

Collection and Scheduling of Laboratory Tests

The options for scheduling of laboratory tests are as follows:

- **STAT**
- **NOW-NEED RESULTS ASAP**
- **TIMED COLLECTIONS**
- **EARLY AM**
- **ROUTINE ORDERS**
- **SPECIMEN IN LAB**

It is IMPORTANT to note that many specimen barcode labels for laboratory tests do not print immediately after the order is placed in the HIS. Many orders are held for batch printing or for a future date. Therefore, when the HIS is down, the nursing units must keep the phlebotomist informed of tests required on their patients since the laboratory will have no way of knowing what orders have been placed in the HIS.

Descriptions of each option are as follows:

- STAT: Emergency or life-threatening condition exists requiring immediate response from the laboratory for collection of specimen, performance of test, and reporting of results. Specimen barcode labels print immediately after order is placed.
- Now Need Results ASAP: Laboratory results are needed within 2 to 3 hours. Specimen will be collected, test will be performed and results will be reported within 2 to 3 hours when possible. Specimen barcode labels print immediately after order is placed.
- Timed Collections: This priority is used when collection of specimen is required at a particular time as specified by the physician. Orders are held in computer and specimen barcode labels print 4 hours before the requested time. The phlebotomist will comply with the requested time of collection as closely as possible. Therapeutic drug and glucose requests will be the highest priority of timed requests. Tests will be performed and results will be reported as quickly as possible. If results are needed STAT, the test must be ordered as a STAT and not as a TIMED test.
- Early AM: These orders are collected between 2 a.m. and 7 a.m. The sequence of collections are prioritized by acuity of unit. Results are available by 8 a.m. The HIS schedules these orders for 2 a.m. Orders are held in computer and specimen barcode labels print 4 hours before the requested time.
- Routine Orders: Routine orders are held in computer and printed in batches hourly.
- Specimen In Laboratory: To order an additional test on a specimen already collected, it is necessary to select the appropriate priority of SPECIMEN IN THE LABORATORY. Specimen barcode labels print immediately in the laboratory after order is placed. The test will be performed if adequate specimen is available. If specimen is not available, the order will be canceled and the nurse will be notified.