

Specimen Labeling Requirements

09/03/2010



All Specimens must be adequately labeled at time of collection and as they are processed throughout the system. Specimens not labeled with two unique identifiers (preferably patient name and date of birth) will be rejected and a new specimen requested.

After verifying patient full name and date of birth, samples collected must be labeled at the bed/patient side with a patient label stating patient name and date of birth (or second unique identifier). If a label is not available, the **patient name** and date of birth (or second unique identifier) must be written on the specimen container. A second unique identifier such as the patient medical record number may be used if it can be matched to a patient date of birth. Labels must be placed on the specimen container itself, they should not be attached to the container lid.

Information required in addition to name and date of birth includes:

- Date and time of collection
- Collector's identification.
- Billing information. Insurance information if billing is to be done by hospital laboratory.
- Additional information needed to process specimens such as total volume of 24 hour urines or time and date of last dose of medication for therapeutic drug levels.

Rejection of unacceptable samples:

If samples received are not labeled with name and second unique identifier, they will be rejected. When samples must be rejected, St. Luke's Laboratory will contact the submitting office/clinic by the next working day. If requested, samples will be returned to the submitting office/clinic. Samples resubmitted to St. Luke's must be accompanied by the completed form: Identification of Unlabeled/Mislabeled Specimens, located on St. Luke' laboratory web page.

A. Possible reasons for rejection

1. Patient name and second unique identifier not on sample container
2. Inadequate sample volume
3. Incorrect collection container. See Lab Test Catalog for sample requirements for each test <http://www.testcatalog.org/nrr/catalogs/stlukesduluth/catalog/TermsAndConditions.aspx>
4. Presence of hemolysis or lipemia
5. Improperly stored sample
6. Interfering substances
7. Sample collected at the wrong time
8. Wrong type of sample collection (i.e. CVMS urine collected but should have been the first voided urine).

If you have questions, please contact Sue Bachinski, St. Luke's Laboratory Outreach Manager at (218) 249-2445 or St. Luke's Laboratory Customer Service at (866)794-1597 or (218)249-5200