

Policy #:	404 (PLH-404-08)	Effective Date:	9/30/2004	Reviewed Date:	8/1/2016
Subject:	PROTOCOL FOR LABELING & TRANSPORTING LABORATORY SPECIMENS				
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PROTOCOL FOR LABELING & TRANSPORTING LABORATORY SPECIMENS

Before collecting specimens positive identification of the patient must be made. Verify patient identification (name and hospital account number) by using the hospital patient armband before collecting a specimen. Name and hospital number on the armband must match the request. When possible ask patient to state their name. For patients without an armband (clients and walk-in outpatients) verify identification by comparing to the request the name and date of birth.

Never pre-label tubes Always label blood tubes before leaving the patient's bedside. If no computer label is available, label the tubes in a legible manner. Labels should include entire name, hospital number (from the armband), time and date, and Cerner or Pathnet user ID of person obtaining the blood. Exception to this is blood drawn for Transfusion Service using a computer label. The computer label must have the hospital number handwritten, from the patient's armband, to ensure laboratory staff the hospital number was verified. If collected with the patient identification system the system label is acceptable without handwritten number.

Manual Laboratory request slips are available if Cerner is down. Be sure to fill out the manual request slip completely which includes the patient's full name, patient's account number, date and time of collection, and physician's full name. It is imperative for the manual request slips sent for Microbiology to have the time of collection documented.

All specimens from patients should be properly labeled and put in clean containers with a secure lid. Care must be taken to avoid contaminating the outside of the container and the laboratory request slip accompanying the specimen. If specimens are transported via the pneumatic tube system, they are placed inside a biohazard bag to cushion and contain.

Specimens that are not to be sent via the pneumatic tube system include: Tissue specimens, Thoracentesis fluid, Cerebral spinal fluid, and specimens that are difficult to obtain. These specimens should be delivered to the Lab Processing Area on the 1st floor of the lab building. EXCEPTION: PFA, Verify Now P2Y12 (PRU) and Verify Now Aspirin (ARU) should be brought to Blood Bank.

Transport/Shipping Specimens:

The laboratory complies with all current applicable federal, state and local regulations for shipping and transporting infectious and diagnostic specimens. All applicable personnel are trained on appropriate packaging and proper packaging material is utilized.

Couriers:

The outreach courier staff is responsible for specimen transport from the affiliate hospitals, clinics, and other clients to the main lab. These staff members receive training on proper specimen handling, including the proper transport temperature, safe specimen handling, and patient confidentiality.