

CDC/NHSN Surveillance Definitions for Specific Types of Infections

Introduction

This chapter contains the CDC/NHSN surveillance definitions and criteria for all specific types of infections. This chapter also provides additional required criteria for the specific infection types that constitute organ space surgical site infections (Refer to Chapter 9 Appendix for specific event types available for organ space SSI attribution for each [NHSN operative procedure category](#)). **Comments and reporting instructions that follow the site-specific criteria provide further explanation and are integral to the correct application of the criteria.** Refer to [Chapter 2 \(Identifying HAIs in NHSN\)](#) for specific guidance for making HAI determinations.

Infection criteria contained in this chapter may be necessary for determining whether a positive blood specimen represents a primary bloodstream infection (BSI) or is secondary to a different type of infection (see Appendix B [Secondary Bloodstream Infection \(BSI\) Guide](#)). A BSI that is identified as secondary to another site of infection must meet one of the infection criteria detailed in this chapter or an eligible infection criterion in the Patient Safety manual and meet other requirements. Secondary BSIs are not reported as Laboratory Confirmed Bloodstream Infections in NHSN, nor can they be associated with the use of a central line.

NOTES:

- See individual protocol chapters for infection criteria for urinary tract infections ([UTI](#)), bloodstream infections ([BSI](#)), pneumonia ([PNEU](#)), ventilator-associated infections ([VAE](#)), and surgical site infections ([SSI](#)).

- For NHSN reporting purposes, the term “organism(s)” in this chapter includes viruses.

The term “physician” for the purpose of application of the NHSN HAI criteria may be interpreted to mean a surgeon, infectious disease physician, emergency physician, other physician on the case, or physician’s designee (nurse practitioner or physician’s assistant).

- Organisms belonging to the following genera cannot be used to meet **any** NHSN definition: *Blastomyces*, *Histoplasma*, *Coccidioides*, *Paracoccidioides*, *Cryptococcus* and *Pneumocystis*. These organisms are typically causes of community-associated infections and are rarely known to cause healthcare-associated infections, and therefore are excluded.
- Antibigrams of the blood and isolates from potential primary sites of infection do not have to match for purposes of determining the source of BSIs (see “matching organisms” below).
- A **matching organism** is defined as one of the following:

1. If genus and species are identified in both specimens, they must be the same.
 - a. **Example:** An intraabdominal specimen is used as an element to meet IAB definition and is growing *Enterobacter cloacae*. A blood specimen with a collection date in the IAB secondary BSI attribution period is reported to be growing *Enterobacter cloacae*. These are considered matching organisms.
 - b. **Example:** An intraabdominal specimen is used as an element to meet IAB definition and is growing *Enterococcus faecium*. A blood specimen with a collection date in the IAB secondary BSI attribution period is reported to be growing *Enterococcus faecalis*. These are **NOT** considered matching organisms as the species are different.
2. If the organism is less definitively identified in one specimen than the other, the lesser identified organism must be identified to at least the genus level and at that level, the organisms must be the same.
 - a. **Example:** A surgical wound growing *Pseudomonas* species is used to meet deep incisional SSI criteria and a blood specimen growing *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* is collected in the SSI secondary BSI attribution period. The organisms are considered matching at the genus level and therefore the BSI is secondary to the SSI.
 - b. **Example:** PCR identifying *Enterococcus faecalis* in CSF meets the MEN definition. A subsequent blood culture collected in the MEN secondary BSI attribution period is identified as *Enterococcus* species. The organisms are considered to be matching and therefore the BSI is secondary to MEN.
3. There are two exceptions to the definition:
 - a. Infections **meeting LCBI 2** criteria with Staphylococcus or Streptococcus:

Example-(Staphylococcus): A patient has a fever and a previous chest tube site is reddened, swollen and a culture is collected from the soft tissue. The chest tube site culture is reported positive for *Staphylococcus* species. SST/ST definition is met. The next day 2 blood culture sets are collected. The blood cultures are both positive for coagulase-negative *Staphylococcus*. The organisms are NOT considered matching, because *Staphylococcus* species could represent a coagulase-negative or a coagulase-positive *Staphylococcus*. Therefore, the BSI would not be considered secondary to SST/ST.

Example-(Streptococcus): A patient has a fever and a previous chest tube is reddened swollen and a culture is collected from the soft tissue. The chest tube site culture is reported positive for Streptococcus species. SST/ST definition is met. The next day, 2 blood culture sets are collected. The blood cultures are both positive for *Streptococcus*, viridans group. The organisms are NOT considered matching, because Streptococcus species could represent a *Streptococcus*, viridans group or non- *Streptococcus*, viridans group. Therefore, the BSI would not be considered secondary to SST/ST.

- b. In cases where an organism is identified only as “yeast” or “yeast not otherwise specified”, the organism can be considered a match to other yeasts, when collected during the required timeframe, whether more fully identified or not.

Example: A culture of tissue from the ulcer margin of a decubiti reported positive for yeast is used as an element to meet DECU definition. A blood specimen collected in the secondary BSI attribution period of the DECU is reported as *Candida albicans*. In this example, the two organisms are considered matching organisms as the organisms are complementary (specifically, *Candida* is a type of yeast) and because yeasts isolated from non-sterile sites are commonly not identified to the genus or genus and species level.

NOTE: This exception is limited to yeast. It does not apply to identification of organisms as Gram positive cocci, Gram negative rods, etc.

Example: A culture of tissue from ulcer margin of a decubiti reported positive for Gram negative rod is used as an element to meet DECU definition. A blood specimen collected in the secondary BSI attribution period of the DECU is reported as *E. coli*. In this example the two organisms are NOT considered matching organisms.

Examples for Determining Matching Organisms (correct selection for NHSN reporting is bolded)

Identification # 1	Identification # 2	Matching Organisms Yes or No
<i>Bacteroides vulgatus</i>	<i>Bacteroides fragilis</i>	No
<i>Enterococcus faecalis</i>	<i>Enterococcus</i>	Yes
<i>Enterococcus faecium</i>	<i>Enterococcus faecalis</i>	No
<i>Pseudomonas</i> species	<i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i>	Yes
Coagulase-negative Staphylococcus	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	No
<i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i>	Coagulase-negative Staphylococcus	Yes
<i>Staphylococcus</i> species	Coagulase-positive Staphylococcus	No
<i>Streptococcus</i> species	<i>Streptococcus</i> Viridans Group	No
Yeast	<i>Candida</i> species	Yes

Infection criteria used for NHSN healthcare-associated infection surveillance have been grouped into 14 major types with some further categorized into specific infection types. For example, there are three specific types of central nervous system infections (intracranial infection, meningitis or ventriculitis, and spinal abscess/infection) that are grouped under the major type of CNS—Central Nervous System.

