



SPECIMEN LABELING REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE:

Specimen labeling requirements are established to promote patient safety through positive identification of the patient that provided the sample.

LABELING PROCEDURE:

1. Verify patient's date of birth and correct spelling of name:
 - a. Ask patient to state his/her name with correct spelling (if needed) and DOB
OR
 - b. If the patient cannot answer questions, obtain the information from the patient's caregiver or nurse. If a hospital wristband has been applied, check it in addition to the caregiver or nurse.
2. Collect sample.
 - Label at the time of collection with:
 - Patient's full name
 - DOB or medical record number
 - Date and time of collection
 - Collector's initials
 - If a non-blood sample, label with source or site

ANONYMOUS TESTING:

If anonymous testing is requested, a fictitious name must be used. The information on the requisition and sample must be identical, including at least two unique identifiers. Payment for the test must accompany the specimen and requisition.

BLOOD GASES:

Samples drawn for blood gases are labeled with the patient information label generated from The HIS and are generally run at the bedside immediately after obtaining the sample. All samples that are transported to another machine, or handed off to another person will be labeled according to policy.

LABELING PROTOCOL:

Information required on specimen label**:	Blood	Urine not cath	Urine cath	Other specimens
*Patient's name	•	•	•	•
*Patient's date of birth (or medical record #)	•	•	•	•
Date & Time of collection	•	•	•	•
Initials of person collecting sample	•		•	•

*Required information or the specimen will be rejected.

Note: Pre-transfusion samples require additional wristband/label.

UNLABELED OR MISLABELED SPECIMENS:

Specimen received:		Laboratory will:
Unlabeled		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reject sample ▪ Notify provider
Mislabeled – sample label differs from requisition		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Notify provider
Sample label correct	requisition wrong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hold sample ▪ Testing will be performed upon receipt of correct requisition
Sample label incorrect	requisition correct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reject sample

IRREPLACEABLE SPECIMENS:

The laboratory considers irreplaceable specimens only to be those that cannot be replaced (eg surgical specimens) not those that are inconvenient to replace. These samples will be evaluated on a case by case basis if questions arise regarding proper labeling.