transit in the thawing/thawed state at +2°C to +8°C must be considered as part of the 10 weeks allowed for storage at refrigerator temperatures.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Thawed vials can be handled in room light conditions.</li> <li>It takes 30 minutes to thaw a vial of vaccine at room temperature from frozen state.</li> <li>The vaccine can be thawed in a vaccine fridge +2 to +8°C from frozen state. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A carton of 10 vials can take up to 6 hours to thaw in the refrigerator.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Once thawed, do not refreeze.</li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine</a> for vaccine storage requirements.</p>
<p><b>Undiluted Thawing/Thawed</b></p> <p><b>Storage between 2°C to +8°C</b></p>  <p>Orange cap</p>	<p><u>Thawing and storage between +2°C and +8°C and thawing at room temperature</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be stored at +2°C to +8°C for up to 10 weeks.</li> <li>The time in transit in the thawing/thawed state at +2°C to +8°C must be considered as part of the 10 weeks allowed for storage at refrigerator temperatures.</li> <li>Thawed vials can be handled in room light conditions.</li> <li>It takes 30 minutes to thaw a vial of vaccine at room temperature from frozen state.</li> <li>The vaccine can be thawed in a vaccine fridge +2 to +8°C from frozen state. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A carton of 10 vials may take up to <b>4 hours</b> to thaw</li> </ul> </li> <li>Once thawed, do not refreeze.</li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine</a> for vaccine storage requirements.</p>
<p><b>Manufacturer-provided thermal shippers</b></p>	<p>The vaccine is stable in the manufacturer-provided thermal shipper for up to 30 days with appropriate handling and re-icing.</p>
<p><b>Unpacking vaccine from thermal shipper</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not discard the original thermal shipper or any of its components.</li> <li>There are two types of thermal shippers: a <b>Softbox</b> thermal shipper and an <b>AeroSafe</b> thermal shipper. Their outer appearance is different, but their components are very similar.</li> <li>The thermal shippers can weigh up to 36.5 kg (81 lbs) when full and should be opened on the floor.</li> </ul> <p><b>Steps for unpacking the thermal shipper</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don dry ice PPE.</li> <li>See 'Safe storage and handling of dry ice' below and refer to the dry ice safety data sheet before accessing the contents of the thermal shipper.</li> <li>Break the seal open.</li> <li>When you open the container, you will see a temperature monitoring device embedded in the foam lid.</li> </ol>

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## Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Softbox:</b> The lid is permanently attached to one flap of the container. Do not pull this flap. When opening the lid, use the three-finger holes in the foam lid, which will allow the lid to swing open.</li><li>○ <b>Aerobox:</b> Gently remove the entire lid, with the temperature-monitoring device, from the inner lid.</li></ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>5. Press and hold the stop button of the temperature-monitoring device for at least <b>5 seconds</b>.</li><li>6. Remove the dry ice pod.</li><li>7. You will now see the box that holds the vial trays. Open the box and you will see the vial trays. Remove the box that holds the vial trays from the container. <b>Do not open the vial trays or remove the vials until you are ready for thawing.</b></li><li>8. Immediately store the vaccine in the ultra-low-temperature freezer. Keep tray at room temperature for less than 5 minutes.</li><li>9. Dispose of dry ice (see 'Disposal of dry ice' section below).</li><li>10. Return the thermal shipper and temperature-monitoring device to the manufacturer as outlined below.</li></ol>
<b>Returning the thermal shipper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A preprinted return shipping label will be included inside the thermal shipper or already affixed to the inner flap of the thermal shipper.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Softbox</b> - apply the preprinted return shipping label over the existing shipping label.</li><li>○ <b>AeroSafe</b> - follow instructions on the inner flap of the thermal shipper to ensure the return label is facing outside.</li></ul></li><li>• Elements required to be returned (<b>Softbox</b> and <b>AeroSafe</b>):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Temperature-monitoring device</li><li>○ Foam lid (remains attached to box)</li><li>○ Dry ice pod</li><li>○ Box that holds the vial trays</li></ul></li><li>• When the thermal shipper is ready to be returned and all the components are inside, seal it with tape.</li></ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Ensure the Dry Ice UN1845 markings and diamond-shaped Class 9 hazard label on the thermal shipper <u>are covered</u> by placing a blank label over them in preparation for the return, as the container no longer contains dry ice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discard empty vial trays as medical waste so they cannot be reused.</li></ul>
<b>Safe storage and handling of dry ice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not store in an airtight container, as it may explode. The dry ice rapidly expands to a gas when exposed to temperatures above -78°C.</li><li>• Work in a well-ventilated space, as asphyxiation is a main hazard of dry ice.</li><li>• Wear insulated (cryogenic) gloves: Wear heavy rubber gloves that insulate against the cold where contact with dry ice may occur. This prevents cold burns and frostbite.</li><li>• Wear safety glasses with side shields, safety goggles or a face shield.</li><li>• Use dry ice tongs or a dry shovel or scoop. Avoid materials incompatible with cryogenic use; some metals such as carbon steel may fracture easily at low temperature.</li><li>• See the product's Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for more information.</li><li>• Pfizer's dry ice MSDS can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</li></ul>
<b>Disposal of dry ice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Once dry ice is no longer needed, open the container, and leave it at room temperature in a well-ventilated area. It will readily turn from a solid to a gas.</li><li>• DO NOT leave dry ice in an unsecured area.</li></ul>

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### Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

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|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• DO NOT drain or flush in toilet.</li><li>• DO NOT dispose in the trash.</li><li>• DO NOT place in a closed area, such as an airtight container or walk-in cooler.</li></ul> |
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Superseded

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

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## VACCINE TRANSPORT – Ultra-frozen Vaccine

Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

Cold chain must be maintained during transport to another location.