Infection criteria are listed in alphabetical order, according to their (abbreviated) major codes, and the criteria for each of the specific types of infection follow it.

Table of Contents

BJ – Bone and Joint Infection	6
BONE – Osteomyelitis	6
DISC – Disc space infection	6
JNT – Joint or bursa infection (not for use as Organ/Space SSI after HPRO or KPRO procedures)	7
PJI – Periprosthetic Joint Infection (for use as Organ/Space SSI following HPRO and KPRO only)	7
CNS – Central Nervous System	8
IC – Intracranial infection (brain abscess, subdural or epidural infection, encephalitis)	8
MEN – Meningitis or ventriculitis	9
SA – Spinal abscess/infection (spinal abscess, spinal subdural or epidural infection)	10
CVS – Cardiovascular System Infection	11
CARD – Myocarditis or pericarditis	11
ENDO – Endocarditis	12
MED – Mediastinitis	15
VASC – Arterial or venous infection excluding infections involving vascular access devices with organisms identified in the blood	15
EENT – Eye, Ear, Nose, Throat, or Mouth Infection	16
CONJ – Conjunctivitis	16
EAR – Ear, mastoid infection	17
EYE – Eye infection, other than conjunctivitis	18
ORAL – Oral cavity infection (mouth, tongue, or gums)	18
SINU – Sinusitis	19
UR – Upper respiratory tract infection, pharyngitis, laryngitis, epiglottitis	19
GI – Gastrointestinal System Infection	20
CDI – <i>Clostridioides difficile</i> Infection	20
GE – Gastroenteritis (excluding <i>C. difficile</i> infections)	20
GIT – Gastrointestinal tract infection (esophagus, stomach, small and large bowel, and rectum) excluding gastroenteritis, appendicitis, and <i>C. difficile</i> infection	21
IAB – Intraabdominal infection, not specified elsewhere, including gallbladder, bile ducts, liver (excluding viral hepatitis), spleen, pancreas, peritoneum, retroperitoneal, subphrenic or subdiaphragmatic space, or other intraabdominal tissue or area not specified elsewhere	22
NEC – Necrotizing enterocolitis	23
LRI – Lower Respiratory System Infection, Other Than Pneumonia	24
LUNG – Other infection of the lower respiratory tract and pleural cavity	24

REPR – Reproductive Tract Infection	24
EMET – Endometritis	24
EPIS – Episiotomy infection	25
OREP –Deep pelvic tissue infection or other infection of the male or female reproductive tract (for example, epididymis, testes, prostate, vagina, ovaries, uterus) including chorioamnionitis, but excluding vaginitis, endometritis or vaginal cuff infections	25
VCUF – Vaginal cuff infection	25
SST-Skin and Soft Tissue Infection	26
BRST – Breast infection or mastitis	26
BURN – Burn infection	26
CIRC– Newborn circumcision infection	27
DECU – Decubitus ulcer infection (also known as pressure injury infection), including both superficial and deep infections	27
SKIN – Skin infection (skin and /or subcutaneous) excluding decubitus ulcers, burns, and infections at vascular access sites	27
ST – Soft tissue infection (muscle and/or fascia [for example, necrotizing fasciitis, infectious gangrene, necrotizing cellulitis, infectious myositis, lymphadenitis, lymphangitis, or parotitis]) excluding decubitus ulcers, burns, and infections at vascular access sites	28
UMB – Omphalitis	29
USI – Urinary System Infection (kidney, ureter, bladder, urethra, or perinephric space excluding UTI [see Chapter 7].)	29

BJ-BONE AND JOINT INFECTION

BONE-Osteomyelitis

Osteomyelitis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from bone by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has evidence of osteomyelitis on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has at least **two** of the following localized signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), swelling*, pain or tenderness*, heat*, or drainage*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) identified from blood by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

AND

imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, x-ray, CT scan, MRI, radiolabel scan [gallium, technetium, etc.]), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for osteomyelitis.

- b. imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, x-ray, CT scan, MRI, radiolabel scan [gallium, technetium, etc.]), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for osteomyelitis.

* *With no other recognized cause*

Reporting Instructions

- Report mediastinitis following cardiac surgery that is accompanied by osteomyelitis as SSI-MED rather than SSI-BONE.
- If a patient meets both organ space JNT and BONE report the SSI as BONE.
- After an HPRO or a KPRO if a patient meets both organ space PJI and BONE report the SSI as BONE.

DISC-Disc space infection

Vertebral disc space infection must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from vertebral disc space by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method, which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has evidence of vertebral disc space infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has at least **one** of the following: fever (>38.0°C) or pain* at the involved vertebral disc space

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) identified from blood by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST)

AND

imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, x-ray, CT scan, MRI, radiolabel scan [gallium, technetium, etc.]), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for vertebral disc space infection.

- b. imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, x-ray, CT scan, MRI, radiolabel scan [gallium, technetium, etc.]), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for vertebral disc space infection.

** With no other recognized cause*

JNT-Joint or bursa infection (not for use as Organ/Space SSI after HPRO or KPRO procedures)

Joint or bursa infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from joint fluid or synovial biopsy by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has evidence of joint or bursa infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has a suspected joint infection and at least two of the following signs or symptoms: swelling*, pain* or tenderness*, heat*, evidence of effusion*, or limitation of motion*.

And at least one of the following:

- a. elevated joint fluid white blood cell count (per reporting laboratory's reference range) OR positive leukocyte esterase test strip of joint fluid.
- b. organism(s) and white blood cells seen on Gram stain of joint fluid.
- c. organism(s) identified from blood by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- d. imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, x-ray, CT scan, MRI, radiolabel scan [gallium, technetium, etc.]), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for joint or bursa infection.

** With no other recognized cause*

Reporting Instruction

- If a patient meets both organ space JNT and BONE report the SSI as BONE.

