

MLS Laboratory Update: Shortage of Becton Dickinson (BD) BACTEC™ Blood Culture Bottles

AUGUST 6, 2024

Purpose of this Message:

To provide awareness to MLS partners, including phlebotomists, regarding the shortage of BD BACTEC™ blood culture bottles. This MLS is in concert with the Health Advisory sent out through the MDH Health Alert Network (HAN).

Action Item:

Please provide this information to all applicable laboratorians, phlebotomists, or any other healthcare workers in your health system.

Background:

- Be aware that there is a critical shortage of Becton Dickinson (BD) BACTEC™ blood culture media bottles which is impacting healthcare facilities nationally and in Minnesota.
- Determine whether your facility or system is impacted by the shortage and if so, which mitigation measures to conserve supply have been implemented.
- Immediately implement best practices to optimize use of blood cultures per your facility or system policies and consider the likely yield of blood cultures prior to ordering.
- Prioritize the use of blood cultures for patients at high risk of poor outcomes when yield is expected to be high, for example in severe sepsis or suspected endovascular infection.
- Ensure that blood cultures are not drawn before orders are placed (e.g., as part of a “rainbow” draw or “draw and hold”).
- Emphasize the use of proper disinfection and collection technique to minimize blood culture contamination.
- Ensure that the appropriate volume of blood is collected when drawing blood for culture.

On July 10, 2024, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) reported that the U.S. is experiencing interruptions in the supply of BD BACTEC™ blood culture media bottles. The shortage is due to supplier issues and is expected to last until at least September 2024. The supply disruption has the potential to impact patient care by leading to delays in diagnosis or impacting the follow up and management of patients with certain infectious diseases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a Health Advisory on July 23, 2024, informing healthcare providers, laboratory professionals, healthcare facility administrators and state, tribal, local and territorial health departments of the shortage and recommends that

those affected should immediately assess their situations and develop mitigation strategies to conserve their supply of blood culture bottles. In Minnesota, MDH is monitoring the situation and participating in meetings of representatives from health systems who are sharing updates on their supply and best practices for conservation.

Additional Information:

- [FDA: Disruptions in Availability of BD BACTEC Blood Culture Media Bottles - Letter to Health Care Providers \(https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/letters-health-care-providers/disruptions-availability-bd-bactec-blood-culture-media-bottles-letter-health-care-providers\)](https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/letters-health-care-providers/disruptions-availability-bd-bactec-blood-culture-media-bottles-letter-health-care-providers)
- [CDC HAN: Disruptions in Availability of Becton Dickinson \(BD\) BACTEC Blood Culture Bottles \(https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2024/han00512.asp\)](https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2024/han00512.asp)
- [BD BACTEC Blood Culture Vial Supply - Latest Information on Supply Status \(https://bdbactec-update.com\)](https://bdbactec-update.com)
- [John's Hopkins: Blood Culture Stewardship \(PDF\) \(https://www.int-med.uiowa.edu/Research/EIN/JHU_BCStewardship.pdf\)](https://www.int-med.uiowa.edu/Research/EIN/JHU_BCStewardship.pdf)
- [CDC: Preventing Blood Culture Contamination: A Quality Tool for Clinical Laboratory Professionals \(https://www.cdc.gov/labquality/blood-culture-contamination-prevention.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/labquality/blood-culture-contamination-prevention.html)
- [CDC/IDSA Clinician Call: BD BACTEC Blood Culture Shortage, July 23, 2024 \(https://www.idsociety.org/multimedia/clinician-calls/cdcidsa-clinician-callbd-bactec-blood-culture-bottle-shortage/\)](https://www.idsociety.org/multimedia/clinician-calls/cdcidsa-clinician-callbd-bactec-blood-culture-bottle-shortage/)
- [Guide to Utilization of the Microbiology Laboratory for Diagnosis of Infectious Diseases: 2024 Update by the Infectious Diseases Society of America \(IDSA\) and the American Society for Microbiology \(ASM\)\[https://academic.oup.com/cid/advance-article/doi/10.1093/cid/ciae104/7619499\]](https://academic.oup.com/cid/advance-article/doi/10.1093/cid/ciae104/7619499)

Questions: Please contact: Paula Snippes Vagnone, Microbiology Unit Supervisor
paula.snippes@state.mn.us

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Minnesota Laboratory System
Minnesota Department of Health, Public Health Laboratory
601 Robert St. N, St. Paul, MN 55164-0899
651-201-5200
health.mnlabsystem@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/idlab/mls/index.html

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