



Blood Culture bottle supply issue

Please be aware that due to manufacturing problems internationally, there is currently an issue with the supply of blood culture bottles. This is completely outside our control, but it may mean that we will receive marginally less than our normal allocation of bottles for distribution for at least the next three months.

Consequently, it is important that good diagnostic stewardship is practiced with respect to taking blood cultures.

There is very little literature available on the clinical indications for taking blood cultures in the community setting. Reasonable examples might include where typhoid fever, or subacute infective endocarditis is clinically suspected, in patients who are well enough to be initially managed in the community.

When blood cultures in the community are thought to be of clinical value, it is recommended that the patient is discussed with a clinical microbiologist (through the Pathlab switchboard) or an ID physician as to the clinical reasons for taking blood cultures, and to ensure that the patient can be safely managed in the community setting.

In those situations where community blood cultures are indicated, two sets should be taken, to both increase the chances of isolating a causative organism, and to appropriately identify any potential contaminants.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions pertaining to the above.

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Please ensure all members of your institution receive a copy of this clinical update.

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