PJI – Periprosthetic Joint Infection (for use as Organ/Space SSI following HPRO and KPRO only)

Joint or bursa infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. **Two** positive periprosthetic specimens (*tissue or fluid*) with at least one matching organism, identified by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. A sinus tract* communicating with the joint identified on gross anatomic exam.
3. Having **three** of the following minor criteria:
 - a. elevated serum C-reactive protein (CRP; >100 mg/L) **and** erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR; >30 mm/hr.)
 - b. elevated synovial fluid white blood cell (WBC; >10,000 cells/ μ L) count **OR** “++” (*or greater*) change on leukocyte esterase test strip of synovial fluid.
 - c. elevated synovial fluid polymorphonuclear neutrophil percentage (PMN% >90%)
 - d. positive histological analysis of periprosthetic tissue (>5 neutrophils (PMNs) per high power field).
 - e. organism(s) identified from a single positive periprosthetic specimen (*tissue or fluid*) by culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

* A sinus tract is defined as a narrow opening or passageway that can extend in any direction through soft tissue and results in dead space with potential for abscess formation.

Comments:

- A matching organism is defined on page 17-1. Organism(s) identified from hip or knee hardware can be used to meet criterion 1.
- The NHSN definition of PJI is closely adapted from the Musculoskeletal Infection Society’s (MSIS’s) definition of PJI (*Proceedings of the International Consensus Meeting on Periprosthetic Joint Infection, 2013*).
- The standard laboratory cutoff values in criteria 3a - 3d are provided by NHSN for HPRO and KPRO SSI surveillance purposes only. The NHSN laboratory cutoffs are not intended to guide clinicians in the actual clinical diagnosis and management of acute or chronic PJI. Clinicians should refer to the MSIS consensus definition for clinical use.

Reporting Instruction

- After an HPRO or a KPRO if a patient meets both organ space PJI and BONE report the SSI as BONE.

CNS-CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM INFECTION

IC-Intracranial infection (brain abscess, subdural or epidural infection, encephalitis)

Intracranial infection must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from brain tissue or dura by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has an abscess or evidence of intracranial infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.

3. Patient has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: headache*, dizziness*, fever (>38.0°C), localizing neurologic signs*, changing level of consciousness*, or confusion*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) seen on microscopic examination of brain or abscess tissue obtained by needle aspiration or during an invasive procedure or autopsy.
 - b. imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, ultrasound, CT scan, MRI, radionuclide brain scan, or arteriogram), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for intracranial infection.
 - c. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.
4. Patient ≤1 year of age has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), hypothermia (<36.0°C), apnea*, bradycardia*, localizing neurologic signs*, or changing level of consciousness*, for example, irritability, poor feeding, lethargy

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) seen on microscopic examination of brain or abscess tissue obtained by needle aspiration or during an invasive procedure or autopsy.
- b. imaging test evidence definitive for infection, (for example, ultrasound, CT scan, MRI, radionuclide brain scan, or arteriogram), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for intracranial infection.
- c. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.

* With no other recognized cause

Reporting Instructions

- Report as MEN if meningitis (MEN) and encephalitis (IC) are present together.
- Report as IC if meningitis (MEN) and a brain abscess (IC) are present together after operation.
- Report as SA if meningitis (MEN) and spinal abscess/infection (SA) are present together.

MEN-Meningitis or ventriculitis

Meningitis or ventriculitis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has suspected meningitis or ventriculitis and at least **two** of the following:
 - i. fever (>38.0°C) or headache (Note: Elements of “i” alone may not be used to meet the two required elements)
 - ii. meningeal sign(s)*
 - iii. cranial nerve sign(s)*

And at least one of the following:

- a. increased white cells, elevated protein, and decreased glucose in CSF (per reporting laboratory’s reference range).
- b. organism(s) seen on Gram stain of CSF.

- c. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
 - d. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.
3. Patient ≤ 1 year of age has suspected meningitis or ventriculitis and at least **two** of the following elements:
- i. fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$), hypothermia ($<36.0^{\circ}\text{C}$), apnea*, bradycardia*, or irritability* (Note: Elements of “i” alone may not be used to meet the required two elements).
 - ii. meningeal signs*
 - iii. cranial nerve signs*

And at least one of the following:

- a. increased white cells, elevated protein, and decreased glucose in CSF (per reporting laboratory’s reference range).
- b. organism(s) seen on Gram stain of CSF.
- c. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- d. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.

* With no other recognized cause

Reporting Instructions

- Report CSF shunt infection as SSI-MEN if it occurs within 90 days of placement; if later or after manipulation/access, it is considered CNS-MEN but is not reportable as an SSI.
- Report as MEN if meningitis (MEN) and encephalitis (IC) are present together.
- Report as IC if meningitis (MEN) and a brain abscess (IC) are present together after operation.
- Report as SA if meningitis (MEN) and spinal abscess/infection (SA) are present together.

SA-Spinal abscess/infection (spinal abscess, spinal subdural or epidural infection)

Spinal abscess/infection must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from abscess or from purulent material found in the spinal epidural or subdural space by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has an abscess or other evidence of spinal infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has at least **one** of the following localized signs or symptoms: fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$), back pain* or tenderness*, radiculitis*, paraparesis*, or paraplegia*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST)

AND

imaging test evidence definitive for spinal abscess/infection, which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for spinal abscess/infection.

- b. imaging test evidence definitive for a spinal abscess/infection (for example, myelography, ultrasound, CT scan, MRI, or other scans [gallium, technetium, etc.]) which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for spinal abscess/infection.

** With no other recognized cause*

Reporting Instruction

- Report as SA if meningitis (MEN) and spinal abscess/infection (SA) are present together after operation.

CVS-CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM INFECTION**CARD-Myocarditis or pericarditis**

Myocarditis or pericarditis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from pericardial tissue or fluid by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), chest pain*, paradoxical pulse*, or increased heart size*

And at least one of the following:

- a. abnormal EKG consistent with myocarditis or pericarditis.
 - b. evidence of myocarditis or pericarditis on histologic exam of heart tissue.
 - c. 4-fold rise in paired sera from IgG antibody titer.
 - d. pericardial effusion identified by echocardiogram, CT scan, MRI, or angiography.
3. Patient ≤1 year of age has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), hypothermia (<36.0°C), apnea*, bradycardia*, paradoxical pulse*, or increased heart size*

And at least one of the following:

- a. abnormal EKG consistent with myocarditis or pericarditis.
- b. histologic examination of heart tissue shows evidence of myocarditis or pericarditis.
- c. 4-fold rise in paired sera from IgG antibody titer.
- d. pericardial effusion identified by echocardiogram, CT scan, MRI, or angiography.

