Labeling Laboratory Specimens

Patient Identification
- Identify the patient by the armband
- **Use two identifiers.**
  - **For Inpatients:** Patient name, medical record number, and when possible, date of birth
  - **For Outpatients:** Patient name and date of birth
  - **For Infants:** Patient name (and birth order if infant of a multiple birth) and date of birth
- When possible, verify information with the patient or family member verbally.

Specimens Must be Labeled at Point of Collection
- Specimen should be labeled with a pre-printed Cerner barcode lab label
- Scan patient armband barcode for accurate patient ID and specimen label for accurate container ID. Sign in computer to mark as “collected.”

Manual Specimen Labeling Guidelines
- If preprinted barcode labels are not available, a pre-printed patient demographic label may be used
  * Add date, time, and collector initials/ID
- Labels already affixed on the tubes may be hand-written at the patient’s bedside with appropriate information taken from the patient’s armband:
  * patient’s full name (preferably last name, first name)
  * medical record number (must be complete number)
  * name of the person collecting the specimen
  * date and time of collection
  * required information

Label Placement on Blood Specimens
- Place label vertically over the manufacturer label on the tube leaving clear space on back side of tube so blood contents are easily seen
- Place only one label per tube
- Align notch on Cerner barcode label to small colored triangle on specimen tube
- Match tube top color to color indicated on barcode labels
- Place labeled specimen into biohazard bag for transport to the laboratory

Preferred microtainer label placement
Labeling Do Nots

Color printed on label must match tube top color. Do not flagpole label around tube.

Do not wrap label around tube.

Do not place more than one label per tube.

Do not place label on tube top.

Do not place one label around multiple tubes.

Do not place labels flagpole around tube.

Do not pinch label.

Do not place label around tube top.

Do not place tube between label and paper backing.

Do not place loose label and unlabeled specimen in bag.

Do not place label outside of bag with unlabeled specimen inside the bag.