

# Newton-Wellesley Hospital's LAB REPORT

Spring 2009

## Accessing Lab Results Electronically

We are now live with Lifepoint Informatics, which offers Web portal access to results and the ability to order tests and lab supplies from any PC with Internet connectivity. For Lab clients on a different EMR system from the Partners LMR, Lifepoint enables our Lab to quickly interface to a variety of EMR systems. Please contact Wendy Daigle if you would like more information or are interested in setting up access for your facility.

## Patient Service Center Improvements

As of Monday, March 2, the new hours for our draw station located at 40 Second Avenue, Suite 115, Waltham, are 7:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. We reviewed the morning and late afternoon volume and determined this adjustment will better accommodate the majority of patient needs.

Thanks to some very talented Hospital employees, our draw station located in Newton-Wellesley Green Medical Office Building, Suite 360 has undergone a 360 renovation to the theme "Here Comes the Sun". The warm and inviting atmosphere provides for a positive patient experience. We invite you to stop by for a visit if you haven't seen it yet.

## New Laboratory Requisitions

In March, we began distribution of the new standard letter sized requisitions. By reformatting from a legal size, the storage of these requisitions will be easier for our Lab clients. Changes include removing the Cytology/Pathology section and creating a separate requisition for these tests. The new Lipid Panel Fasting with Reflex DLDL has been added under the Profiles and Panels section. The white box at the bottom of the requisition for customized tests has been reduced, enabling six lines of text for printing. If you currently have more than six lines, we will work with you to edit the content to fit the new size.

As always, the areas highlighted in yellow on the requisitions are required to authenticate the lab order: patient demographics, diagnosis for each test ordered, order date and time and physician signature.



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## Optimal Specimen Collection Tips

Ever wonder if the blood collection tube you utilize makes a difference with the result? It can and therefore, the best lab results start with the proper specimen collection.

When collecting a blood specimen for plasma glucoses, the best blood collection tube to use is the grey top. The grey top will eliminate the chance of a false low glucose that can occur if the specimen is submitted in an unspun serum separator tube (SST) or red top tube.

For general chemistry testing, it is better to use the SST tube instead of the red tops, as the serum sitting on the red cells for an extended period of time also yields false results. An SST tube has a gel that when spun, will separate the serum from the red cells.

## STAT Specimens

When stat pick ups are requested, our customer service representatives will now ask for the name of the patient. This will allow us to track each stat in detail should there be a question about the turnaround time. The information is not given to the couriers; it will be used for internal tracking only.

## Color-Coded Specimen Bags

We now have **RED STAT BAGS** available for ordering. This will make it easier for couriers and Central Processing staff to identify the stats and expedite the processing of them from the routine specimens. As a reminder, below are the bags to use for certain specimens:

**RED STAT bags** = Stats

**Clear bags** = Routine

**White bags** = Routine

**Blue bags** = Cytology/Paps

## Supply Order Form Available Electronically

If you would like to send us your order via email, please contact Wendy Daigle at [wdaigle@partners.org](mailto:wdaigle@partners.org) for an electronic supply order form. The completed form is then emailed to Customer Service, which will enable us to better track and process the requests.



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## Compliance Reminders

The three most common **specimen labeling errors** that we see daily that can impact patient safety are:

- 1) the date of birth on specimen does not match the date of birth on the requisition;
- 2) one of two required patient IDs on the specimen is missing; and
- 3) the specimen is received unlabeled.

In the case of an unlabeled specimen, unless it is irreplaceable such as a biopsy, it must be canceled and the specimen rejected. Please remind staff the importance of ensuring all specimens collected are properly labeled.

For the Laboratory to bill properly, the tests in red on the requisition, which are the **Medicare Limited Coverage Tests**, must include the specific **ICD-9 code(s)** or a descriptive diagnosis for each test ordered. It is critical that the diagnosis you provide to the Lab is consistent with those recorded in the patient's medical record on the date of service.

As part of the Joint Commission Patient Safety Goals, the Laboratory personnel calling to report a **critical value** is required to obtain the full name of the person taking and reading back the critical value.

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