

UPDATE - BLOOD CULTURE BOTTLE SHORTAGES

Notification Date: August 14th, 2024

Effective Date: August 19th, 2024

Explanation:

VUMC has transitioned to a new vendor of blood culture bottles (bioMerieux) to address the national shortage of BD bottles. On the effective date, restrictions on blood cultures to a single set will be lifted. Restrictions on repeating blood cultures within 48 hours will remain as these are generally not indicated.

Additional Recommendations:

For adult patients, two sets of blood cultures are recommended for initial assessment (three for suspected endovascular infection). Collection by peripheral venipuncture is optimal. For pediatrics, weight-based collection is recommended.

Blood cultures are **NOT** recommended in the following scenarios:

- Patient with WBC elevation and no other signs/symptoms of sepsis
- Patient with fever but no chills, leukocytosis, or other signs of sepsis
- Stable patient with prosthetic joint infection
- Stable patient with postoperative infection, planned for I&D with cultures in the OR
- Patient with repeatedly negative blood cultures in the past week in the absence of change in clinical status
- Patient with a lower urinary tract infection (e.g., cystitis, prostatitis)
- Patient with non-severe pneumonia
- Patient with non-severe cellulitis
- Daily surveillance cultures to document bloodstream infection clearance

Please review the [VUMC blood culture algorithms](#) for adult patients for more guidance on the likelihood of bacteremia in certain clinical scenarios.

Questions:

Please contact Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories Customer Service at 615-875-5227 (5-LABS) or 800-551-5227 or visit our website: [Home | Vanderbilt Medical Laboratories \(vumc.org\)](#)