** With no other recognized cause*

ENDO-Endocarditis

When meeting the Endocarditis (ENDO) definition:

- The ENDO Infection Window Period is defined as the 21 days during which all site-specific infection criteria must be met. It includes the date the first positive diagnostic test that is used as an element of the ENDO criterion was obtained, the 10 calendar days before and the 10 calendar days after. The Infection Window Period is lengthened for this event to accommodate the extended diagnostic timeframe that is frequently required to reach a clinical determination of endocarditis.
- The RIT for Endocarditis (ENDO) is extended to include the remainder of the patient's current admission.
- When meeting the Endocarditis (ENDO) definition, the secondary BSI attribution period includes the 21-day infection window period **and all subsequent days of the patient's current admission.**
 - As a result of this lengthy secondary BSI attribution period, secondary BSI pathogen assignment for ENDO, is limited to organism(s) identified in blood specimen that match the organism(s) used to meet the ENDO definition.

*Example: If the ENDO definition was met using a site-specific specimen (for example, cardiac vegetation) or using a blood specimen with *S. aureus* as the identified organism, if a blood specimen collected during the ENDO secondary BSI attribution period is positive for *S. aureus* and *E. coli*, while the *S. aureus* can be assigned to the ENDO event, it cannot be assumed the *E. coli* can be assigned as a secondary BSI pathogen. The blood organism (*E. coli*) does not match the organism (*S. aureus*) used to meet the ENDO definition. If the blood specimen can be used to meet an ENDO definition criterion both organisms can be assigned. Otherwise, the *E. coli* will need to be investigated as a separate BSI and identified as a secondary BSI to another site-specific infection or determined to be a primary BSI.*

Endocarditis of a natural or prosthetic heart valve must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Organism(s) identified from cardiac vegetation*[†], embolized vegetation (for example, solid-organ abscess) documented as originating from cardiac source, or intracardiac abscess by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Organism(s) seen on histopathologic examination of cardiac vegetation*, embolized vegetation, for example, solid organ abscess, documented as originating from cardiac source, or intracardiac abscess.
3. Endocarditis seen on histopathologic examination of cardiac vegetation* or intracardiac abscess.
4. At least **one** of the following echocardiographic evidence of endocarditis*[‡]:
 - i. vegetation on cardiac valve or supporting structures
 - ii. intracardiac abscess
 - iii. new partial dehiscence of prosthetic valve

And at least one of the following:

- a. typical infectious endocarditis organism(s) (specifically, Viridans group streptococci, *Streptococcus bovis*, *Haemophilus* spp., *Actinobacillus actinomycetemcomitans*, *Cardiobacterium hominis*, *Eikenella corrodens*, *Kingella* spp., *Staphylococcus aureus*,

Enterococcus spp.) identified from ≥ 2 matching blood collections drawn on separate occasions with no more than 1 calendar day between specimens by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

- b. *Coxiella burnetii* identified by anti-phase I IgG antibody titer $>1:800$ or identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

5. At least **three** of the following (**Note: Meaning one element from i, ii, iii, or iv and only one condition within each element can be used.**)

- i. prior endocarditis, prosthetic valve, uncorrected congenital heart disease, history of rheumatic heart disease, hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy, or known IV drug use.[§]
- ii. fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$)
- iii. vascular phenomena: major arterial emboli (specifically, embolic stroke, renal infarct, splenic infarct or abscess, digital ischemic/gangrene from embolic source), septic pulmonary infarcts, mycotic aneurysm (documented by imaging, seen in surgery, or described in gross pathological specimen), intracranial hemorrhage, conjunctival hemorrhages, or Janeway's lesions documented.
- iv. immunologic phenomena: glomerulonephritis (documented in chart, or white cell or red blood cell casts on urinalysis), Osler's nodes, Roth's spots, or positive rheumatoid factor.

And at least one of the following:

- a. typical infectious endocarditis organism(s) (specifically, Viridans group streptococci, *Streptococcus bovis*, *Haemophilus* spp., *Actinobacillus actinomycetemcomitans*, *Cardiobacterium hominis*, *Eikenella corrodens*, *Kingella* spp., *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus* spp.) identified from ≥ 2 matching blood collections drawn on separate occasions with no more than 1 calendar day between specimens by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- b. *Coxiella burnetii* identified by anti-phase I IgG antibody titer $>1:800$ or identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

6. At least **one** of the following*‡:

- i. vegetation on cardiac valve or supporting structures seen on echocardiogram
- ii. intracardiac abscess seen on echocardiogram
- iii. new partial dehiscence of prosthetic valve seen on echocardiogram

And at least one condition from three of the following elements:

- a. prior endocarditis, prosthetic valve, uncorrected congenital heart disease, history of rheumatic heart disease, hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy, or known IV drug use.[§]
- b. fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$)
- c. vascular phenomena: major arterial emboli (specifically, embolic stroke, renal infarct, splenic infarct or abscess, digital ischemic/gangrene from embolic source), septic pulmonary infarcts, mycotic aneurysm (documented by imaging, seen in surgery, or described in gross pathological specimen), intracranial hemorrhage, conjunctival hemorrhages, or Janeway's lesions documented.
- d. immunologic phenomena: glomerulonephritis (documented in chart, or white cell or red blood cell casts on urinalysis), Osler's nodes, Roth's spots, or positive rheumatoid factor.
- e. identification of organism(s) from the blood by at least **one** of the following methods:

- recognized pathogen(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- same common commensal organism(s) identified from ≥ 2 blood collections drawn on separate occasions on the same or consecutive days by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

7. One condition from each of the following elements (a, b, c, d, and e):

- prior endocarditis, prosthetic valve, uncorrected congenital heart disease, history of rheumatic heart disease, hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy, or known IV drug use.⁵
- fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$)
- vascular phenomena: major arterial emboli (specifically, embolic stroke, renal infarct, splenic infarct or abscess, digital ischemic/gangrene from embolic source), septic pulmonary infarcts, mycotic aneurysm (documented by imaging, seen in surgery, or described in gross pathological specimen), intracranial hemorrhage, conjunctival hemorrhages, or Janeway's lesions documented.
- immunologic phenomena: glomerulonephritis (documented in chart, or white cell or red blood cell casts on urinalysis), Osler's nodes, Roth's spots, or positive rheumatoid factor.
- identification of organism(s) from the blood by at least **one** of the following methods:
 - recognized pathogen(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
 - same common commensal organism(s) identified from ≥ 2 blood collections drawn on separate occasions on the same or consecutive days by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

Reporting Instructions

* Cardiac vegetation can be found on a cardiac valve, pacemaker/defibrillator lead or ventricular assist device (VAD) components within the heart.

† The following can also meet the definition of a "cardiac vegetation":

- Positive culture from a cardiac valve, pacemaker/defibrillator lead or ventricular assist device (VAD) components within the heart.

