

Specimen Labeling and Transport Requirements

Pathology Laboratory Associates has established a policy for specimen acceptance/rejection that:

- Has a positive impact on patient care
- Protects specimen quality
- Eliminates risk of exposure to the healthcare worker
- Complies with all accreditation standards

To protect patients from adverse errors made due to improperly labeled specimens, the laboratory policy demands that proper labeling criteria are always met. Every specimen brought to the laboratory must have a label on the container in which it is held. It is not acceptable to label only the lid, transport bag, or other container used to transport the specimen. The label must contain the following legible information:

- Patient name
- Patient medical record number, with check digit
- Patient location
- Collection date and time
- Specimen type and/or source
- Test required (note any special handling required)
- Ordering physician

All patient specimens MUST be placed in biohazard bags for transport to the Laboratory.

Laboratory procedures will not be performed on unacceptable specimens. Specimens collected using the incorrect preservative type and transport material will not be tested. Specimens received showing evidence of leakage may not be tested.

Specimens identified as precious specimens such as ascites fluid, amniotic fluid, cerebrospinal fluid, joint fluid, pleural fluid, surgical tissue/aspirate and certain timed specimens where the specimen cannot be recollected without undue harm to the patient will be tested only if the following conditions have been satisfied:

- The patient's physician's office must be notified, and an affidavit must be signed. The physician, nurse, or person signing the affidavit will be accepting responsibility for the specimen and give written authorization for testing.
- In addition, the pathologist on call must be notified.
- It will be documented in the laboratory computer system that the test was performed on an unlabeled specimen so that this information appears on the preliminary and final reports.