



Specimen Labelling

Pre-analytical errors account for up to 70% of all mistakes made in laboratory diagnostic process. These errors may occur during patient preparation, sample collection / labelling, sample transportation, sample preparation, and sample storage.

Pathlab is working diligently to minimise these risks and as a result of this effort specimen labelling is now our largest source of Pre-analytical error. The consequences of a labelling error not being detected or resolved can result in avoidable patient harm.

Good specimen labelling practice should ensure that samples are labelled immediately after collection, with a minimum of three points of identification:

- Surname
- First Name (use given name, not known as)
- DOB and / or NHI
- For timed tests (e.g. GTT, please note time of collect)

NB Blood Bank, tube must be signed, dated and tubes MUST be hand written

**All Sub-standard labelled specimens will be rejected
and re-collect requested.**

Change of Practice – Cervical Screening Specimens (LBC)

Following a directive from the National Screening Unit and consistent with good laboratory practice across NZ, we will no longer consider cervical cytology samples as irreplaceable*, consequently all unlabelled, discrepant or poorly identified specimens will be rejected & not processed.

Dr Richard Massey
Lead Pathologist, Cytology
(07) 578 7073

Dr Stephen May
Clinical Director
(07) 858 0795

*Irreplaceable / precious specimens e.g. Histology are managed by a dedicated process to ensure accurate identification.