Container	Qualified container that is certified to maintain required temperature and allows for vaccine to be packed securely to prevent movement.
Onward transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>To reduce the risk of temperature excursions, the manufacturer recommends the vaccine be administered at the point where the vaccine is delivered, and that the product is not transferred to other locations.</b></li><li>• In order to provide flexibility for the safe re-distribution of vaccine from the point of use/delivery, the manufacturer has indicated that, based on stability data, the product can be transported in an appropriately validated container in either the:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ultra-frozen state at -90°C to -60°C OR</li><li>○ Thawed state at +2°C to +8°C.</li></ul></li><li>• <b>First choice. As per manufacturer recommendations, if the vaccine must be transported, transport the vaccine in an ultra-frozen state.</b></li></ul> <p><u>Ultra-frozen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Only full trays in their original carton (not individual vials) can be transported in an ultra-frozen state.</li><li>• Transfer the vaccine from the ultra-low temperature freezer to the container rapidly. Keep tray at room temperature for less than 5 minutes to prevent thawing.</li><li>• The ultra-frozen product should be appropriately packed in a validated container to prevent contact with the dry ice.</li></ul> <p><u>Thawing/Thawed (only applicable to undiluted state)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If transportation must occur in the thawing/thawed state:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The transported vaccine must be labelled “transported thawing/thawed” and the total time in transportation must be tracked.</li></ul></li><li>• The time in transit in the thawing/thawed state at +2°C to +8°C must be considered as part of the 10 weeks allowed for storage at refrigerator temperatures.</li><li>• Single vials can be transported in a thawing/thawed undiluted state.</li><li>• The thawing/thawed product should be appropriately packed in a validated container.</li><li>• Do not refreeze thawed product.</li></ul> <p><u>Diluent (orange cap only)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The ideal temperature to transport diluent is between +20°C to +25°C, and there are no restrictions or time limits in place while diluent is transported in this range.</li><li>• The diluent can be transported between +2°C to +8°C for a maximum of 120 hours.</li><li>• It is important to ensure that diluent does not freeze.</li></ul> <p><u>In addition, for ultra-frozen and thawing/thawed vaccine:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Label the container as “Fragile: Handle with Care, Do Not Drop” and “Temperature Sensitive”.</li><li>• Keep the vaccine vials upright.</li></ul>

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## Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As much care as possible should be taken to minimize movement during onward transportation both within the container and the vehicle.</li><li>• The temperature must be maintained and recorded during transport.</li><li>• Record the transportation locations, dates and times, including the duration of time in transit.</li><li>• Do not transport the vaccine at room temperature.</li><li>• Do not transport vials that have been punctured.</li></ul>
<b>Temperature monitoring</b>	<p>An appropriate temperature monitoring device must be used to transport vaccine.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Vaccine shipped from Pharmacy wholesale distributors and Accuristix wholesale distributor utilizing a pre-qualified container with phase-changing technology will not have a temperature monitoring device.</p>
<b>Receiving vaccine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When a vaccine shipment is received, it must be examined and stored as specified in the product monograph.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Ultra-frozen state – ultra-low temperature freezer at -90°C to -60°C.</li><li>○ Thawed state – fridge at +2°C to +8°C.</li><li>○ Once thawed, do not refreeze.</li></ul></li><li>• Read and/or stop the recording of the temperature monitoring device upon receipt to determine if it has been activated or alarmed.</li></ul>

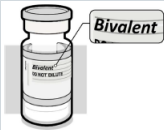
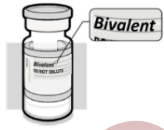

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

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## COLD CHAIN EXCURSIONS – Ultra-frozen vaccine

### Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

All known exposures of vaccine to temperatures outside temperature requirements as specified in the product monograph must be reported. Each cold chain excursion needs to be assessed to determine if it is a cold chain break and vaccine needs to be quarantined.

<p><b>Ultra-frozen vaccine</b></p>	<p><b>Ultra-frozen state</b> (-90°C to -60°C)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vaccine is to be stored at -90°C to -60°C in a laboratory grade ultra-low temperature freezer while in a frozen state.</li> <li>If the temperature is warmer than -60°C, the vaccine is considered to be in the thawing stage and needs to be stored in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C. Do not refreeze.</li> <li>If the temperature is colder than -90°C, quarantine the vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in an ultra-low freezer at -90°C to -60°C until viability has been assessed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pre-puncture vaccine</b></p>  <p>Grey cap</p>	<p><b>Pre-puncture vaccine</b> can be stored at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>+2°C to +8°C for 10 weeks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the temperature is colder than +2°C, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li> </ul> </li> <li><u>+8°C to +25°C for 12 hours</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the temperature is warmer than +25°C (room temperature) <u>within the 12 hour</u> timeframe, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li> <li>Pre-puncture vaccine stored at +8°C to +25°C is to be discarded after 12 hours and counted as wasted doses in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory system (AVI).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Post-puncture vaccine</b></p>  <p>Grey cap</p>	<p><b>Post-puncture vaccine</b> can be stored at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>+2°C to +25°C for 12 hours</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the temperature is colder than +2°C or warmer than +25°C within the 12 hour timeframe, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li> <li>Post-puncture vaccine is to be discarded after 12 hours and counted as wasted doses in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory system (AVI).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Undiluted thawed vaccine</b></p>  <p>Orange cap</p>	<p><b>Undiluted thawed vaccine</b> can be stored at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>+2°C to +8°C for 10 weeks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the temperature is colder than +2°C, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li> </ul> </li> <li><u>+8°C to +25°C for 12 hours</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the temperature is warmer than +25°C (room temperature) <u>within the 12 hour</u> timeframe, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li> <li>Undiluted thawed vaccine is to be discarded after 12 hours and counted as wasted doses in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory system (AVI).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

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## Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original & Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent

### Diluted thawed vaccine



Orange cap

**Diluted thawed vaccine** can be stored at:

- +2°C to +25°C for 12 hours
  - If the temperature is colder than +2°C or warmer than +25°C within the 12 hour timeframe, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.
  - Diluted thawed vaccine is to be discarded after 12 hours and counted as wasted doses in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory system (AVI).