‡ Which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation (specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for endocarditis).

§ Elements of 5i, 6a and 7a documented during the current admission:

- May be documented outside of the ENDO infection window period or SSI surveillance period.
- Should not be used to set the ENDO date of event.

MED-Mediastinitis

Mediastinitis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from mediastinal tissue or fluid by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has evidence of mediastinitis on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), chest pain*, or sternal instability. *

And at least one of the following:

- a. purulent drainage from mediastinal area
 - b. mediastinal widening on imaging test
4. Patient ≤1 year of age has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), hypothermia (<36.0°C), apnea*, bradycardia*, or sternal instability*

And at least one of the following:

- a. purulent drainage from mediastinal area.
- b. mediastinal widening on imaging test.

* *With no other recognized cause*

Comment:

- The mediastinal space is the area under the sternum and in front of the vertebral column, containing the heart and its large vessels, trachea, esophagus, thymus, lymph nodes, and other structures and tissues. It is divided into anterior, middle, posterior, and superior regions.

Reporting Instruction

- Report mediastinitis (MED) following cardiac surgery that is accompanied by osteomyelitis as SSI-MED rather than SSI-BONE.

VASC-Arterial or venous infection excluding infections involving vascular access devices with organisms identified in the blood

Note: If a patient meets the criteria for an LCBI in the presence of an arterial or vascular infection (VASC) report as an LCBI not as a VASC. **

Arterial or venous infection must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) from extracted arteries or veins identified by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has evidence of arterial or venous infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), pain*, erythema*, or heat at involved vascular site*

AND

- More than 15 colonies cultured from intravascular cannula tip using semi-quantitative culture method.
4. Patient has purulent drainage at involved vascular site.
 5. Patient ≤ 1 year of age has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms: fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$), hypothermia ($<36.0^{\circ}\text{C}$), apnea*, bradycardia*, lethargy*, pain*, erythema*, or heat at involved vascular site*

AND

More than 15 colonies cultured from intravascular cannula tip using semi-quantitative culture method.

* With no other recognized cause

Reporting Instructions

- Report infections of an arteriovenous graft, shunt, fistula or intravascular cannulation site without organism(s) identified from blood as CVS-VASC.
- Report Organ Space VASC infections as an SSI and not an LCBI when you have an SSI with secondary BSI.
- Report intravascular infections with organism(s) identified from the blood and meeting the LCBI criteria, as BSI-LCBI.

** Occasionally, a patient with both an eligible central line and another vascular access device will have pus at the other access site. If there is pus at the site of one of the following vascular access devices and a specimen collected from that site has at least one matching organism to an organism identified in the blood during the BSI IWP, report such events marking the “pus at the vascular access site” field as “Yes.” Vascular access devices included in this exception are limited to:

- Arterial catheters unless in the pulmonary artery, aorta or umbilical artery
- Arteriovenous fistulae
- Arteriovenous grafts
- Atrial catheters (also known as transthoracic intra-cardiac catheters, those catheters inserted directly into the right or left atrium via the heart wall)
- Hemodialysis reliable outflow (HERO) dialysis catheters
- Intra-aortic balloon pump (IABP) devices
- Non-accessed CL (those neither inserted nor used during current admission)
- Peripheral IV or Midlines

EENT-EYE, ear, nose, throat, or mouth infection**CONJ-Conjunctivitis**

1. Patient has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms: pain, erythema, or swelling of conjunctiva or around eye

And at least one of the following:

- a. Patient has organism(s) identified from conjunctival scraping or purulent exudate obtained from the conjunctiva or contiguous tissues, (for example, eyelid, cornea, meibomian glands, or lacrimal glands) by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is

- performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- b. WBCs and organism(s) seen on Gram stain of exudate.
 - c. purulent exudate.
 - d. multinucleated giant cells seen on microscopic examination of conjunctival exudate or scrapings.
 - e. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.

Reporting Instructions

- Report other infections of the eye as EYE.
- Do not report chemical conjunctivitis, caused by silver nitrate (AgNO₃), as a healthcare-associated infection.
- Do not report a separate case of conjunctivitis (CONJ) that occurs as a part of another viral illness (for example, UR).

EAR-Ear, mastoid infection

Ear and mastoid infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

Otitis externa must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from purulent drainage from ear canal by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has at least **one** of the following: fever (>38.0°C), pain *, or erythema*
AND
organism(s) seen on Gram stain of purulent drainage from ear canal.

Otitis media must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

3. Patient has organism(s) identified from fluid from middle ear obtained during an invasive procedure (for example, tympanocentesis) by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
4. Patient has at least **two** of the following: fever (>38.0°C), pain *, inflammation*, retraction* or decreased mobility of eardrum*, or fluid behind eardrum*.

Otitis interna (labyrinthitis) must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

5. Patient has organism(s) identified from fluid from inner ear obtained during an invasive procedure by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
6. Patient has a physician or physician designee diagnosis of inner ear infection.

Mastoiditis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

7. Patient has organism(s) identified from fluid or tissue from mastoid by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
8. Patient has at least **two** of the following: fever (>38.0°C), pain or tenderness*, post auricular swelling*, erythema*, headache*, or facial paralysis*.

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) seen on Gram stain of fluid or tissue from mastoid.
- b. imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, CT scan), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for mastoid infection.

** With no other recognized cause*

EYE-Eye infection, other than conjunctivitis

An infection of the eye, other than conjunctivitis, must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from anterior or posterior chamber or vitreous fluid by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has at least two of the following signs or symptoms with no other recognized cause: eye pain, visual disturbance, or hypopyon

AND

Physician or physician designee initiates antimicrobial therapy within two days of onset or worsening of symptoms.

ORAL-Oral cavity infection (mouth, tongue, or gums)

Oral cavity infections must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from abscess or purulent material from tissues of oral cavity by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has an abscess or other evidence of oral cavity infection found on invasive procedure, gross anatomic exam, or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has at least one of the following signs or symptoms with no other recognized cause: ulceration, raised white patches on inflamed mucosa, or plaques on oral mucosa.

And at least one of the following:

- a. virus identified from mucosal scrapings or exudate by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST)
- b. multinucleated giant cells seen on microscopic examination of mucosal scrapings or exudate
- c. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.
- d. fungal elements seen on microscopic exam of mucosal scrapings or exudate (for example, Gram stain, KOH).
- e. Physician or physician designee initiates antimicrobial therapy within 2 days of onset or worsening of symptoms.

