



# Tuesday Take Away



## Mislabeled Specimens

What is the main “*take away*” message?

**Just one Mislabeled Specimen can lead to Multiple Adverse Outcomes**

### Safe Specimen Collection



#### Always

- Use two patient identifiers
- Label all specimens in the presence of the patient

**Never** leave a patient's room with an unlabeled specimen

#### Mislabeled specimens can occur in multiple ways:

- Missing label or incomplete information
- Incorrect patient information Wrong blood in tube: When a specimen from one patient is labeled with another patient's identifiers. *If this is not caught by the laboratory, the error can remain undiscovered unless a clinician notices an atypical result and questions it. This error can have very significant consequences*
- Labeling a jar lid or outer bag which can be separated from the specimen

#### Mislabeled specimens can lead to:

- Inaccurate clinical decisions
- Incorrect treatment
- Increased patient anxiety
- Decreased patient confidence in care and caregivers
- Additional procedures to obtain replacement specimens
- Inability to replace the specimen (e.g., kidney stones, cultures taken prior to antibiotic therapy)
- Increased inpatient length of stay or
- Additional outpatient appointments for repeat testing
- Additional staff time to:
  - Investigate mislabeling problem and arrange for repeat testing
  - Replace and reprocess specimens

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