#### Note:

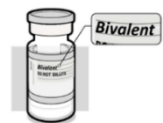
- Temperature excursions to be reported as per process outlined in [Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine](#).
- Timeframe for reporting is within 24 hours.
- Vaccine that is determined not viable, is to be discarded according to the health practitioners' standard of practice and must be entered into AVI as wasted using the correct reason.
- For more information on inventory reconciliation, refer to the [Inventory Reconciliation quick reference guide](#).

Contact Pfizer at 1-833-829-2684 for viability assessment and determination.

See the Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Excursion Tool below.

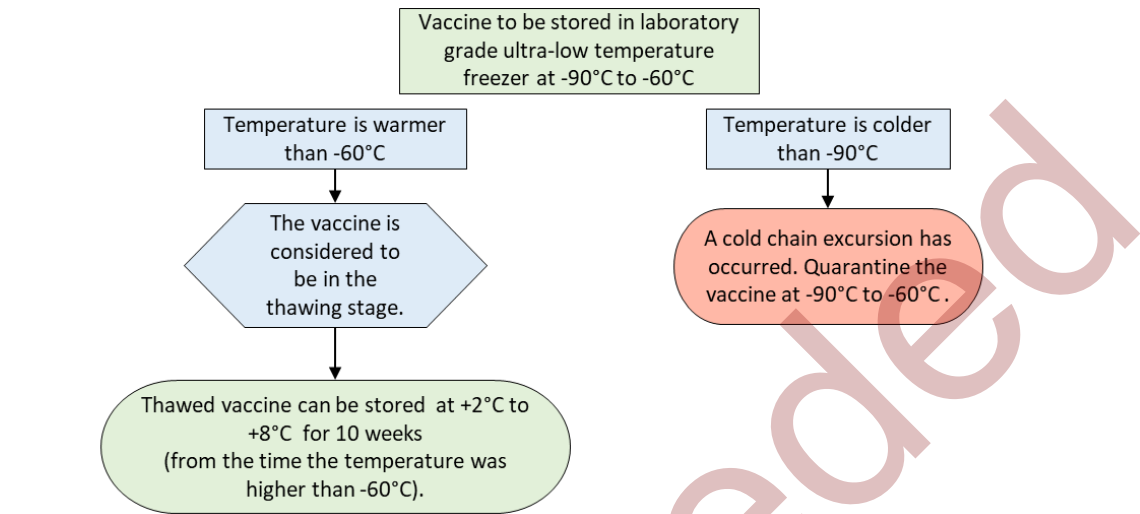
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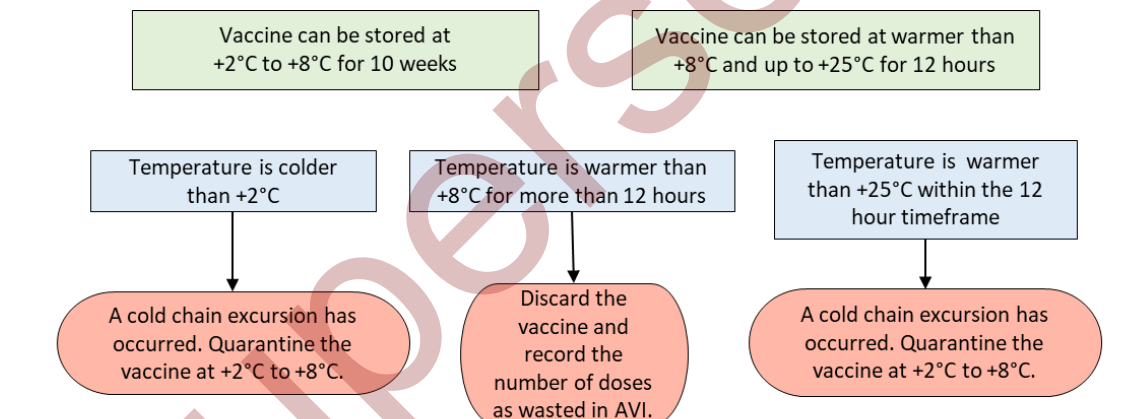


## Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Excursion Tool –12 years and older Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Grey cap) NO DILUTION

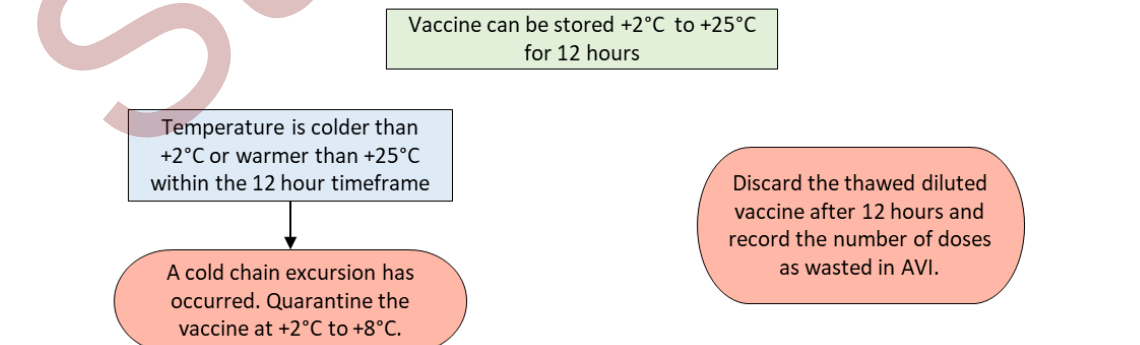
### Ultra-Frozen Vaccine NO DILUTION



### Pre-puncture Vaccine



### Post-puncture Vaccine



Contact Pfizer at 1-833-829-2684 for viability assessment and determination.

