

Specimen Collection and Handling Instructions

For Laboratories Performing Testing Only



The collecting provider is responsible for proper patient preparation, specimen collection, identification, labeling, documentation, and safe handling before the specimen is submitted to the laboratory.

1. Patient Preparation – Pre-Collection

- Before collection, verify that the patient has followed all test-specific preparation requirements, including fasting, medication timing, collection timing, or other instructions provided by the laboratory.

2. Test Request / Electronic Order

- Complete the laboratory requisition or electronic order accurately.
- Ensure the patient information, tests requested, ordering provider, specimen type/source, and other required information are complete and accurate.

3. Positive Patient Identification

- Before collection, positively identify the patient using **at least two approved patient identifiers**.
- Compare the identifiers with the test request/order and identification band when applicable.

Do not collect the specimen if the patient's identity cannot be verified.

4. Specimen Collection and Labeling

- Collect the correct specimen using the appropriate container and collection procedure.
- Label the specimen **immediately after collection** with the required patient identifiers and other information required by the laboratory.

5. Identification of Collector

- Provide the identity of the person who collected the primary specimen on the requisition or traceable through electronic ordering system.

6. Specimen Handling and Transport

- Maintain specimen integrity after collection. Store and transport the specimen according to the laboratory's specimen collection, handling, and transport requirements.

7. Safe Disposal

- Dispose of needles and other sharps immediately in approved sharps containers. Dispose of blood-contaminated and other potentially infectious materials according to applicable facility and biohazard-waste procedures.

8. Specimen Problems

- Contact the laboratory before submitting a specimen when there is uncertainty regarding patient identification, specimen type, labeling, collection requirements, or specimen handling.

The collecting provider is responsible for ensuring the specimen is correctly identified, collected, labeled, documented, and safely handled before submission to the testing laboratory.