



MEDICAL REFRIGERATOR BUYING GUIDE







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Medical refrigerators are important pieces of equipment for hospitals, pharmacies, and other medical facilities. They offer a cold storage environment for vaccines and medical products sensitive to temperature.

Although on the surface a refrigerator seems to be a refrigerator, in the healthcare environment not all medical refrigerators are appropriate for all applications.

CME Corp. experts can help navigate the broad range of medical grade refrigerators and source quality medical refrigerators for a variety of specific uses in the healthcare environment.

In this article, we will discuss:

-  Important Factors to Consider When Choosing a Medical Refrigerator
-  Types of Medical Refrigerators
-  Leading Medical Refrigerator Manufacturers
-  Choosing the Right Medical Refrigerator
-  CME is Your Medical Refrigerator Partner
-  FAQs About Choosing a Medical Refrigerator

IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A MEDICAL REFRIGERATOR

Capital equipment purchases like medical grade refrigerators require careful consideration.

Specific refrigeration needs and equipment specifications will vary across facilities. However, there are several general questions that should be answered before finalizing that medical refrigerator purchase order.

What will be stored in the refrigerator? Identifying what will be stored in the refrigerator will help establish temperature requirements and required accessories. For example, some medical refrigerators can be equipped with temperature monitoring systems and will sound an alarm if the temperature falls out of the required range.

There may be circumstances that require the content of a medical refrigerator to be secured. Establishing a list of potential contents will help determine if security or alarms are needed for the refrigerator.

What size refrigerator is needed? The size of a medical refrigerator can be determined by what will be stored in the unit or simply by the space available for the refrigerator. Taking measurements of the refrigerator location before placing the order can eliminate costly modifications to the space after the purchase.

In addition to considering the capacity and footprint of the refrigerator, evaluate how to use the capacity most efficiently with shelving, compartments, or other storage options within the refrigerator.

How noisy is the refrigerator? Noisy medical refrigerators can be disruptive to both staff and patients and generally affect the overall atmosphere of a medical setting. Decibel ratings are identified in the technical specification of the refrigerator, be sure to have a look at them.

Does the medical refrigerator under evaluation comply with CDC, FDA, or TJC compliance? CDC, FDA, and TJC compliance can affect a medical facilities' ability to offer medical services and receive the maximum insurance reimbursements for those services as well as influence the reputation of the facility in the community.

Compliance with CDC and FDA regulations is not voluntary. Noncompliance can carry significant monetary fines in addition to the cost of procuring compliant refrigerators. It just makes sense to source and purchase compliant medical equipment from the start.

Is the medical refrigerator ADA compliant? Medical, and many government, facilities design workspace counters for compliance with ADA guidelines. Under-counter medical refrigerators planned for these spaces will also need to be ADA compliant to be compatible with ADA height counters.

Does the manufacturer offer annual maintenance or service contracts? Annual maintenance is important to maintain optimal function of medical refrigerators and help extend the service life of the equipment.

Additionally, even the highest quality medical refrigerators may need service from time to time. Ask the manufacturer or your medical equipment distributor about service contracts so you can prevent costly downtime associated with poorly functioning medical refrigerators.

Is the refrigerator energy efficient? In a landscape surrounded on all sides by increasing costs, purchasing energy efficient medical refrigerators can help a healthcare facility save money. Look for the energy star logo.

TYPES OF MEDICAL REFRIGERATORS

Medical grade or medical refrigerators are engineered to offer a more controlled and reliable cold storage environment for temperature sensitive medical products or biological samples.

Features and functions essential for ensuring security, efficacy, and regulatory compliance are available for these refrigerators.

Under the umbrella of medical refrigerator are several distinct types, each designed for specific storage requirements.