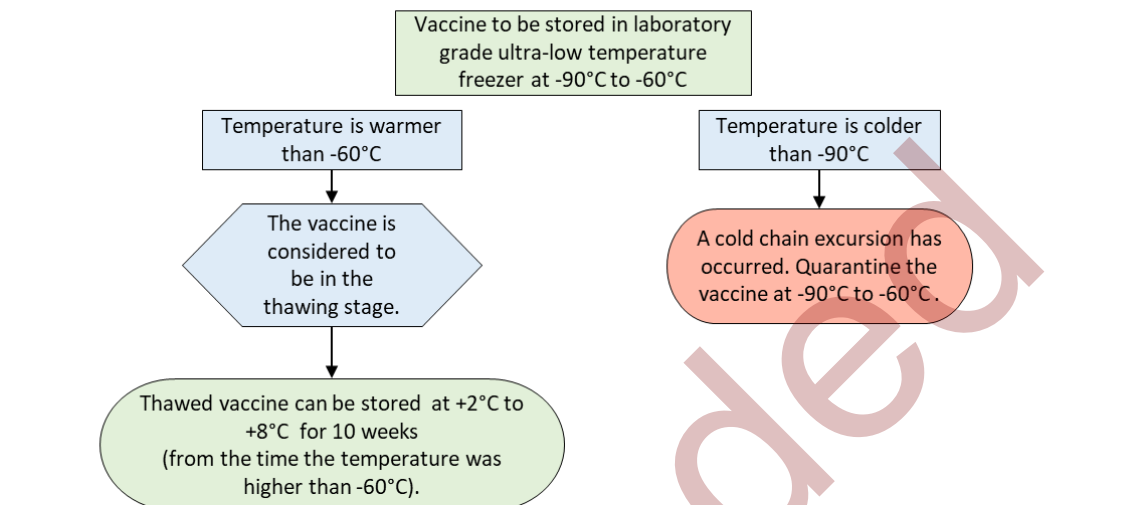
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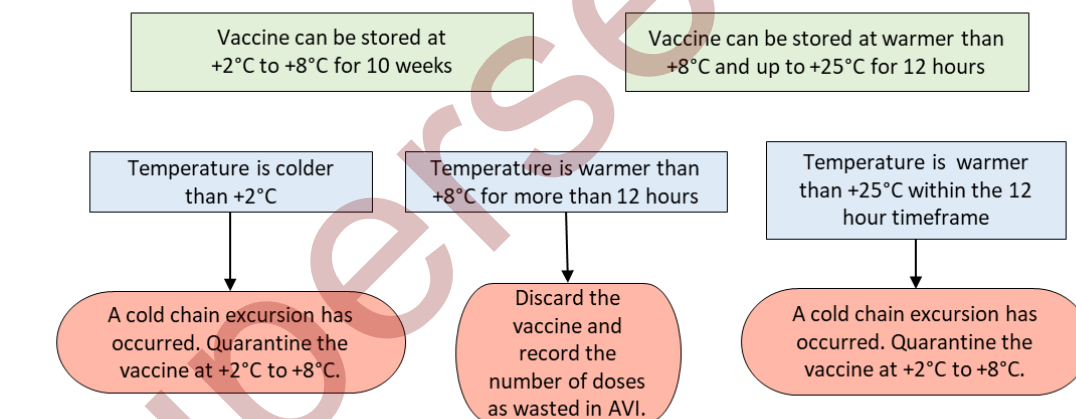


## Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Excursion Tool – 5- 11 years Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (orange cap)

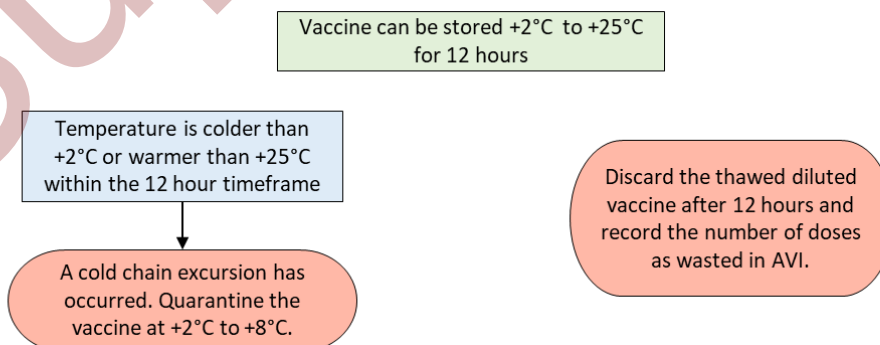
### Ultra-Frozen Vaccine



### Undiluted Thawed Vaccine



### Diluted Thawed Vaccine



Contact Pfizer at 1-833-829-2684 for viability assessment and determination.

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

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## Moderna Spikevax Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Royal Blue Cap) and XBB.1.5 (Royal Blue Cap, Coral Blue Label) FROZEN VACCINE

### Moderna Spikevax Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Royal Blue Cap) and XBB.1.5 (Royal Blue Cap, Coral Blue Label)

#### Vaccines that require storage at -20°C

Vaccines should remain in the freezer until ready to immunize.

