



With an increase of phone calls regarding vaccines with diluents and expired vaccines, the Maine Immunization Program would like to highlight these two issues in this month's newsletter and provide you with the appropriate guidance.

## Vaccines with Diluents: How to use Them

Always refer to package inserts for detailed instructions on reconstituting specific vaccines. In general, follow these steps:

1. For single-dose vaccine products (exceptions are Menomune in the multi-dose vial and Rotarix), select a syringe and a needle of proper length to be used for both reconstitution and administration of the vaccine. Following reconstitution, Menomune in a multidose vial will require a new needle and syringe for each dose of vaccine to be administered. For Rotarix, see the package insert.
2. Before reconstituting, check labels on both the lyophilized vaccine vial and the diluent to verify the following:
  - that they are the correct two products to mix together
  - that the diluent is the correct volume (especially for Menomune in the multidose vial)
  - that neither vaccine nor diluent has expired
3. Reconstitute (i.e., mix) vaccine **just prior to use** by:
  - removing the protective caps and wiping each stopper with an alcohol swab
  - inserting needle of syringe into diluent vial and withdrawing entire contents
  - injecting diluent into lyophilized vaccine vial and rotating or agitating to thoroughly dissolve the lyophilized powder
4. Check the appearance of the reconstituted vaccine.
  - Reconstituted vaccine may be used if the color and appearance match the description on the package insert
  - If there is discoloration, extraneous particulate matter, obvious lack of resuspension, or cannot be thoroughly mixed, mark the vial as "DO NOT USE," return it to proper storage conditions, and contact your state or local health department immunization program or the vaccine manufacturer
5. If reconstituted vaccine is not used immediately or comes in a multidose vial (i.e., multidose Menomune), clearly mark the vial with the date and time the vaccine was reconstituted maintain the product at 35°–46°F (2°–8°C); do not freeze protect reconstituted vaccines from light

Please refer to the following website for more information:

<http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3040.pdf>



# Expired Vaccines 101

All vaccines and diluents have expiration dates. The expiration date is the date by which the vaccine or diluent should be used. This date is printed on all vaccine and diluent vials and packages. The vaccine or diluent may be used up to and including this date **unless** otherwise stated in the manufacturer's product information. Vaccine and diluent **should NOT be used** after this date has passed. When the expiration date is marked with only a month and year, the vaccine or diluent may be used up to and including the last day of the month indicated. Any unused vaccine or diluent should NOT be used after this month has passed.



Vaccine Expiration Date **08/16/13** Note: Use through **August 16, 2013**. DO NOT use on or after August 17, 2013.



Vaccine Expiration Date **08/13** Note: Use through **August 31, 2013**. DO NOT use on or after September 1, 2013.

**Q:** What should we do if a dose of expired vaccine is given to a patient?

**A:** The dose should be repeated. If the expired dose is a live virus vaccine, you should wait at least 4 weeks after the previous dose (expired) was given before repeating it.

Expired vaccines and diluents should **NEVER** be administered, even if it is only 1 day past the expiration date. **Expired vaccines and diluents should be removed IMMEDIATELY from the vaccine storage unit(s).**

Vaccine expiration dates must be checked on a regular basis. During VFC site visits, we will do a full inspection of the storage units to ensure that this step is being followed.

As a general rule, vaccines that have been mishandled or stored at inappropriate temperatures should not be administered. Vaccine exposed to inappropriate temperatures that has been inadvertently administered generally should be repeated. In these situations, clinicians should consult with the vaccine manufacturer(s) and/or the state/local health department immunization program for guidance.

Contact your immunization program, vaccine supplier, or vaccine manufacturer(s), as appropriate for your situation, for specific policies regarding the disposition of expired or mishandled vaccines. If the expired or mishandled vaccines were VFC vaccines or other vaccines purchased with public funds, contact your immunization program for guidance.

For more information, please refer to the Storage and Handling Toolkit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/storage/toolkit/storage-handling-toolkit.pdf>

## Introducing the... “AFIX Corner”

### AFIX

AFIX is a quality improvement strategy designed to raise immunization rates and improve standards of practices at the provider level. The acronym for this four-part strategy stands for:

**A**ssessment of immunization coverage of public and private providers,  
**F**eedback of diagnostic information to improve service delivery,  
**I**ncentives to recognize and reward improved performance, and;  
**eX**change of information among providers.

The purpose of AFIX is to move health care providers from a state of unawareness about the problem (low immunization rates in their practice) to one in which they are aware, concerned and knowledgeable; motivated to change; ready to try new behaviors/strategies; and capable of sustaining these new behaviors.

The AFIX Coordinator will now be including **Successful Strategies** on a quarterly basis to the immunization newsletter.

### Important reminder to all provider sites...

Upon receiving vaccine to your facility it is important to be diligent with accepting your order into the IMMPACT system. In order to document doses given with this vaccine, this step must be completed.

You may do this by:

1. Signing into IMMPACT
2. On the left hand side bar under ‘Inventory’ click on ‘Manage Orders’
3. Under ‘Inbound Orders’ select the order
4. Click on ‘Receive Order’

If you have any questions, please contact the Maine  
Immunization Program at:

Phone (207) 287-3746 or (800) 867-4775

