

Dear colleague,

There is significant unwarranted variation in blood test requesting across primary and secondary care. Demand optimisation improves patient experience (fewer venepuncture events, less time/travel for outpatient blood taking); reduces the risk of anaemia associated with repeated blood taking; and reduces the associated harms from the investigation of incidental findings. Minimal re-testing intervals (MRI) are defined as the minimum time before a test should be repeated, based on the properties of the test and the clinical situation in which it is used. There are national guidelines published by the Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH) which indicate Minimum repeat intervals (MRI) for some sample types. These guidelines can be found on the [Royal College of Pathologists website](http://RCPATH.org) (RCPATH.org).

We have reviewed some of the commonly requested biochemistry tests and as such note that some tests are being repeated more frequently than recommended. We would therefore like to request that before ordering a blood test you review previous results and only repeat when necessary. Laboratory tests ordered by secondary and primary care on your patients are available on cyberlab.

The laboratory will be updating the minimum repeat intervals (MRI) for ferritin and implementing a minimum repeat interval for NT-proBNP (see Table below). Samples received within the MRI will not be processed by the laboratory and will be rejected with comments that the test was ordered within the MRI.

Test	Minimum repeat interval
Ferritin	3 months
NT - proBNP	1 year

If there is a clear clinical indication for repeating a test within the minimum retesting interval, please contact the laboratory as soon as possible and within 4 days via the Blood Science email - bhrut.bloodscienceresults@nhs.net.

Reference

RCPATH and Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine National Minimum Retesting Intervals guidelines – Published March 2021

Kind Regards,

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Consultant Clinical Scientist, Biochemistry

Contacts:

Pathology IT helpdesk for IT issues: bhrut.pathology.helpdesk@nhs.net

Blood Science test results from GPs and clinicians: bhrut.bloodscienceresults@nhs.net

Duty Biochemist for clinical advice: bhrut.biochemistry-clinical-advice@nhs.net