Store at -25°C to -15°C. Stable in laboratory grade freezer until date of expiration.

Protect from light.

<b>Storage temperature monitoring requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must have an alarm setting that provides audible sound in the event that the temperature of the unit deviates beyond the alarm set points or if the door is ajar.</li><li>• Must have adjustable alarm set points/range.</li><li>• Should have adjustable temperature set points/temperature controls.</li><li>• Should have a digital temperature display on front that displays current temperature to 1°C degrees resolution.</li></ul>
<b>Frozen Laboratory grade freezers</b>	<p><u>Storage at -25°C to -15°C</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Long term storage until expiry date.</li><li>• Must continuously keep temperature at -20°C within +/- 5°C.</li><li>• Vaccine can be stored at -25°C to -15°C until date of expiration.</li></ul>
<b>Storage between 2°C to +8°C Pre-puncture Thawing/Thawed  (Do NOT refreeze once thawed)</b>	<p><u>Storage at +2°C to +8°C</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can be stored at +2°C to +8°C for 30 days.</li><li>• The time in transit in the thawing/thawed state at +2°C to +8°C must be considered as part of the 30 days allowed for storage at refrigerator temperatures.</li><li>• Thaw time under refrigeration (+2°C to +8°C) is 2 hours. After thawing, let vial stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before administering.</li><li>• Thaw time at room temperature (+15°C to +25°C) is 45 minutes.</li></ul>

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

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## VACCINE TRANSPORT – Frozen Vaccine

Moderna Spikevax Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Royal Blue Cap) and XBB.1.5 (Royal Blue Cap, Coral Blue Label)

**Cold chain must be maintained during transport to another location.**

<b>Container</b>	Qualified container that is certified to maintain temperature at -25°C to -15°C and allows for vaccine to be packed securely to prevent movement.
<b>Onward transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>First choice. As per manufacturer recommendations, if the vaccine must be transported, transport the vaccine in the frozen state at -25°C to -15°C but can be as cold as -50°C.</b></li><li>• <b>Do not use dry ice.</b></li><li>• Second choice. In exceptional scenarios, where frozen state transport cannot be accomplished and based on stability data, the manufacturer has indicated that the product can be transported in an appropriately validated container in a thawing/thawed state (at +2°C to +8°C).</li><li>• Full cartons or individual vials can be transported in either the frozen or thawed state.</li></ul> <p><u>Frozen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Transfer the vaccine from the freezer to the container rapidly. Keep tray at room temperature for less than 5 minutes to prevent thawing.</li><li>• The product should be appropriately packed in a validated container in order to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Prevent contact with ice packs,</li><li>○ Prevent movement of the vials in the container, and</li><li>○ Keep the vaccine vials upright.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><u>Thawing/thawed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If transportation occurs in the thawing/thawed state:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The total transportation time should be no longer than 10 hours.</li><li>○ The transported vaccine must be labelled “transported thawing/thawed” and the total time in transportation must be tracked.</li><li>○ This time can be extended to 12 hours in extenuating circumstances e.g., vehicle breakdown, poor road conditions. This would not be routine practice.</li></ul></li><li>• The product should be appropriately packed in a validated container in order to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Prevent contact with ice packs,</li><li>○ Prevent movement of the vials, and</li><li>○ Keep the vaccine vials upright.</li></ul></li><li>• As much care as possible should be taken to minimize extra movement in the thawed state<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The container should be secured in the vehicle so that it does not move around.</li></ul></li><li>• The time in transit in the thawing/thawed state at +2°C to +8°C should be considered part of the 30 days allowed for storage at refrigerator temperatures.</li></ul> <p><u>In addition, for frozen and thawing/thawed vaccine:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Label the container as “Fragile: Handle with Care, Do Not Drop” and “Temperature Sensitive”.</li><li>• The temperature must be maintained and recorded during transport.</li><li>• Record the transportation locations, dates and times, including the duration of time in transit.</li><li>• Do not refreeze thawed product</li></ul>

## Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

**Moderna Spikevax Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Royal Blue Cap) and XBB.1.5 (Royal Blue Cap, Coral Blue Label)**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not transport the vaccine at room temperature.</li><li>• Do not transport vials that have been punctured.</li></ul>
<b>Temperature monitoring</b>	<p>An appropriate temperature monitoring device must be used to transport vaccine.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Vaccine shipped from Pharmacy wholesale distributors and Accuristix wholesale distributor utilizing a pre-qualified container with phase-changing technology will not have a temperature monitoring device.</p>
<b>Receiving vaccine</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When a vaccine shipment is received, it must be examined and stored as specified in the product monograph.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Frozen state – freezer at -25°C to -15°C</li><li>○ Thawed state – fridge at +2°C to +8°C</li><li>○ Once thawed, do not refreeze.</li></ul></li><li>• Read and/or stop the recording of the temperature monitoring device upon receipt to determine if it has been activated or alarmed.</li></ul>

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

## COLD CHAIN EXCURSIONS – Frozen Vaccine

Moderna Spikevax Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Royal Blue Cap) and XBB.1.5 (Royal Blue Cap, Coral Blue Label)

All known exposures of vaccine to temperatures outside temperature requirements as specified in the product monograph must be reported. Each cold chain excursion needs to be assessed to determine if it is a cold chain break and vaccine needs to be quarantined.