Reporting Instruction

- Report healthcare-associated primary herpes simplex infections of the oral cavity as ORAL; recurrent herpes infections are not healthcare associated.

SINU-Sinusitis

Sinusitis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from fluid or tissue from the sinus cavity obtained during an invasive procedure by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), pain or tenderness over the involved sinus*, headache*, purulent exudate*, or nasal obstruction*

AND

Imaging test evidence of sinusitis (for example, x-ray, CT scan).

* *With no other recognized cause*

UR-Upper respiratory tract infection, pharyngitis, laryngitis, epiglottitis

Upper respiratory tract infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), erythema of pharynx*, sore throat*, cough*, hoarseness*, tachypnea*, nasal discharge*, or purulent exudate in throat*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) identified from upper respiratory site [specifically: larynx, nasopharynx, pharynx, and epiglottis] by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST). Note: excludes sputum and tracheal aspirate because these are not upper respiratory specimens.
 - b. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.
 - c. Physician or physician designee diagnosis of an upper respiratory infection.
2. Patient has an abscess on gross anatomical or histopathologic exam or imaging test.
 3. Patient ≤1 year of age has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), hypothermia (<36.0°C), apnea*, bradycardia*, nasal discharge*, or purulent exudate in throat*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) identified from upper respiratory site [specifically larynx, nasopharynx, pharynx, and epiglottis] by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST). Note: excludes sputum and tracheal aspirate because they are not upper respiratory specimens.
- b. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.
- c. physician or physician designee diagnosis of an upper respiratory infection.

* *With no other recognized cause*

GI-GASTROINTESTINAL SYSTEM INFECTION

CDI- *Clostridioides difficile* Infection

Clostridioides difficile infection must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Positive test for toxin-producing *C. difficile* on an unformed stool specimen (conforms to the shape of the container).
2. Patient has evidence of pseudomembranous colitis on gross anatomic (includes endoscopic exams) or histopathologic exam.

Note:

- When using a multi-testing methodology for CD identification, the result of the last test finding, which is placed onto the patient medical record, will determine if GI-CDI criterion 1 is met.

Comments:

- The date of event for CDI criterion 1, will always be the specimen collection date of the unformed stool, specifically, not the date of onset of unformed stool.
- A positive test for toxin-producing *C. difficile* and an unformed stool specimen is a single element, and both are required to meet criterion.

Reporting Instructions

- Report the CDI and the GE or GIT if additional enteric organism(s) are identified and criteria are met for GE or GIT.
- Report each new GI-CDI according to the Repeat Infection Timeframe (RIT) rule for HAIs (see NHSN HAI definitions in [Chapter 2](#) for further details and guidance).
- CDI laboratory-identified event (LabID Event) categorizations (for example, recurrent CDI assay, incident CDI assay, healthcare facility-onset, community-onset, community-onset healthcare facility-associated) do **not** apply to HAIs; including *C. difficile* associated gastrointestinal infections (GI-CDI).

GE-Gastroenteritis (excluding *C. difficile* infections)

Gastroenteritis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has an acute onset of diarrhea (liquid stools for > 12 hours) and no likely noninfectious cause (for example, diagnostic tests, therapeutic regimen other than antimicrobial agents, acute exacerbation of a chronic condition, or psychological stress information).
2. Patient has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: nausea*, vomiting*, abdominal pain*, fever (>38.0°C), or headache*

And at least **one** of the following:

- a. an enteric pathogen is identified from stool or rectal swab by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- b. an enteric pathogen is detected by microscopy on stool
- c. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.

* With no other recognized cause

Comment:

- The reference to “enteric pathogens” describes pathogens that are not considered to be normal flora of the intestinal tract. Enteric pathogens identified on culture or with the use of other diagnostic laboratory tests include *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *Yersinia*, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria*, *Vibrio*, *Enteropathogenic* or *Enterohemorrhagic E. coli* or *Giardia*.

Reporting Instruction

- Report only GI-GIT using the event date as that of GI-GIT if the patient meets criteria for both GI-GE and GI-GIT.

GIT-Gastrointestinal tract infection (esophagus, stomach, small and large bowel, and rectum) excluding gastroenteritis, appendicitis, and *C. difficile* infection

Gastrointestinal tract infections, excluding, gastroenteritis and appendicitis, must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has one of the following:

- an abscess or other evidence of gastrointestinal tract infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
- abscess or other evidence of gastrointestinal tract infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam (See Reporting Instructions)

AND

organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method, which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST). The organism(s) identified in the blood must contain at least one MBI organism on the NHSN Organism List that can be accessed via the [spreadsheet](#) or the new [NHSN Terminology Browser](#).

2. Patient has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms compatible with infection of the organ or tissue involved: fever (>38.0°C), nausea*, vomiting*, pain* or tenderness*, odynophagia*, or dysphagia*

And at least one of the following:

- organism(s) identified from drainage or tissue obtained during an invasive procedure or from drainage from an aseptically-placed drain by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- organism(s) seen on Gram stain or fungal elements seen on KOH stain or multinucleated giant cells seen on microscopic examination of drainage or tissue obtained during an invasive procedure or from drainage from an aseptically-placed drain.
- organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST). The organism(s) identified in the blood must

contain at least one MBI organism on the NHSN Organism List that can be accessed via the [spreadsheet](#) or the new [NHSN Terminology Browser](#).

AND

imaging test evidence definitive for gastrointestinal infection (for example, endoscopic exam, MRI, CT scan), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for gastrointestinal tract infection.

- d. imaging test evidence definitive for gastrointestinal infection (for example, endoscopic exam, MRI, CT scan), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for gastrointestinal tract infection.

** With no other recognized cause*

Reporting Instructions

- Report only GI-GIT using the event date as that of GI-GIT if the patient meets criteria for both GI-GE and GI-GIT.
- For GIT 1b: If an organism is identified on histopathologic exam, the blood specimen must contain a matching organism.
- In patients > 1 year, pneumatosis intestinalis is considered an equivocal imaging finding for a gastrointestinal tract infection (GIT). For patients ≤ 1 year, please review the NEC criteria.

IAB-Intraabdominal infection, not specified elsewhere, including gallbladder, bile ducts, liver (excluding viral hepatitis), spleen, pancreas, peritoneum, retroperitoneal, subphrenic or subdiaphragmatic space, or other intraabdominal tissue or area not specified elsewhere

Intraabdominal infections must meet at least ***one*** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from an abscess or from purulent material from intraabdominal space by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has at least one of the following:
 - a. abscess or other evidence of intraabdominal infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
 - b. abscess or other evidence of intraabdominal infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam
(See Reporting Instructions)

AND

organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method, which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST). The organism(s) identified in the blood must contain at least one MBI organism on the NHSN Organism List that can be accessed via the [spreadsheet](#) or the new [NHSN Terminology Browser](#).

