
Nationwide Shortage of Bactec™ Blood Culture Bottles

Dear Regional Pathology Services Clients,

Due to a severe nationwide shortage of Becton Dickinson Bactec™ blood culture bottles that is expected to persist through the summer, Regional Pathology Services will adopt the following modification for body fluid cultures as per Nebraska Medicine's guidelines:

- Submit body fluids in a sterile container with order code [ANACU](#) (Anaerobic with aerobic culture and Gram stain). A full bacterial culture including the use of an enrichment broth to support and detect bacteria will be performed.
 - Body fluids include: ascites, paracentesis, pericardial, peritoneal, pleural, thoracentesis and donor cornea fluid.

Further information regarding Nebraska Medicine's plan to address the blood culture bottle shortage can be found below:

- Understanding indications for blood cultures (see [Initial Blood Culture Algorithm](#) and [Follow-up Blood Culture Algorithm](#))
- Most common reasons for unnecessary blood cultures are patients with non-infectious syndromes (e.g., gastrointestinal bleed, myocardial infarction, seizures), isolated fever or leukocytosis without infectious signs/symptoms, repeating blood cultures for persistent fever/leukocytosis while on broad spectrum antibiotics and prior negative blood cultures, and repeating blood cultures for contaminants
- Only obtain 2 sets (4 bottles) per patient, as obtaining additional sets is low yield in setting of a shortage.
- Do not obtain blood cultures from central venous catheters unless there is a suspicion that the catheter is the cause of infection. If so, DO NOT culture all lumens of a central venous catheter, or all central venous catheters. Please obtain culture from one lumen only, along with the peripheral culture.
- Blood cultures should not be repeated any earlier than 48 hours, even if the patient remains ill and febrile.
- Repeat blood cultures are unnecessary for most bacteremias, including gram negative bacteremias, as long as the patient is clinically improving. Only *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Staphylococcus lugdenesis*, and *Candida* species routinely require repeat blood cultures every 48-72 hours to demonstrate clearance (See [Follow-up Blood Culture Algorithm](#)).

If you have any questions about these changes please contact your account executive at <https://www.reglab.org/contact-us/>