

BASSETT MEDICAL CENTER POLICY		DEPARTMENT (S): Laboratory	REVISION: 1-09	POLICY #: 86-CL
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TITLE: Patient Identification and Specimen Labeling				PAGE: Page 1 of 4

KEY WORDS

1. Specimen
2. Labeling
3. Patient identification
4. Lab

A. GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

All specimens collected for laboratory testing are subject to the labeling requirements set forth in this policy to assure accurate identification of patient specimens and to comply with laboratory regulations.

B. SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all personnel collecting specimens for receipt by the Bassett Medical Center (Bassett) Laboratories. This includes specimens collected by any non-Bassett agency staff or non-Bassett providers.

C. ACCOUNTABILITY

All hospital and clinic staff members are responsible for verifying that all specimens collected comply with this policy. Upon physician request, any specimen not in compliance with this policy will be referred to the Clinical Director or the pathologist on conference rotation to make a final determination of the acceptability. Business & Support Services Manager, Laboratory Network in conjunction with the other Laboratory Managers shall be responsible for the coordination and revision of this Policy.

D. POLICY ELEMENTS

1. Patient Identification: Prior to the collection of any laboratory specimen, proper patient identification must be made. Refer to the Patient Identification Policy (Policy 71 - CL).
  - a. All inpatients must be wearing an identification band that must include their first and last name and medical record number (MRN) before any specimen is collected. The MRN should be a minimum of six digits that may start with a zero. Exclude the succeeding zeros and number one (-001) on the scheduling system labels and the proceeding zeros (M000) on the laboratory information system label (unless a preceding zero is needed to make the MRN 6 digits). The person collecting the specimen or performing the test must perform verbal identification, if possible. The patient will be asked to state their full first and last name and date of birth. This is then compared to the information on the patient's identification

- band, verify that the spelling of the name and medical record number match the laboratory labels. If the patient name is truncated on any wristband, label or documentation, please verify complete first and last name and assure the spelling is correct. For Blood Bank collections, the complete first and last names are required. The specimen is NOT collected if there is a discrepancy identified. The discrepancy MUST be resolved before specimen collection.
- b. For all outpatients, the patient or their proxy will be asked to state their full first and last name and date of birth. This information will be compared to the test order/requisition, laboratory specimen labels and/or the scheduling system registration labels. The specimen is NOT collected if there is a discrepancy identified. The discrepancy MUST be resolved with the clinic staff before specimen collection.
- c. When an outpatient is scheduled to receive a transfusion of blood or blood products, the patient MUST be wristbanded at the time of the specimen collection with necessary information (refer to the Outpatient Wristbanding Policy). Once the patient has been positively identified, the patient is wristbanded and the specimen is then collected. The specimen is NOT to be collected until the patient has been identified and wristbanded.
- d. If the identity of the patient is unknown at the time the patient presents, refer to the "Unidentified Patient" policy 72-CL. Patients labeled in accordance with that policy will be considered properly labeled.
- e. Any specimen collected outside of Bassett may be labeled using the complete patient name and date of birth as identification. The identification on the specimen and on the accompanying lab order must be correct and must match. Any discrepancy will lead to rejection of the specimen.

## 2. Specimen Labels

- a. Specimen labels must bear the following information and must be legible:
- Patient's first and last name, properly spelled.
  - Patient's medical record number (MRN) [unless the specimen is from a patient outside Bassett System or if the MRN is unavailable at the time of collection/testing, in which case the date of birth (DOB) (month-day-year) is required].
  - Date and time of specimen collection. Time must be handwritten.
  - Initials and/or Tech ID number of the person collecting the specimen.
- b. Labels (bar code generated, addressograph or registration stickers) for blood collection tubes can be used in all instances EXCEPT for

Blood Bank specimens which MUST IMMEDIATELY be hand labeled at the patient's side. (See section 3c for Blood Bank labeling.) When labels are used at the patient's bedside, they should be placed lengthwise over the manufacturer's label to permit visual inspection of the specimen. Barcode labels should be oriented on the tube with the name at the bottom of the tube and the priority code near the stopper. The label must not extend over the cap or the end of the tube. The specimen must be labeled immediately (at the patient's side) by the individual who collected the specimen. NO ONE is permitted to label specimens obtained by another individual. If a label is to be affixed over the original label, care must be taken to assure that the information on the label is verified against the original label. The new label must have the same information in step "a" above, as well as the initials of the person affixing the new label. See special specimen types for additional information.

3. Special Specimen Types:

a. Blood Bank:

It is recommended by the American Association of Blood Banks and required by the Bassett Blood Bank that specimens be hand labeled using information from the patient's identification wristband, by the phlebotomist before leaving the side of the patient. Preprinted labels affixed to the specimen will NOT be accepted by the Blood Bank. All labeling must be done by the person collecting the specimen. The label must include the patient's complete first and last name, medical record number, date and time of specimen collection, and the initials of the person collecting the specimen. If the identity of the patient is unknown at the time the patient presents, refer to the "Unidentified Patient" policy 72-CL. Specimens hand labeled in accordance with that policy will be considered properly labeled. The same person must write all identification on a Blood Bank specimen. Any specimen not labeled with correct full first and last name and Medical Record Number will be rejected.

b. Surgical Pathology specimens:

Multiple specimens must be identified exactly the same way on both the requisition and the specimen label with the appropriate source. Secure the specimen container lids to minimize leakage and contamination of label and/or requisition in transit. Leaking specimens makes them illegible and unable to be processed. The label should be oriented so the label is horizontal to the lid. Specimen labels must not be placed on the lid.

c. Cytology specimens:

Slides should be labeled with the patient's name and medical record number (or if the medical record number is unavailable, the date of birth should be used) using pencil before the specimen is placed on the slide. Please include specimen type and site along with significant medical history on the requisition.

d. Other Specimens:

Specimens for medico-legal purposes - refer to the Laboratory Departmental policy "Chain of Custody for Legal Specimens".

Paternity testing specimens - refer to the Laboratory Departmental policy "Performing Paternity Testing Collection Procedure".

E. COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated via email to all Managers, Directors, and Executive Operations Team members.

F. DISTRIBUTION

This policy will be placed online in the Administrative Policy Manual, and Medical Staff Policy Manual.

G. ENFORCEMENT

The Vice President, Patient Services is responsible for compliance to this policy.

H. REVISION

The Vice President, Patient Services is responsible for making revisions to this policy.