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| **Guidelines for Labeling Specimens** |
| **Purpose** | This procedure provides guidelines for LABELING SPECIMENS. |
| **Policy Statements** | * To maintain a labeling system that positively identifies all patient specimens, specimen types and aliquots.
* To prevent errors in processing specimens and reporting test results on the wrong patient.
* This procedure applies to all laboratory staff.
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| **Materials** | Labels and aliquot labels |  |
| **Sample** | This procedure applies to all specimens. |
| **Procedure** | Follow the activities in the table below for LABELING SPECIMENS.

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| **Step** | **Action** |
| 1 | The orders are processed and/or the specimen is received in the laboratory computer system.  |  [*SCM 5.00 Collection Verification (CVIS)*](http://khan.childrensmn.org/Manuals/Lab/SOP/Gen/SpecCol/205648.pdf). |
| 2 | Laboratory staff uses computer-generated labels to label the primary specimen containers and their aliquots. The label system contains text, numbers and barcodes to uniquely identify each patient. The primary collection container and their aliquots can be audited back to the full particulars of patient identification, collection date, specimen type, etc. | [*630.00 Laboratory Specimen Labeling*](http://khan.childrensmn.org/references/policy/600/630.00-laboratory-specimen-labeling.pdf) |
| 3 | Transfusion Services (Blood Bank) specimens must be labeled with the complete accurate spelling of the patient’s full legal name, the patient’s medical record number, patient’s Date of Birth, the date and time the specimen was collected, and the initials of the person obtaining the specimen. Either a computer-generated label or a hand-written label is acceptable. | [*TS 2.2 Evaluating Patient Specimens*](http://khan.childrensmn.org/Manuals/Lab/SOP/TS/SpecPro/202183.pdf). |
| 4 | Blood cultures are labeled by placing the label directly on the bottle. When labeling Blood Culture bottles, be careful not to completely cover the barcode on the bottle. |  |
| 5 | For tests with multiple timed specimens and accession numbers, use a “foot” of the generated label with the specified time and apply to each specimen. Indicate (in handwriting) the time of the draw, if not printed on the label.  |  |
| 6 | The original label is NEVER removed from the original specimen container. |  |
| 7 | The specimen is NEVER returned to the unit. |  |

Procedure notes1. All specimens must have accurate and legible patient identification on the specimen container and on the requisition. The identification on the patient must exactly match the identification on the specimen label.
2. The identification on the patient’s armband must exactly match the identification on the specimen label. Refer to Children’s policy [*376.00 Patient Identification Bands and Allergy Alerts*](http://khan.childrensmn.org/references/policy/350/376.00-patient-identification-bands-and-allergy-alert.pdf). The identification must include:
3. The patient’s full legal name
4. The medical record number or date of birth
5. The date and time of collection
6. The source/site of the specimen
7. Reject specimens according to [*GL 2.0 Mislabeled or Unlabeled Specimen Process*](http://khan.childrensmn.org/Manuals/Lab/SOP/Gen/Gen/207584.pdf) and Children’s Policy [*630.00 Laboratory Specimen Labeling*](http://khan.childrensmn.org/references/policy/600/630.00-laboratory-specimen-labeling.htm).
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