# Laboratory Specimens

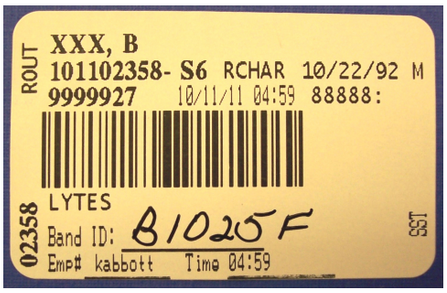
## Label Them Correctly!

Improperly labeled specimens are a common cause of testing delays

## Correct Specimen Labeling:

In the designated **Band ID** area on the specimen label, write the following ID band identifiers:

(1) **prefix letter**
(2) **4-digit number**
(3) **suffix letter**




Note: Time of collection and collector (employee name or ID number) are pre-printed on the label.

**IMPORTANT:** Label specimens ***at the bedside***, ***immediately*** after collection

## Specimen Labeling Examples

**RIGHT**

### Blood cultures:

Apply the collection label **vertical** to the bottle length **without covering** the manufacturer's barcode.

### All Vacutainer and Microtainer tubes:

- Hold the stopper in left hand and….
- Position left side of label near the cap, but not over the cap.
- Place the label lengthwise left to right making sure the barcode is **straight** and **vertical** to tube length.
- Press the adhesive side of the label **smoothly** to the tube without wrinkling.
- **NOTE:** Apply only ONE (1) label per tube. Rubber band any additional labels to the tube(s) and send to lab.

**WRONG**

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.

1. Blood Cultures: The manufacturer's **barcode is covered** by label. Instruments cannot read the barcode.
2. **Multiple labels** on a tube. Instruments will reject the specimen.
3. Label is placed in the **WRONG** (horizontal) **direction**. Instruments cannot read barcode.
4. Label is placed too **LOW** on the tube. Instruments will reject the specimen.
5. Label is **spiral-wrapped** around the tube. Instruments cannot read the barcode.
6. Label is placed too **HIGH** on the tube. Instruments will reject the specimen.
7. Multiple labels tucked in specimen bag. Labels may be discarded with bag and additional tests not performed.

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