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Summer and SCIG: Hot Weather Tips

Now that summer is here, there have been many questions about safe temperatures for your subcutaneous immunoglobulin. How hot can it get? Has the drug been affected if it sits out on your front porch in summer time heat?

Here are some helpful tips from the Immune Deficiency Foundation Nurse Advisory Committee to address your concerns. These recommendations may also be helpful for the other medications you receive by mail.

The information from the manufacturers of the subcutaneous immunoglobulin (SCIG) products available for use currently (Gammagard®, Gamunex-C® and Hizentra®) says that the products should be stored at room temperature (25ºC or 77ºF) and clearly states that product that has been frozen should never be used. Unfortunately, there are no official, published data available from these manufacturers that say what if the temperature consistently exceeds 77ºF.

- **Be proactive** and talk to your specialty pharmacy about your needs and concerns!
- Your specialty pharmacy should be shipping your drug to you with cool packs, in an insulated container. Some even use temperature indicator strips. If they do not, ask them to.
- If the cool packs are hot when you get the drug or the indicator measures a temperature much higher than 77ºF, talk to the pharmacy. Let them know how you have received the drug and get their assurance that they have checked with the manufacturer and the drug has not been deactivated.
- Make arrangements to have the drug delivered when there will be someone home to accept the delivery. If that is not possible, have it delivered somewhere where someone can bring it in out of the heat. Delivery options include your place of business or a helpful neighbor-someone who is home all day. You may want to consider getting a local mailbox at a UPS store, FedEx/Kinko’s or some similar place. These are secure facilities and many have extended hours of operation.
- Your drug should be in its original carton so that it is protected from the light.
- If you are flying, your drug always goes in your carry-on luggage (Do not forget to get a letter from your prescriber stating you are carrying drugs and medical supplies to get you through customs and/or security screening). If you are flying somewhere warm, use cool packs. If you are flying somewhere where it will be very cold when you get outside, use insulator packs.
- If you are taking an automobile vacation, keep your drug in the same compartment as the passengers - do not put it in the trunk. Cool packs and insulated containers are also a good idea for this instance. When you stop to take a break, keep your medications with you. When you need to go in somewhere to cool off, remember your meds need to cool off too.

About The Immune Deficiency Foundation

The Immune Deficiency Foundation (IDF), founded in 1980, is the national patient organization dedicated to improving the diagnosis, treatment and quality of life of persons with primary immunodeficiency diseases through advocacy, education and research.

To learn more about IDF visit [www.primaryimmune.org](http://www.primaryimmune.org) or call 800-296-4433.