<b>Frozen</b>	<b>Frozen state</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vaccine is to be stored at -25°C to -15°C while in a frozen state.</li><li>• If the temperature is warmer than -15°C, the vaccine is considered to be in the thawing stage and needs to be stored in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C. Do not refreeze.</li><li>• If the temperature is colder than -50°C, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in freezer at -25°C to -15°C until viability has been assessed.</li></ul>
<b>Pre-puncture thawed vaccine</b>	<b>Pre-puncture thawed vaccine</b> can be stored at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>+2°C to +8°C for 30 days</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ If the temperature is colder than +2°C, quarantine vaccine and mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li></ul></li><li>• <u>+8°C to +25°C for 24 hours</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ If the temperature is warmer than +25°C (room temperature) within the 24 hour timeframe, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li><li>○ Pre-puncture vaccine stored at +8°C to +25°C is to be discarded after 24 hours and counted as wasted doses in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory system (AVI).</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Post-puncture thawed vaccine</b>	<b>Post-puncture thawed vaccine</b> can be stored at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>+2°C to +25°C for 24 hours</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ If the temperature is colder than +2°C or warmer than +25°C within the 24 hour timeframe, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li><li>○ Post-puncture thawed vaccine is to be discarded after 24 hours and count as wasted doses in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory system (AVI).</li></ul></li></ul>

### Note:

- Temperature excursions to be reported as per process outlined in [Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine](#).
- Timeframe for reporting is within 24 hours.
- Vaccine that is determined not viable, will be discarded according to the health practitioners' standard of practice and must be entered into AVI as wasted using the correct reason.
- For more information on inventory reconciliation, refer to the [Inventory Reconciliation quick reference guide](#).

Contact Innomar at 1-833-847-4270 for viability assessment and determination.  
See the Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Excursion Tool below.

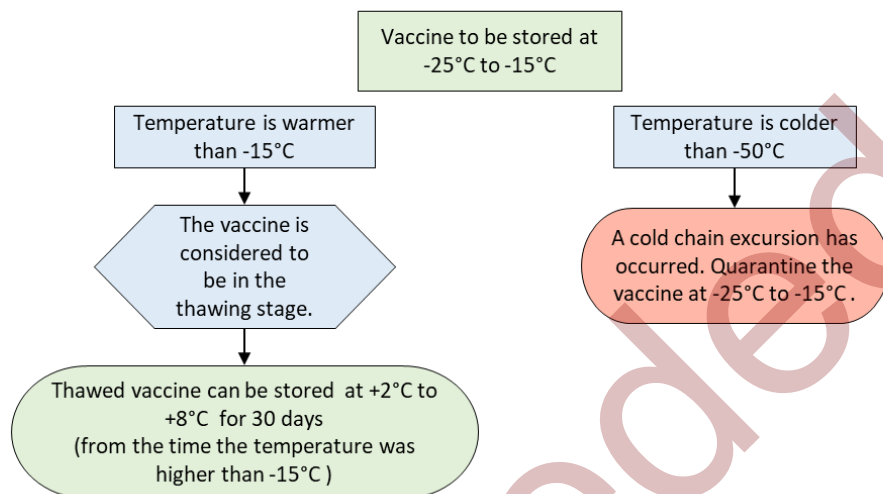
# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

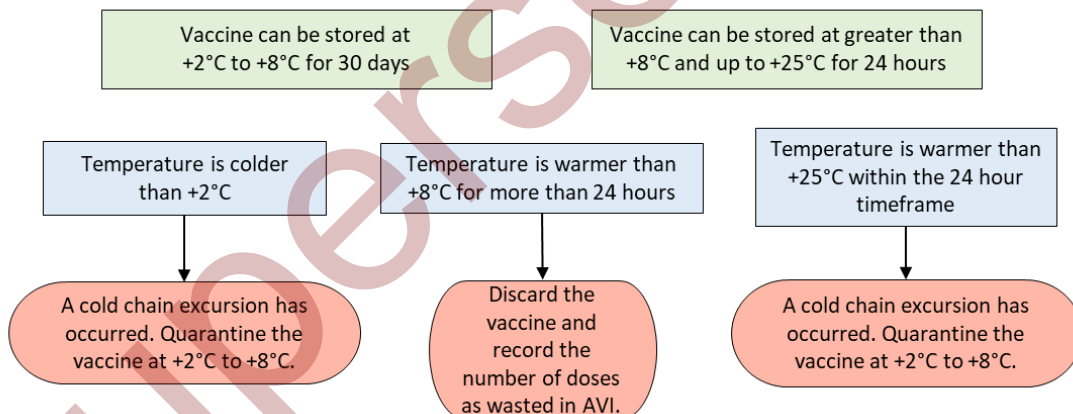


## Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Excursion Tool – 6 Months and Older, Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent (Royal Blue Cap) and XBB.1.5 (Royal Blue Cap, Coral Blue Label)

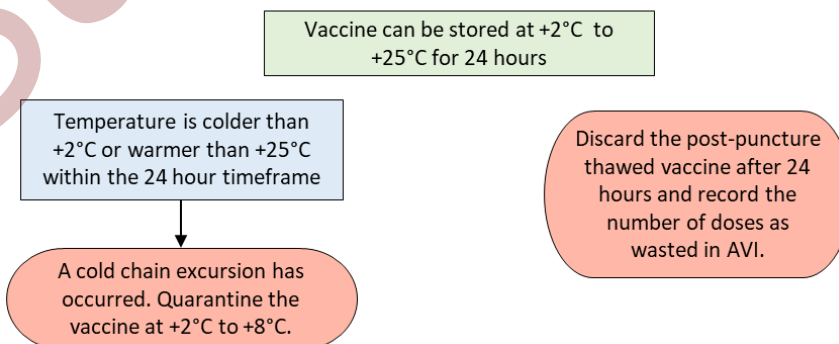
### Frozen Vaccine



### Pre-Puncture Thawed Vaccine



### Post-Puncture Thawed Vaccine



Contact Innomar at 1-833-847-4270 for viability assessment and determination.

