



## Secondary Bloodstream Infection (BSI) Guide

### What is the meaning of the statement “not related to infection at another site” in relation to a positive blood culture?

The purpose of using the CDC/NHSN infection criteria is to identify and consistently categorize infections that are healthcare-associated into major and specific infection sites or types. Several of the criteria include the caveat that signs, symptoms, and/or laboratory findings may not be related to infection at another site. When assessing positive blood cultures in particular, one must be sure that there is no other CDC-defined primary site of HAI that may have seeded the bloodstream secondarily; otherwise the bloodstream infection may be misclassified as a primary BSI or erroneously associated with the use of a central line, i.e., called a CLABSI.

If the criteria for the primary infection site require a culture, then at least one organism cultured from that site must match an organism in the blood culture. NOTE: As of 1/1/11, antibiograms of the blood and site isolates do not have to match. In these instances and others where a culture of the involved site is not required for the criteria, and no such culture is collected, it is necessary to use clinical judgment regarding the likelihood of the organisms causing a secondary bloodstream infection. The following guidance may be used to help determine the relatedness of a primary site of infection to a positive blood culture:

