# Specimen Rejection Criteria for Molecular Biology

**PURPOSE**

Rejection criteria are designed to prevent the reporting of inaccurate and insignificant data obtained from incorrectly collected and transported specimens, which may mislead the physician. The specimen should arrive in the laboratory properly labeled, in an appropriate container and transported with minimal delays. The specimen source should be appropriate for the testing requested. If not, the results can lead to misdiagnosis and inappropriate treatment of the patient.

# POLICY

* Refer to the [Laboratory Services](http://khan.childrensmn.org/Communities/Lab.asp) web page for test specific patient preparation and sample collection information.
* Refer to the [Specimen Management](MB001.1%20Specimen%20Management%20in%20Molecular.doc) document MB001.1 and assay specific procedures for additional information

**Procedure A:** Follow the activity below for general guidelines for rejection of specimens

**General Guidelines**

| **Activity** | **Step** | **Action** | **Related Doc** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | Notify the patient’s care provider; explain the reason for rejection | [MB001.1](MB001.1%20Specimen%20Management%20in%20Molecular.doc) Specimen Management |
| Unacceptable Specimens  | 2 | Request a new specimen |
|  | 3 | Refrigerate rejected specimen in micro fridge up to 24 h before discarding  | Refer to Assay specific procedures for additional information |
|  | 4 | Credit sample in CRW  |
|  | 5 | Document reason for rejection, the person notified, date and time called in the LIS patient report |
|  | 6 | **If the physician insists that a suboptimal specimen be processed, the laboratory must include in the report a statement regarding the status of the specimen** |  |
|  | 7 | Special considerations for difficult recollections

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| If | Then |
| The sample is a CSF or surgical specimen | * Consult with Micro Technical Director or a pathologist
* Cancel testing
* Contact care provider
* Document reason for rejection
 |
| The care provider wishes to challenge | * Refer to organizational policy 630.00
* Provider must contact pathologist for approval
* Complete [Unlabeled/Mislabeled Specimen Challenge Form](http://khan.childrensmn.org/manuals/lab/sop/gen/gen/207584.pdf).
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 | [Organizational Policy 630.00 Laboratory Specimen Labeling](http://khan.childrensmn.org/Manuals/Policy/600/033257.asp) |
| Sunquest Cancellation codes | 8 | The following rejection/cancellation codes may be used

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| --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Rejection Statement** |
| **SREJ** | This specimen was mislabeled before being received by the laboratory. Lab cannot accept the responsibility for the identification of this specimen and all testing has been canceled. |
| **RSPN** | Specimen received unlabeled. Lab cannot accept the responsibility for the identification of this specimen and all testing has been canceled. |
| **LNR** | The Laboratory received a mislabeled specimen. The specimen has been identified by the patient's caregiver and testing has been authorized by a pathologist. |
| **LBL** | The specimen was mislabeled by the laboratory staff. The nursing unit was notified, the specimen re-identified for the correct patient and testing has been authorized. |

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| Reports | 9 | Refer to [MB001.3](MB001.3%20Labeling%20Errors%2C%20Specimen%20mixups.doc) for reporting examples | Labeling Errors/Specimen Mix-ups And Correcting Patient Data |

**Procedure B:** Follow the activity below for rejecting samples and action

**Criteria for rejection and action**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Step** | **Criteria** | **Action** |
|  | 1 | Discrepancy between patient identification on requisition and specimen container label | Notify patient’s caregiver; request a new specimen. Refer to Organizational Policy [Laboratory Specimen Labeling 630.00](http://khan.childrensmn.org/Manuals/Policy/600/033257.asp) |
| **Clerical errors** | 2 | No identification on container. |
|  | 3 | Specimen source not noted | Call patient’s caregiver to find out missing information |
|  | 4 | Wrong test ordered | Call patient’s caregiver to clarify test request  |
|  | 1 | Specimen in wrong transport media | Notify patient’s caregiver. Request a new specimen in appropriate transport device/media. |
| **Specimen quality** | 2 | Specimen collected incorrectly/inappropriate source | Notify patient’s caregiver that the specimen is not suitable for testing. Request a new specimen. |
|  | 3 | Incorrect storage, delayed transport |
|  | 4 | Commingled specimen (cross contaminated samples) | Notify patient’s caregiver that the specimen is contaminated. Request a new specimen. |
|  | 1 | Quantity not sufficient (QNS), multiple tests ordered | Notify physician and ask to prioritize tests or request additional specimen. |
| **General** | 2 | More than one specimen submitted on the same day | Notify caregiver that only one specimen will be processed per day. Document duplicate specimen and credit in LIS. |
|  | 3 | Leaking container | Notify patient’s caregiver. Request a new specimen. Document external contamination in LIS. |
|  | 4 | Nonsterile container | Notify patient’s caregiver. Request a new specimen. |

**References**

1. Miller, J.M., Specimen Management in Clinical Microbiology, ASM Press, Washington D.C., 1996.
2. Isenberg, Henry, D., *Clinical Microbiology Procedures Handbook,* 2007, ASM Press, Washington, D.C.,

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