



SPECIMEN LABELING REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE:

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

LABELING:

1. All samples submitted must have the patient's name and date of birth (or a second unique medical record number).
2. Patient's name and second identifier on the requisition must match the sample submitted for testing.
3. Date and time of collection are required and can be provided on the sample or the requisition.

Procedure

1. Verify patient's date of birth and correct spelling of name by:
 - a. Asking patient to state his/her name, correct spelling, 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 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:

Specimens for Blood Gases 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 other unique identifier)	•	•	•	•
Date of collection	•	•	•	•
Initials of person collecting sample	•		•	•

*Required information or the specimen will be rejected.

**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:

In the event that an irreplaceable specimen is received that is unlabeled or mislabeled, the Lab Director and Risk Manager will be notified. An investigation will be initiated and a verifying statement will be obtained from the person collecting the specimen. The ordering provider will be notified. The Lab Director or Risk Manager will document authorization for use of the specimen. A Risk Management occurrence report will be completed and documentation of the investigation will be attached and forwarded to the Risk Management Office.

All unlabeled or mislabeled laboratory specimens will be tracked and trended for quality improvement purposes.