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

## Novavax Vaccine (+2°C to +8°C)

### VACCINE STORAGE REQUIREMENTS

#### Novavax Vaccine (+2°C to +8°C)

- Vaccine can be stored for 12 months at +2°C to +8°C.
- Protect from light.

See [Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine](#) for vaccine storage requirements.

### VACCINE TRANSPORT

#### Novavax Vaccine (+2°C to +8°C)

See [Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine](#) for vaccine transportation requirements.

<b>Container Temp. Monitoring Receiving</b>	See <a href="#">Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine</a> for vaccine transportation requirements.
<b>Onward transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vaccine cold chain maintained at +2°C to +8°C during transportation.</li><li>• There are no concerns from a stability perspective in transporting the Novavax vaccine.</li><li>• Vaccine may be transported post-puncture with infection control considerations including: hand hygiene, cleaning vial with alcohol wipe pre-puncture and post puncture before returning to vaccine bags.</li></ul>

### COLD CHAIN EXCURSIONS

#### Novavax Vaccine (+2°C to +8°C)

All known exposures of vaccine to temperatures outside temperature requirements as specified in the product monograph must be reported. Each cold chain excursion needs to be assessed to determine if it is a cold chain break and vaccine needs to be quarantined.

<b>Vaccine that requires storage between +2°C and +8°C)</b>	<p><b>Pre-puncture vaccine</b> can be stored at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>+2°C to +8°C for 12 months</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ If the temperature is colder than +2°C or warmer than +8°C quarantine vaccine and mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>Post-puncture vaccine</b> can be stored at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>+2°C to +8°C for up to 12 hours or between &gt;+8°C to +25°C for up to 6 hours.</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ If the temperature is colder than +2°C or warmer than +25°C, quarantine vaccine, mark as “DO NOT USE”, and store in a vaccine fridge at +2°C to +8°C until viability has been assessed.</li><li>○ Post-puncture vaccine that has been stored between +2°C to +8°C for more than 12 hours or between &gt;+8°C to +25°C for more than 6 hours is to be discarded and counted as wasted doses in the Alberta Vaccine Inventory system (AVI).</li></ul></li></ul>
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## Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

### Note:

- Temperature excursions are to be reported as per process outlined in [Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for Provincially Funded Vaccine](#).
- Timeframe for reporting is within 24 hours.
- Vaccine that is determined not viable, will be discarded according to the health practitioners' standard of practice and must be entered into AVI as wasted using the correct reason.
- For more information on inventory reconciliation, refer to the [Inventory Reconciliation quick reference guide](#).

Contact Innomar QA at 1-833-847-4270 for viability assessment and determination.

See the Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine Cold Chain Excursion Tool below.

