

## Bronson Laboratory - Blood Culture Bottle Shortage

Bronson system uses a system called BD BACTEC™ for our blood cultures and a **national shortage of BD blood culture bottles** is expected to last until at least September.

During this time it is important to ensure appropriate use of blood culture bottles until our supply can be replenished. Bronson is taking several steps to protect our supply and reallocate them to our highest use areas.

Providers can help manage this shortage by **being very conservative and judicious in ordering blood cultures**. In the case of suspected bacteremia the recommended blood cultures collection uses 4 blood culture bottles (2 aerobic and 2 anaerobic), each containing 10 cc of blood from an adult patient. Culturing less blood reduces the test sensitivity and culturing more blood does not improve test sensitivity. Pediatric patients require a weight-proportionate, smaller amount of blood.

One well-collected set of four bottles should detect all clinically significant bacteremia.

- Do not repeat blood cultures on subsequent days unless there is a significant clinical change in the patient's condition.
- Do not add blood cultures to the patient work-up if you do not suspect bacteremia or if the primary source of the patient's infection is already known and being treated.
- Do not order preemptive blood cultures ("draw and hold").

If we are conservative in our use of blood culture bottles, we can provide appropriate care to our patients during this period of shortage. If you have questions about blood cultures, please contact the Microbiology Department 269-341-6440.