

NEW MEXICO HEALTH ALERT NETWORK (HAN) <ALERT >

The U.S. is experiencing significant interruptions in the supply of sodium citrate blood specimen collection (light blue top) tubes because of the increase in demand and recent vendor supply challenges.

International Sodium Citrate Tube Shortage



There is currently an international shortage of sodium citrate (blue top) evacuated blood tubes required for all coagulation testing, including PT/INR, PTT, fibrinogen, heparin anti-Xa levels and d-dimer. This shortage *has already impacted* the ability to perform necessary coagulation testing across care settings in New Mexico.

We recommend that providers communicate with key leaders within their organization (laboratory, pharmacy, medicine, nursing) to develop and implement strategies to minimize use of the tubes while maintaining the quality and safety of care for their patients.

We strongly encourage conservative measures for limiting the use of sodium citrate tubes overall, with considerations to include:

For Ordering Providers:

- Evaluate clinical necessity of all coagulation testing orders to ensure only vital tests are ordered:
 - Non-urgent bleeding and clotting disorder evaluations
 - Daily/standing orders
 - Test panels with unnecessary orders
 - Pre-procedural screening for low-risk procedures (e.g. patients with no history of abnormal labs or bleeding, or patients with cirrhotic coagulopathy in which INR is not predictive of bleeding risk)
- If appropriate, in patients on anticoagulation, consider:
 - Where possible, reduce the frequency and/or extend the timing of standing PT/INR orders, especially for stable patients on long-term warfarin
 - Consider alternatives to unfractionated heparin and warfarin where appropriate
 - Consider the use of point-of-care instruments for routine coagulation testing where appropriate

For Nursing/Phlebotomy:

- Immediately stop drawing light blue top tubes
 - As part of any a "hold" request - only draw a tube when actual testing has been ordered
 - As part of any "rainbow draw" – only draw a tube when actual testing has been ordered
- Do not use waste tubes at time of phlebotomy, UNLESS drawing from butterfly or line (can use citrate tube or any non-additive tube)

For Hospital/Multi-Site Systems:

- Consider centralized inventory management with daily/weekly inventory assessment

For more information see the FDA website:

[Medical Device Shortages During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency | FDA](#)