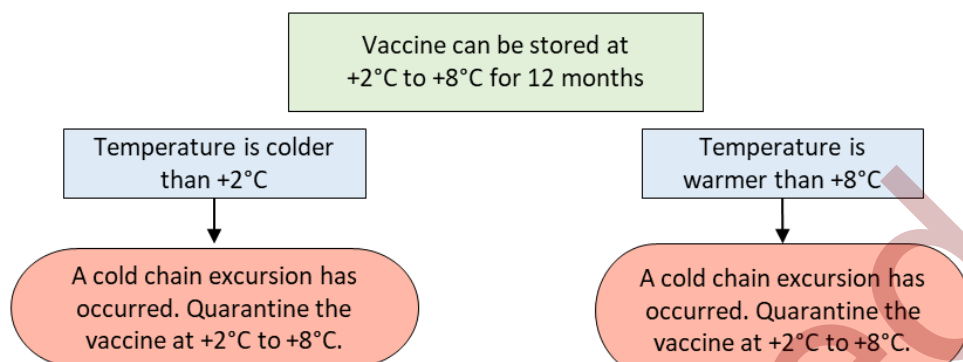
Superseded

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

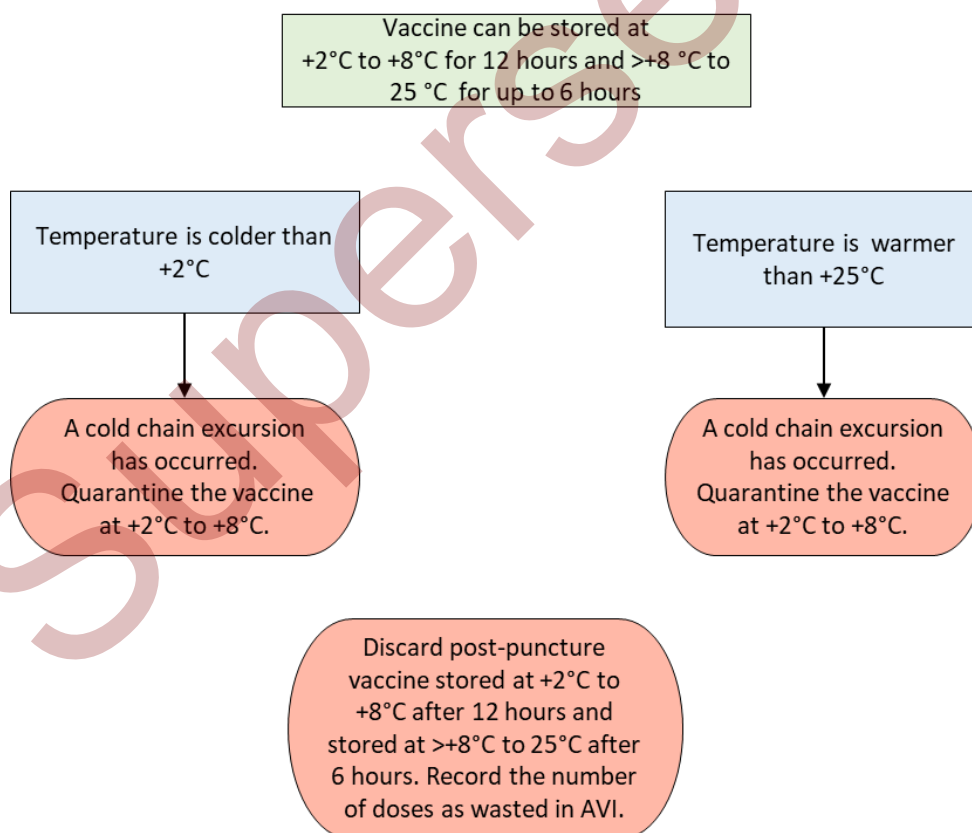
September 15, 2023

## Novavax Vaccine Cold Chain Excursion Tool

### Pre-puncture Vaccine



### Post-puncture Vaccine



Contact Innomar QA at 1-833-847-4270 for viability assessment and determination.

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

## After-hours contact information for temperature excursions

### After-hours Reporting Best Practice

- Temperature excursion reporting outside of operation hours should be via email. Email accounts are monitored by more personnel than the phone line.
- If the request is urgent, email subject should include "URGENT:"
- Include the NOC on all after-hours temperature excursion reporting. NOC has the ability to escalate if required.

Organization	Primary Contact	Secondary Contact	Hours of Operation	After-hours Responsiveness
<b>Pfizer Customer Service</b>	<a href="mailto:CanadaCSVaccine@Pfizer.com">CanadaCSVaccine@Pfizer.com</a>	1-833-829-2684	05:30 - 17:30. MST (M-F)	3 to 4 hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Innomar QA</b></li><li>• <b>Moderna</b></li><li>• <b>Novavax</b></li></ul>	<a href="mailto:QA-GMP@innomar-strategies.com">QA-GMP@innomar-strategies.com</a>	1-833-847-4270	05:30 - 17:30 MST (M-F)	1 hr if identified as time sensitive. 2 to 4 hrs if not time sensitive.
<b>NOC Mailbox</b>	<a href="mailto:vaccinenoc-cnovaccin@phac-aspc.gc.ca">vaccinenoc-cnovaccin@phac-aspc.gc.ca</a>	1-613-952-0865	24 hrs, 7 days a week	Within 1 hour
<b>NOC Liaison</b>	<a href="mailto:Geordie.Ironside@phac-aspc.gc.ca">Geordie.Ironside@phac-aspc.gc.ca</a>	1-343-572-6999	0600 -16:00 MST (M-F)	Immediate if urgent

### During regular business hours

Pfizer - 1-833-829-2684

Moderna - 1-833-847-4270

Novavax – 1-833-847-4270

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

## TEMPERATURE MONITORING

The minimum, maximum, and current temperature of all refrigerators/freezers where vaccine is stored must be monitored and recorded.

<b>Temperature monitoring devices</b>	<p>The only thermometers and temperature recording devices that are acceptable for monitoring the temperature within vaccine storage units are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minimum and Maximum Thermometer.</li><li>• Data Logger - must function like a min/max device and therefore the minimum, maximum, and current temperatures need to be downloaded twice a day.</li><li>• Alarmed Temperature Monitoring System - must function like a min/max device and therefore the minimum, maximum, and current temperatures need to be downloaded twice a day.</li><li>• Chart <b>Recorder in combination with a min/max thermometer</b> Note: Chart recorders can be hard to interpret, inaccurate, and difficult to ascertain minimum and maximum temperatures. In addition, if chart recorders are on the same power supply as the fridge (and do not have back-up power) and the power goes out – there is not enough data to make a decision on vaccine viability.</li></ul> <p><b>Fluid-filled bio-safe liquid (bottle) thermometers, bi-metal stem thermometers, and household thermometers are NOT acceptable.</b></p>
<b>Continuous temperature recording devices</b>	<p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chart Recorders (in combination with a min/max thermometer); OR</li><li>• Data Loggers (downloaded twice a day); OR</li><li>• Alarmed Temperature Monitoring System (downloaded twice a day).</li></ul>
<b>Temperature recording</b>	<p>At minimum, the temperature must be recorded and reviewed at the beginning and end of each business day (separated by at least 8 hours) for each refrigerator/freezer storing vaccine.</p>

# Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling Policy for COVID-19 Vaccine

September 15, 2023

## Storage and Handling Summary

	<b>Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent 5 Years plus</b> (Grey cap 12+) (Orange Cap 5-11Y)	<b>Moderna Spikevax Original and Omicron BA.4/5 Bivalent</b> (Royal Blue Cap) and <b>XBB.1.5</b> (Royal Blue Cap, Coral Blue Label) <b>6 Months plus</b>	<b>Novavax</b> 12 years of age and older
<b>ULT</b> (-90°C to -60°C)	Up to 18 months	n/a	n/a
<b>Freezer Storage</b> (-25°C to -15°C)	Can NOT be stored at -25°C to -15°C	Until expiry date	n/a
<b>Refrigerated Storage</b> (+2°C to +8°C)	10 weeks	30 days	12 months
<b>Room Temperature Pre-puncture/Prior to dilution</b> (up to +25°C)	12 hours	24 hours	n/a
<b>Post-puncture/ After Dilution</b>	12 hours between +2°C to +25°C	24 hours between +2°C to +25°C	12 hours between +2°C to 8°C, and 6 hours >+8°C to +25°C
<b>Onward Transportation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ultra-frozen full cartons</li> <li>• Refrigerated full cartons or individual unpunctured vials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frozen or refrigerated full cartons or individual unpunctured vials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refrigerated punctured or unpunctured vials</li> </ul>