

SUPPLY SHORTAGE: SODIUM CITRATE BLOOD COLLECTION TUBES, LIGHT BLUE TOP, COAGULATION TUBES

SITUATION:

We are experiencing a nationwide shortage of Sodium Citrate Blood Collection Tubes, used for coagulation testing, among both of the nation's two FDA registered blood collection device manufacturers. It is unclear how long this shortage will last, but it is anticipated to extend over the next few months, if not longer.

DETAILS:

Coagulation testing is highly specimen dependent. Sodium Citrate blood collection tubes are formulated to a sensitive dilution of anticoagulant to blood ratio. Tests are calibrated to this ratio. The tubes are produced such that the specimen is not exposed to plastics, which can initiate the blood clotting process during collection or transport. Clotting initiation prior to testing will provide false results.

The only alternative method of collecting coagulation studies is limited to some bedside point of care testing systems that bypass the need for Sodium Citrate collection. These direct finger stick options are extremely limited.

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES:

- Educate your acute and non-acute physicians and staff regarding this shortage.
- Stop emergency department rainbows (collecting predefined set of blood tubes) that include the Sodium Citrate, light blue top tube. These tubes should not be expended unless the test is required.
- Centralize inventory: salvage inventory on-site and from physician offices and off-site collection facilities. Monitor use and institute allocations as required.
- Use point of care prothrombin or ACT testing whenever reasonable and reflex (a confirmatory test performed after initial testing) only as required by the point of care (POC) test indications for use (IFU).
- Work with reference labs to designate minimum draw requirements for coagulation studies and communicate with collectors.
- Work within your hospital system to shift supply as necessary.

Currently there are only two FDA registered manufacturers of the Sodium Citrate blood collection tubes. HealthTrust has vetted over 20 suppliers who do not have Sodium Citrate FDA registered blood collection devices for coagulation testing.