



Threats to Oxytocin in the Health Supply Chain

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What are they and how do we address them?

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Discussion Agenda

- 1) Context
- 2) Prevalence of substandard oxytocin
- 3) Supply chain threats to oxytocin quality
- 4) What to do!




Overview: Maternal Cause of Death and the Role of Oxytocin

- Postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) is the leading cause of maternal death¹
- WHO recommends oxytocin for the prevention and treatment of PPH^{2,3}
- Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) use oxytocin because it is:
 - Included on most essential medicines lists
 - Commonly used
 - Available in public health supply chains



The Prevalence of Substandard Oxytocin is High in Many Low- and Middle-Income Countries



According to a recent WHO literature review, over one-third of the 559 samples were substandard.⁴

Implication: one third of women would have received less oxytocin than expected. ⁴





Don't Forget About the Importance of Labelling!

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Inconsistent labelling causes confusion

Storage Conditions listed on Labels

do not freeze
2° -8° C, do not freeze
2° -8° C protect from light
2° -8° C protect from light and heat
2° -15° C protected from light
8° -20° C protected from light
8° -25° C do not freeze
below 25° C protected from light
below 25° C protected from light don't freeze
do not exceed 30° C
do not exceed 30° C, do not freeze
keep in cold, dry, dark place
keep in cold, dry, dark place, do not freeze
keep in cool and dark place
not available



Key Actions and Recommendations

Key Actions for National Medicines Regulatory Authorities



Only register quality-assured oxytocin that is labeled for storage at 2-8 °C



Work with maternal health and immunization program directors to communicate changes



Ensure that on-going post-marketing surveillance is carried out



Actions for Supply Chain Managers



Evaluate options for inclusion of oxytocin into functional cold chains, including that used for immunization



Advocate for investment in improved cold chain infrastructure



Communicate the importance of maintaining oxytocin in the cold chain throughout the supply chain



Manual for Procurement &
Supply of Quality-Assured
Maternal, Newborn and
Child Health Commodities

Buy Quality-Assured Oxytocin!

- Designed to assist procurement agencies and specialists in establishing a quality assurance system for the procurement of maternal, newborn, and child health products.
- Provides detailed product specifications for priority commodities

<http://bit.ly/MNCHprocurement>





References

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