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This job aid is a quick reference highlighting key steps in the venipuncture procedure. It identifies the top patient safety events associated with collection of laboratory specimens and steps that can help ensure acceptance of laboratory specimens.

6 Top Collection Errors Reported by the Laboratory	
Duplicate Tests Requests	<i>e.g., duplicate request received; specimen already collected</i>
Specimen Labeling	<i>e.g., incomplete/illegible specimen labeling; missing initials of collector or witness; label placement error</i>
Specimen Compromised	<i>e.g., specimen clotted; hemolyzed</i>
Unacceptable Specimen	<i>e.g., wrong tube/container; expired container; wrong transport medium</i>
Specimen Volume	<i>e.g., inadequate ratio of blood to anticoagulant; tube not filled to fill line</i>
Patient Identification	<i>e.g., identifiers not supplied on the requisition and/or specimen; wrong patient</i>

Venipuncture Procedure Steps			
1	Review requisition or electronic order for collection requirements/duplicate request(s) (<i>e.g., fasting, timed testing, utilization rules</i>).	11	Collect samples following the Blood Collection Order of Draw. Completely fill all tubes to vacuum capacity. Gently invert tubes immediately after collection as required.
2	Obtain blood collection supplies and specimen label(s). Label(s) must positively identify patient (Patient name and unique identifier).	12	Remove needle and/or activate safety mechanism.
3	Locate the patient. Identify yourself to the patient and indicate the process to occur	13	Apply pressure to venipuncture site. Apply bandage.
4	Wash your hands in front of patient, put on gloves and reassure patient as required.	14	Dispose of supplies safely.
5	Confirm patient identity and compare to information on requisition and label(s).	15	Label tube(s) in presence of patient.
6	Position patient.	16	Perform final check, reading aloud the last three numbers of the MRN on the armband, specimen(s) and requisition/order.
7	Select venipuncture site.	17	Complete requisition including date and time of collection.
8	Apply tourniquet 8-10 cm above site. Select vein. Release tourniquet.	18	Ensure patient is comfortable.
9	Cleanse the site. Assemble necessary supplies and reapply tourniquet.	19	Wash your hands.
10	Perform venipuncture. Note: tourniquet must be released within one minute.	20	Ensure sample(s) and requisition are packaged and transported ASAP.

How to reduce Safety Improvement and Management System (SIMS) reports and ensure the specimen is accepted
I know that each tube is not expired, the tube type is correct and volume collected is adequate to perform the test.
I have labels with a full name and a unique identifier that both match the requisition.
I label the tube(s) in front of the patient.
I check the patient's identification against the requisition and/or label(s) to ensure all information matches.
I invert the specimen(s) gently the correct number of times. I ensure the correct volume has been drawn.
I provide all the required collection information including the date and time of collection.
I always perform the final patient identification – The Final Check – when the patient is wearing an armband.
I ensure specimen(s) and requisition are transported to the laboratory in a timely manner.

Reference: CC85-079 Venipuncture for Blood Collection