

Department of Pharmacy Policy

CURRENT AS OF: 11/09

SUBJECT: Refrigerator Temperature Monitoring

PURPOSE: To describe the system to maintain proper storage conditions for refrigerated medications and food supplies.

INFORMATION:

Maintaining Stock Integrity

Pharmacy Services has the responsibility of maintaining proper storage of refrigerated medication and patient care unit food supplies. This is achieved through use of the daily refrigerator temperature log sheet.

Refrigerator temperature log sheet

A log sheet will be placed on the medication and patient care unit nutrition refrigerators. It will be used to record the temperature on a daily basis. To ensure proper storage conditions the temperature must be between 36 and 46 degrees F. Readings outside this range should be documented with actions documented/initialed. Actions require pharmacist assessment of contents and whether they must be discarded, replaced, etc. and adjustment of the dial. Following the adjustment, the refrigerator should be rechecked to ensure the adjusted temperature status. These log sheets will be maintained in Pharmacy Services files.

Documentation:

Each day's monitoring should be documented and initialed. If the temperature is out of range or noncompliant conditions, document the time and action taken. If the temperature is outside the range, revisit the refrigerator within the shift and document the revisit time and temperature. Reference the back of log if more extensive documentation is required.

Assigned Personnel

Pharmacy Services refrigerator maintenance technician positions (position to be staffed 7 days/week) is staffed to monitor and maintain all the unit-based refrigerators throughout the hospital:

- a. Document temperature on a manual log. Initiate action when temperature is outside the range. Document/initial action taken on the log.
- b. Collect expired medications within the refrigerator or medications past due or for discharged patients. Return to pharmacy to be return to stock or discard.
- c. Defrost refrigerators with routine frequency (average of 3 refrigerators/day)
- d. Monitor multiple dose vials (e.g. insulin, heparin) and ensure that they have a 28 day expiration date written on them if opened. Ensure that unopened insulin vials have a blank expiration label on the vial to facilitate dating it when opened.

When the refrigerator maintenance technician is absent, refrigerator monitoring will be delegated to pharmacy staff. The registry will be disseminated to ensure all refrigerators are monitored.

Unit-Base Refrigerators

A registry of unit based refrigerators will be maintained by pharmacy. The registry includes the refrigerator; type and location.

Refrigerator Labeling

A large sign is affixed to each refrigerator identifying storage contents.

- Medications only, no food
- Food only

Each unit based refrigerator will be labeled with a fluorescent label to identify the temperature monitoring process and what actions and who to contact if the temperature is outside of range:

Any personal food found will be discarded. Laboratory specimens are not permitted in the refrigerators.

Medication Refrigerator Label:

TEMPERATURE MONITORED
Daily by Pharmacy;
If daily monitoring is delinquent, or if temperature is outside
the 36-46 F range,
do not use any items stored in this refrigerator until it is
assessed for appropriateness.
Contact 3-5641 or pager #330-7911
Previous monthly logs are filed in Pharmacy.

Food Refrigerator Label:

TEMPERATURE MONITORED
daily by Pharmacy;
If daily monitoring is delinquent, or if temperature is outside
the 36-46 range,
do not use any items stored in this refrigerator until it is
assessed for appropriateness.
Contact Food Services 3-5652 or page the kitchen supervisor #3459
Previous monthly logs are filed in Pharmacy.

Approved: _____
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