3. Patient has at least **two** of the following: fever (>38.0°C), hypotension, nausea*, vomiting*, abdominal pain or tenderness*, elevated transaminase level(s)*, or jaundice*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) seen on Gram stain and/or identified from intraabdominal fluid or tissue obtained during invasive procedure or from an aseptically-placed drain in the intraabdominal space (for example, closed suction drainage system, open drain, T-tube drain, CT guided drainage) by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- b. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST). The organism(s) identified in the blood must contain at least one MBI organism on the NHSN Organism List that can be accessed via the [spreadsheet](#) or the new [NHSN Terminology Browser](#).

AND

imaging test evidence definitive for infection (for example, ultrasound, CT scan, MRI, ERCP, radiolabel scans [gallium, technetium, etc.] or on abdominal x-ray), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for intraabdominal infection. †

* With no other recognized cause

Reporting Instructions

- †Biliary ductal dilatation is considered an equivocal finding for cholangitis.
- For IAB 2b: If an organism is identified on histopathologic exam, the blood specimen must contain a matching organism.
- Do not report pancreatitis (an inflammatory syndrome characterized by abdominal pain, nausea, and vomiting associated with high serum levels of pancreatic enzymes) unless it is determined to be infectious in origin.
- Eligible laboratory results that represent transaminase levels include: serum glutamic oxaloacetic transaminase (SGOT), serum glutamic pyruvic transaminase (SGPT), alanine transaminase (ALT) or aspartate transaminase (AST). Consider the requirement for elevated transaminase level(s) met if at least one is elevated as per the normal range provided by the laboratory.

NEC-Necrotizing enterocolitis (*See Chapter 4*)

Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) criteria include neither a site-specific specimen nor organism identified from blood specimen. The pathophysiology of NEC is multifactorial. NEC definitions are provided to facilitate the provision of an exception for assigning a BSI secondary to NEC and should not be used for HAI surveillance as they are not designed, tested, or intended for this purpose.

LRI- LOWER RESPIRATORY INFECTION, OTHER THAN PNEUMONIA

LUNG-Other infection of the lower respiratory tract and pleural cavity

Other infections of the lower respiratory tract must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) seen on Gram stain of lung tissue or pleural fluid or identified from lung tissue or pleural fluid* (when pleural fluid was obtained during thoracentesis or within 24 hours of chest tube placement) by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has a lung abscess or other evidence of infection (for example, empyema) on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has imaging test evidence of abscess or infection (excludes imaging test evidence of pneumonia) which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for lung infection).

Reporting Instruction

- If patient meets LUNG and PNEU report as PNEU only, unless the LUNG is a surgical site organ/space infection, in which case, report both PNEU and SSI-LUNG.

*If a pleural fluid specimen is collected after a chest tube is repositioned **OR** after 24 hours of chest tube placement, this pleural fluid specimen is not eligible for LUNG 1. Repositioning must be documented in the patient record by a healthcare professional.

REPR-REPRODUCTIVE TRACT INFECTION

EMET-Endometritis

Endometritis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from endometrial fluid or tissue by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has **suspected endometritis** with at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), pain or tenderness (uterine or abdominal)*, or purulent drainage from uterus.

* *With no other recognized cause*

Reporting Instructions

- Do not report an HAI chorioamnionitis as EMET (see OREP).
- Do not report subsequent postpartum endometritis after a vaginal delivery as an HAI if a patient is admitted with POA chorioamnionitis (OREP). (See next bullet for endometritis following a C-section).
- Report as an organ space SSI-EMET if a C-section was performed on a patient with chorioamnionitis, and the patient later develops endometritis.

EPIS-Episiotomy infection

Episiotomy infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Postvaginal delivery patient has purulent drainage from the episiotomy.
2. Postvaginal delivery patient has an episiotomy abscess.

OREP- Deep pelvic tissue infection or other infection of the male or female reproductive tract (for example, epididymis, testes, prostate, vagina, ovaries, uterus) including chorioamnionitis, but excluding vaginitis, endometritis or vaginal cuff infections

Other infections of the male or female reproductive tract must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from tissue or fluid from affected site (excludes urine and vaginal swabs) by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has an abscess or other evidence of infection of affected site on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has **suspected infection of** one of the listed OREP sites and **two** of the following localized signs or symptoms: fever (>38.0°C), nausea*, vomiting*, pain or tenderness*, or dysuria*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
- b. physician or physician designee initiates antimicrobial therapy within **two** days of onset or worsening of symptoms.

* With no other recognized cause

Reporting Instructions

- Report endometritis as EMET.
- Report vaginal cuff infections as VCUF.
- If patient has epididymitis, prostatitis, or orchitis and meets OREP criteria, and they also meet UTI criteria, report UTI only, unless the OREP is a surgical site organ/space infection, in which case, only OREP should be reported.

VCUF-Vaginal cuff infection

Vaginal cuff infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Post hysterectomy patient has purulent drainage from the vaginal cuff on gross anatomic exam.
2. Post hysterectomy patient has an abscess or other evidence of infection at the vaginal cuff on gross anatomic exam.

3. Post hysterectomy patient has organism(s) identified from fluid or tissue obtained from the vaginal cuff by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

Reporting Instruction

- Report vaginal cuff infections as SSI-VCUF.

SST-SKIN AND SOFT TISSUE INFECTION

BRST-Breast infection or mastitis

A breast abscess or mastitis must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from affected breast tissue or fluid obtained by invasive procedure or from drainage from an aseptically-placed drain by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has a breast abscess or other evidence of infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has fever (>38.0°C) and local inflammation of the breast,
AND
Physician or physician designee initiates antimicrobial therapy within 2 days of onset or worsening of symptoms.

Reporting Instructions

- For SSI after a BRST procedure: if the infection is in the subcutaneous region report as a superficial incisional SSI, and if the infection involves the muscle/fascial level report as a deep incisional SSI.
- BRST Criterion '3' is not eligible as an Organ/Space SSI following a BRST procedure.

BURN-Burn infection

Burn infections must meet the following criteria:

1. Patient has a change in burn wound appearance or character*, such as rapid eschar separation, or dark brown, black, or violaceous discoloration of the eschar,
AND
Organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

Reporting Instructions

- Report BURN in the setting of an infected burn covered with a temporary graft or dressing.
- In the setting of a permanent skin graft (autograft) over a burn wound, use the SKIN or ST criteria.

