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# Specimen Labeling

**Two patient identifiers are required on all patient samples**

* **Legal last Name, Legal first Name**
* **Date of Birth**

**The following may cause delays in testing:**

* Not labeling the specimen with the patient’s first and last name and date of birth. Must use patient’s legal name (no nicknames or initials).
* Labeling specimen with illegible handwriting or with non-permanent ink.
* Labeling the specimen container lid. Lids get removed.
* Labeling slides with ink that will wash away during staining. Use a pencil.
* Not labeling culture specimens with a source (i.e. left eye)
* Improper label orientation

**Specimens will be rejected in the following situations:**

* Multiple patient specimens and only one requisition in the same bag
* Requisition and specimen do not match patient identifiers
* Specimen is misidentified, wrong patient identifiers
* Specimen is unlabeled, no unique identifier on specimen

If specimen relabeling is requested, a pathologist must approve. The person identifying the specimen must come to MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory to identify the specimen, label the specimen, and complete appropriate paperwork to re-label.

Accurate test results are very dependent on properly collected and transported specimens. MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory couriers are trained and equipped to transport all specimen types. Special transport needs must be communicated to the courier at the time of the pick-up.

Brochures are available explaining specimen collection that can be used for patient education. The brochures can be requested on the MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory Online Supply Order Portal or use the instructions from the appropriate section of this manual.

Please review expiration dates on collection supplies and request new supplies if necessary. Results may be compromised if a specimen is submitted in an expired container. Specimens will be rejected if received in an expired container.

After collection and labeling, place the labeled specimen in a bio-hazard bag. Close the bag, making sure the seal is secure. Place the paper requisition in the outside pocket of the bag with the patient name showing. MercyOne Des Moines Laboratory accepts one patient sample per bio-hazard bag.