Activated coagulation times (ACTs) are widely used for monitoring anticoagulation during cardiac surgery. Significant variability of this test is well known. Variability in test results was studied, which may arise from the sample drawing site. Consistent ACT values are important for anticoagulation management during cardiopulmonary bypass. Erroneous or ambiguous values can provoke additional heparin and/or protamine administration resulting in blood products being given unnecessarily. During the period of systemic anticoagulation, there is great individual variability between ACT measures obtained from venous and arterial samples. Further studies are required to analyze the cause of differences at the baseline and the source of variable coagulation times after heparin.

References: