
Section C: Collection and Delivery of Blood Transfusion Laboratory Specimens

Page 1 of 5

I.	Specimens Required for BTL Tests.....	1
II.	Drawing a BTL Specimen.....	1
III.	Drawing Blood Specimens on Patients who do not have an Armband.....	2
IV.	Patient Identification Unknown	2
V.	Umbilical Cord Specimens	3
VI.	Delivery of Blood Specimens to the BTL.....	3
VII.	Zero Tolerancy Policy for BTL Specimens.....	3

I. Specimens Required for BTL Tests

A 6mL EDTA (pink top) tube is required for most BTL tests.

See [Laboratory Information Test Guide](#) for a description of all Blood Transfusion Laboratory Tests, including specimens required, brief description of the test, and turn around times.

II. Drawing a BTL Specimen

Take Cerner labels(s) with appropriate specimen tubes (see above) to the patient's side. SEE [Section B - Ordering BTL tests](#).

During Computer Downtime (or in areas that do not order through Cerner): Take completed BTL requisition, specimen label(s) with appropriate specimen tubes to the patient's side. SEE [Section B – V “Completing BTL Requisition”](#) for additional information.

At the patient's side:

1. All Inpatients and Emergency patients must have an armband on their person BEFORE a blood specimen is drawn.
2. Compare the patient's name, PIN on the labels (and requisition if applicable) against the patient's armband. (See [section III](#) for instructions for drawing specimens on patients that do not have an armband)
3. If any of the above information is incorrect or absent, discrepancy must be resolved before blood specimen is drawn.

Date effective: Jan 2005

Date revised: Mar 2012

Section C: Collection and Delivery of Blood Transfusion Laboratory Specimens

Page 2 of 5

4. If labels, requisition (if applicable) and armband match, draw the patient's blood specimen.
 5. **Specimen MUST be labeled at the bedside.**
 - **Cerner Labels:** Phlebotomist MUST sign the LEFT side label, and legibly print Username and date/time specimen is drawn.
 - **Requisition (if applicable)** Phlebotomist MUST sign the requisition. Printed name, computer username or initials without signature is NOT acceptable. Date/time the specimen is drawn is also recorded on the requisition.
- See [Zero Tolerance Policy](#) in section VII.
6. Notify the BTL immediately if the patient:
 - has a blood group card listing blood group antibodies,
 - mentions previous delays when blood was required, or
 - has a history of transfusion reactions.

III. Drawing Blood Specimens on Patients who do not have an Armband

1. PreAdmit and OutPatients that do NOT have an armband on, MUST participate in the identification process by stating and spelling their full name and their date of birth.
2. This information must be compared to the specimen labels and requisition (if applicable) before the specimen is drawn.
3. If the patient is unable to participate or there is a discrepancy, this situation must be resolved before the specimen is drawn.

IV. Patient Identification Unknown

1. If a patient's identity is unknown, he/she is assigned a pseudonym, (*i.e.* UnKnown at LHSC, and John Doe at SJHC). When a pseudonym is used, the attendant staff must identify the patient to the person drawing the blood specimen.
2. A permanent PIN or Computer Downtime PIN, as well as the pseudonym must be assigned before a blood specimen for the BTL is drawn.
3. Notify the BTL immediately when the unknown ID is changed to the patient's legal name. It is best to remain with the pseudonym until the urgency is over.
4. If time permits, the BTL will request a new specimen be drawn on the previously unknown patient. In an urgent situation, when there is insufficient time to process a new specimen, the BTL will request that a "confirmation of name change" form be completed by an attending medical staff.
5. If at any time the PIN assigned to the patient changes, the BTL will require a new specimen, and will issue only Group O Uncrossmatched blood until new specimen is tested.

Date effective: Jan 2005

Date revised: Mar 2012

Section C: Collection and Delivery of Blood Transfusion Laboratory Specimens

Page 3 of 5

V. Umbilical Cord Specimens

Cord specimens must be ordered on the newborn's record, and labeled with the newborn's surname, sex and PIN.

VI. Delivery of Blood Specimens to the BTL

1. Labeled specimen, completed/signed LEFT side label and remaining Cerner labels are placed in a biohazard bag.
 - **During Computer Downtime (or in areas that do not order through Cerner):**
Labeled specimen and completed, signed requisition are placed in a biohazard bag.
2. BTL specimens must be sent in their own separate biohazard bag from the Core Lab specimens and Cerner labels must be completed on both the BTL and Core Lab specimens as they are received by 2 separate areas.
3. Specimens must be delivered to the BTL as soon as possible (see [Laboratory Information Test Guide](#) for acceptable maximum times). The pneumatic tube system, if available may be used to transport BTL specimens. Verify that the tube system is functioning before using this method of transport. For additional information see the [LLSG Laboratory Specimen Collection Guide](#): section on [Transporting Specimens to the Laboratory](#)

VII. Zero Tolerance Policy for BTL Specimens

To promote a culture where ALL specimens drawn for the Blood Transfusion Lab are drawn only after careful checking of patient identification, and to promote diligence in reviewing labels before they are placed on the specimen tube, the Blood Transfusion Lab has a policy of ZERO TOLERANCE.

1. **Minimum requirements for BTL labels and requisitions (if applicable)**
 - a. Specimen is labeled.
 - b. Full first and last name – correct, complete, identical and legible on both specimen label and completed LEFT side of the Cerner label or requisition (if applicable)
 - c. PIN number – correct, complete, identical and legible on both specimen label and completed LEFT side of the Cerner label or requisition (if applicable)
 - d. Phlebotomist must complete LEFT side of the Cerner label with **signature** (no initials), legible printed username and date/time.
If requisition is being used: Phlebotomist must **sign** the requisition – initials, printed name or computer code are not acceptable.

Section C: Collection and Delivery of Blood Transfusion Laboratory Specimens

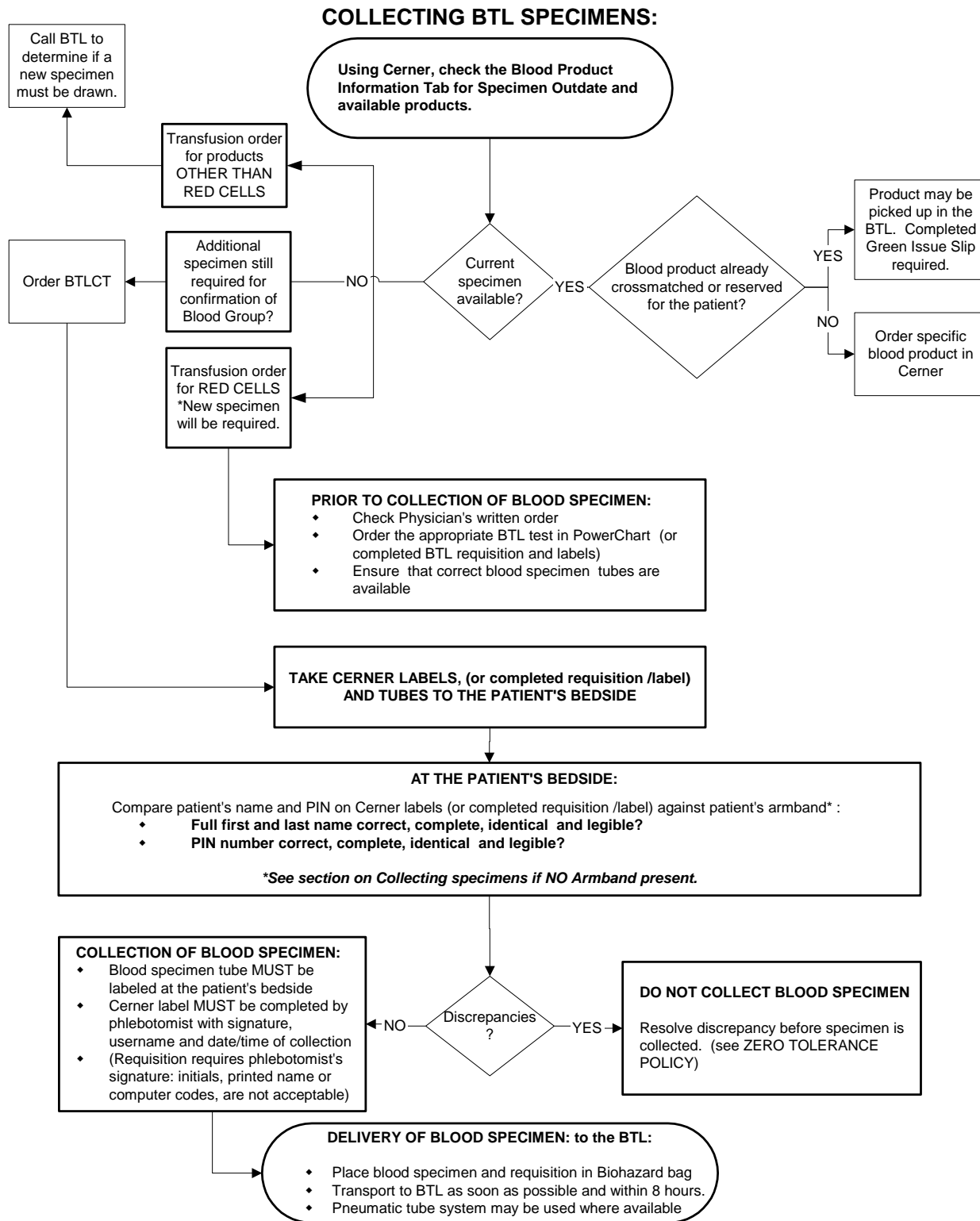
Page 4 of 5

2. **Action if specimen is not labeled or either the PIN or first and last name are not correct, complete, identical and legible on both specimen label and LEFT side label or requisition:**
 - a. Specimen discarded and new specimen requested
 - b. If new specimen is unobtainable, and transfusion requirement is urgent, patient will be transfused with O Rh negative, uncrossmatched blood and the attending physician must sign for release of uncrossmatched blood

3. **Action if phlebotomist did not sign LEFT side label or requisition, or if the LEFT side label or requisition was not sent with the specimen to the BTL:**

Phlebotomist may come to BTL to sign requisition/label and a release form indicating that patient identification was completed appropriately before blood specimen was drawn.

Section C: Collection and Delivery of Blood Transfusion Laboratory Specimens



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