

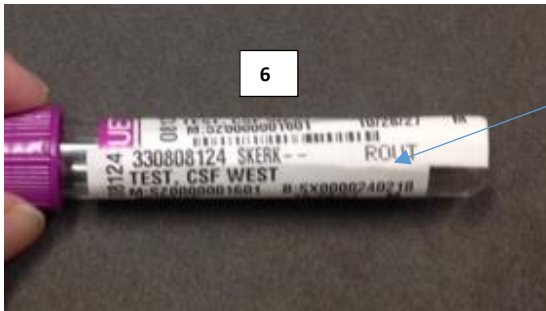
Labeling Nurse-Collected Lab Specimens

Labeling “DON'Ts”



- 1- Labels placed horizontally with a “tag” won’t fit in lab racks or analyzers and won’t scan properly in lab (Barcode scanning is how the tube status is documented, such as “Received in Lab, In Process, and Final”. Scanning is also how the lab analyzers detect the specimen and know which test to run on each patient’s specimen.).

- 2- This label covers the open area on the tube so that lab staff can't determine if the amount of specimen is sufficient.
- 3- Labels that are placed over the cap prevent lab staff from being able to remove the cap without destroying the label.
- 4- Labels placed too far at the bottom of the tube prevent the label from 1) scanning properly and 2) fitting into a rack or analyzer.
- 5- Labels placed in a twisting fashion cannot be scanned in lab.
- 6- Wrinkled Labels



If you have placed a wrinkled label on the tube, please remove it and re-label with a new label at the bedside. Don't place the new label over the wrinkled/original label. Wrinkles prevent the scanning process from working. Also, removing the original label is preferred because two visible bar codes can cause the scanning process to fail.

Labeling "Dos"

Do place a single label on each tube (each label contains the mandatory 2 patient identifiers: Full Name and Date of Birth or Medical Record Number). Label should not cover the cap or be too near the bottom of the tube. No tags should be made. No twisting label placements should be made. All 4 tubes below show proper placement. Date, Time, and Collector's initials should be written legibly on all labels on tubes or containers.



Handwritten Labels:

When no label is available and the collector must hand write information on the tube, the following 4 items must be present on all specimens:

- 1) Full Name (first and last) as found in chart (required on ALL specimens)
- 2) Date of Birth or Medical Record Number (required on Blood Bank Specimens)
- 3) Date / time of collection must also be written on the tube or container (required on all specimens)
- 4) Collector's Initials , legibly written (required on all specimens)

Unacceptable Patient Identifiers:

Room Number

Bed Number

Acceptable Handwritten Label

-Includes full name



Unacceptable Handwritten Label

-Does not include full name (initials not sufficient)

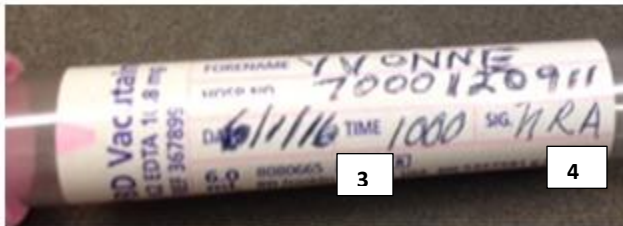
- Does not include date of birth (room # and/or bed # not sufficient)

Handwritten Blood Bank Specimen Labeling:

All Blood Bank specimen labels must have:

1. The patient's first and last name
2. The patient's Medical Record Number
3. Date/time of collection
4. Collector's initials (legibly written or printed)

If a printed label is not available, it is acceptable to hand write on a Blood Bank specimen as long as all 4 items listed above are included on the specimen.

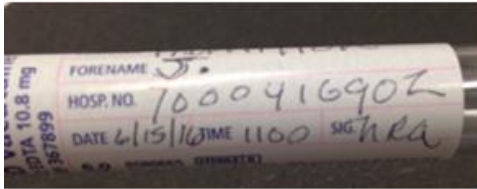
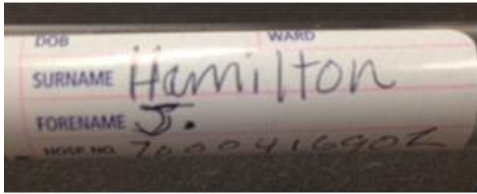


Why proper label placement is important:

When labels are placed improperly (as shown on the first page) lab staff are required to re-print labels, remove the improperly placed label, and relabel the tube before the tube can be received into lab or any testing can be completed. This process 1) Slows down the time required to provide a test result which may adversely affect patient care and 2) introduces the possibility of mislabeling – studies show that the more times labels are placed/replaced, the greater the chance for mislabeling. Best practice for labeling lab specimens is to label at the bedside when there is one patient's specimen available. In lab there are many specimens and labels, which leads to potential for choosing the wrong specimen to place the label on.

Labeling Quiz (Correct Answers in Red)

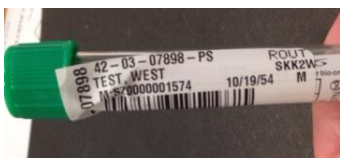
- 1) Is the tube below labeled properly? There are 2 images so you can see the entire label.
- i. Yes or No **NO** _____



- 2) List all elements that must be present on every specimen for Blood Bank Testing: **Date and time of collection, collector's initials, patient's full name, and MRN.**
- 3) True or false: If specimen is not to be used for Blood Bank testing, the handwritten label must contain full name, date and time of collection, collector's initials, and EITHER the MRN or DOB. **True**
- 4) If you answered NO to 1) above, which element is missing from the label in the image? **First initial written, need full first name**

Matching: Draw a line to connect the image with the correct description.

Images



Descriptions

Label placed properly

Label placed improperly (tag)

Label placed improperly (covers cap)