CIRC-Newborn circumcision infection

Circumcision infection in a newborn (≤ 30 days old) must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Newborn has purulent drainage from circumcision site.
2. Newborn has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms at circumcision site: erythema*, swelling*, or tenderness*,

AND

Pathogen identified from circumcision site by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

3. Newborn has at least **one** of the following signs or symptoms at circumcision site: erythema*, swelling*, or tenderness*,

AND

Common commensal is identified from circumcision site by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST),

AND

Physician or physician designee initiates antimicrobial therapy within **two** days on onset or worsening of symptoms.

** With no other recognized cause*

DECU-Decubitus ulcer infection (also known as pressure injury infection), including both superficial and deep infections

Decubitus ulcer infections must meet the following criterion:

1. Patient has at least **two** of the following signs or symptoms: erythema*, tenderness*, or swelling of decubitus wound edges*,

AND

Organism(s) identified from needle aspiration of fluid or biopsy of tissue from ulcer margin by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

** With no other recognized cause*

SKIN-Skin infection (skin and/or subcutaneous) excluding decubitus ulcers, burns, and infections at vascular access sites (See [VASC](#)).

Skin infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has at least **one** of the following:

- purulent drainage
 - pustules
 - vesicles
 - boils (excluding acne)
2. Patient has at least **two** of the following localized signs or symptoms: pain* or tenderness*, swelling*, erythema*, or heat*

And at least one of the following:

- a. organism(s) identified from aspirate or drainage from affected site by a culture or non-culture based testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis and treatment for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST). Identification of 2 or more common commensal organisms without a recognized pathogen is not eligible for use. Common Commensal organisms include, but are not limited to, diphtheroids (*Corynebacterium* spp. not *C. diphtheria*), *Bacillus* spp. (not *B. anthracis*), *Propionibacterium* spp., coagulase-negative staphylococci (including *S. epidermidis*), viridans group streptococci, *Aerococcus* spp., *Micrococcus* spp., and *Rhodococcus* spp. Common Commensals on the NHSN Organism List can be accessed via the [spreadsheet](#) or the new [NHSN Terminology Browser](#).
- b. multinucleated giant cells seen on microscopic examination of affected tissue.
- c. diagnostic single antibody titer (IgM) or 4-fold increase in paired sera (IgG) for organism.

* With no other recognized cause

Reporting Instructions

- Do not report acne as a skin/soft tissue HAI.
- Report SKIN or ST criteria in the setting of a permanent skin graft (autograft) over a burn wound.
- Apply the site-specific definition (not SKIN) for the following:
 - Report omphalitis in infants as UMB.
 - Report infections of the circumcision site in newborns as CIRC.
 - For decubitus ulcers, apply the DECU infection.
 - Report infected burns as BURN.
 - Report BURN in the setting of an infected burn covered with a temporary graft or dressing.
 - Report breast abscesses or mastitis as BRST.
 - Report localized infection at a vascular access site as a VASC unless there is an organism identified from blood, meeting LCBI criteria, which should instead be reported as an LCBI (see VASC definition).

ST-Soft tissue infection (muscle and/or fascia [for example, necrotizing fasciitis, infectious gangrene, necrotizing cellulitis, infectious myositis, lymphadenitis, lymphangitis, or parotitis]) excluding decubitus ulcers, burns, and infections at vascular access sites (See [VASC](#)).

Soft tissue infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from tissue or drainage from affected site by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST)
2. Patient has purulent drainage at affected site.

3. Patient has an abscess or other evidence of infection on gross anatomic or histopathologic exam

Reporting Instructions

- Report SKIN or ST criteria in the setting of a permanent skin graft (autograft) over a burn wound.
- Apply the site-specific definitions identified below (not ST) for the following:
 - Report infected decubitus ulcers as DECU.
 - Report infected burns as BURN.
 - Report BURN in the setting of an infected burn covered with a temporary graft or dressing.
 - Report infection of deep pelvic tissues as OREP.
 - Report localized infection at a vascular access site as a VASC unless there is an organism identified from blood, then it should be reported as an LCBI (see [VASC](#) definition).

UMB-Omphalitis

Omphalitis in a newborn (≤ 30 days old) must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has erythema or drainage from umbilicus
And at least one of the following:
 - a. organism(s) identified from drainage or needle aspirate by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST)
 - b. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).
2. Patient has erythema and purulence at the umbilicus

Reporting instruction

- Report infection of the umbilical artery or vein related to umbilical catheterization as VASC if there is no accompanying organism identified from blood specimen. However, if the patient meets criteria for LCBI, report as a LCBI (see [VASC](#)).
- Catheterized umbilical venous catheter (UVC) or umbilical arterial catheter (UAC) sites are not eligible for UMB criteria.

USI – URINARY SYSTEM INFECTION (kidney, ureter, bladder, urethra, or perinephric space excluding UTI [see Chapter 7].)

Urinary system infections must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

1. Patient has organism(s) identified from fluid (not urine) or tissue from affected site by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST)
2. Patient has an abscess or other evidence of infection on gross anatomical exam, during invasive procedure, or on histopathologic exam.
3. Patient has **one** of the following signs or symptoms:
 - fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$)

- localized pain or tenderness*

And at least one of the following:

- a. purulent drainage from affected site
- b. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST).

AND

imaging test evidence definitive for infection, for example, ultrasound, CT scan, magnetic resonance imaging [MRI], or radiolabel scan [gallium, technetium]), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for urinary system infection.

4. Patient ≤ 1 year of age has at least one of the following signs or symptoms:

- fever ($>38.0^{\circ}\text{C}$)
- hypothermia ($<36.0^{\circ}\text{C}$)
- apnea*
- bradycardia*
- lethargy*
- vomiting*

And at least one of the following:

- a. purulent drainage from affected site
- b. organism(s) identified from blood by a culture or non-culture based microbiologic testing method which is performed for purposes of clinical diagnosis or treatment, for example, not Active Surveillance Culture/Testing (ASC/AST)

AND

imaging test evidence definitive for infection, for example, ultrasound, CT scans, magnetic resonance imaging [MRI], or radiolabel scan [gallium, technetium]), which if equivocal is supported by clinical correlation, specifically, physician or physician designee documentation of antimicrobial treatment for urinary system infection.

* *With no other recognized cause*

Reporting Instructions

- Report infections following circumcision in newborns as SST-CIRC.