- **Blood Bank Refrigerators** – These refrigerators store blood and blood products (blood cells, plasma, or platelets) at very controlled temperatures for proper preservation.
- **Chromatography Refrigerator** – Chromatography refrigerators offer a stable temperature range for the storage of chromatography columns used in pharmaceuticals, chemical analysis, biochemistry, and environmental analysis.
- **General Purpose Refrigerator** – General purpose medical refrigerators used in healthcare store a wide range of medical products that require a cold environment but do not require special storage conditions or very specific temperatures.
- **Laboratory Refrigerators** – Laboratory refrigerators are used to store specimens, reagents, and laboratory samples such as enzymes, cell cultures, or blood products.
- **Pharmacy Refrigerator** – Pharmacy refrigerators provide temperature-controlled storage for medications, vaccines, and other pharmaceutical products.
- **Portable Refrigerator** – Portable medical refrigerators are used in healthcare environments that require mobile cold storage for temperature sensitive supplies such as blood products, medications, and vaccines.
- **Vaccine Refrigerator** – Vaccine refrigerators are designed to store vaccines at recommended temperatures to ensure they remain potent and effective.

LEADING MEDICAL REFRIGERATOR MANUFACTURERS

CME is the only medical equipment distributor focused solely on medical equipment, and **we have cultivated relationships with the leading medical refrigerator manufacturers.** Our equipment experts can help you source the best medical grade refrigerator for the needs of your facility, staff, and patients.

 accucold ABS American BioTech Supply COREPOINT
SCIENTIFIC Follett K2 SCIENTIFIC thermo scientific

CHOOSING THE RIGHT MEDICAL REFRIGERATOR

Medical refrigerators are an important capital equipment purchase. **Investing the time to critically identify where the unit will be used and what it will store can help guide the decision of the type of medical grade refrigerator to purchase.**

Choosing the right medical refrigerator also means choosing the right manufacturer. Ask manufacturers about documentation related to compliance with CDC, FDA, and TJC regulations as well as validation of temperature tolerances. Manufacturers of quality medical refrigerators will also frequently offer generous warranties.

 **Shop CME Corp.'s wide selection of compact and full-size medical refrigerators.**

CME IS YOUR MEDICAL REFRIGERATOR PARTNER

In addition to helping to source the best medical refrigerator for your needs and budget, CME Corp. is the only medical equipment distributor to offer logistics, direct-to-site, and biomedical services.

Our Logistics and Direct-To-Site service teams can receive, inspect, assemble (as needed), deliver, and install your medical refrigerators when it is convenient for you.

Inspecting and testing new equipment can drain the resources of a healthcare facility's biomed team and delay the installation of new medical refrigerators. Biomedical services have been at the heart of CME for over 35 years. With this expert experience **we are ready to support your biomed team to ensure your refrigerators are installed, tested, and ready for service.**

Our BMETs can also work with your facility **to establish equipment maintenance and repair plans focused on ensuring the reliability of your medical refrigerators and compliance with applicable regulations.**

FAQS ABOUT CHOOSING A MEDICAL REFRIGERATOR

What makes a refrigerator medical grade?

To keep cold sensitive products safe, medical grade refrigerators are designed to quickly recover temperature after the door has been opened. Additionally, medical grade refrigerators offer built-in alarms and temperature monitoring to help ensure the contents of the refrigerator are secure.

What is the service life of a medical fridge?

With proper annual maintenance, medical refrigerators have an average service life of eight to ten years. The actual lifespan can vary depending on the frequency of preventative maintenance, manufacturer, and use.

How often should medical refrigerators be cleaned?

Handles and exterior surfaces of medical refrigerators should be wiped down with gentle disinfectants once a day. Clean interior spills immediately with disinfectant and deep clean the unit once or twice a year (or according to facility protocol).

What is the difference between a vaccine refrigerator and a regular fridge?

Vaccine refrigerators maintain a tight temperature range and are designed to recover the temperature quickly after the door is opened. These medical refrigerators record minimum and maximum temperatures, will alarm if the temperature falls out of specification, and very often have locks.

Can medical refrigerators be customized?

Check with the manufacturer if you need to customize your medical refrigerator. Customization options may include reversing the door swing, setting a wider range of digital thermostat settings, or additional temperature monitoring features.