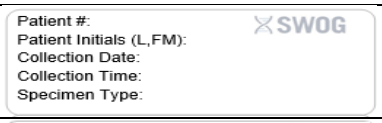
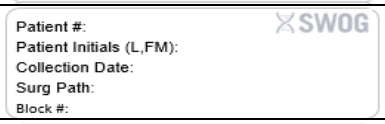
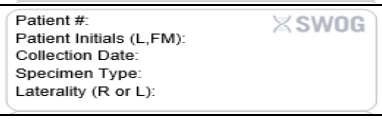
Specimen Labeling Requirements

If labeling requirements are not otherwise specified in the protocol or through a linked resource (usually in Section 15 in SWOG-led protocols), then specimens must be labeled in accordance with the standard requirements below.

Minimum Labeling Requirements	Additional Labeling Requirements for FFPE Tissue	Other Labeling Requirements
• SWOG Participant ID • Participant Initials (L,FM) • Date of specimen collection (MM/DD/YYYY) • Specimen Type (whole blood, serum, bone marrow, urine, stool, etc.)	From the corresponding pathology report: • Surgical Pathology ID (SPID, Accession #) • Block number (e.g., A2, 3E, 2-1, B, etc.)	**Bone Marrow:** • Laterality – right (R), or left (L) **Protocol-specific requirements:** • Collection time (e.g., PK specimens) • Tissue type – primary (P), metastatic (M), or normal (N) • Tissue slide thickness, in µm (microns)

Label	Example Label	Specimen type(s)
Basic labels *or MS Word Version for Download*		• Blood/blood products (e.g., plasma, serum, buffy coat) • Bone Marrow Aspirate and Bone Marrow Biopsy • Urine • Stool • Other biofluids
Time-based labels *or MS Word Version for Download*		• Specimens collected for studies where multiple samples are collected during the same day and the lab requires collection time to differentiate them for processing
Tissue Label *or MS Word Version for Download*		• FFPE tissue (blocks, slides, scrolls/curls) • Frozen tissue
Tissue Label with Tissue Type *or MS Word Version for Download*		• FFPE tissue (blocks, slides, scrolls/curls) • Frozen tissue
Tissue w microns label *or MS Word Version for Download*		• FFPE tissue slides or scrolls
Tissue w microns & Tissue Type label *or MS Word Version for Download*		• FFPE tissue slides or scrolls
Basic with Laterality *or MS Word Version for Download*		When the protocol requires indication of laterality, for: • Bone Marrow Aspirate • Bone marrow Biopsy

Additional Guidelines for Specimen Labeling

- For **vials and tubes**:
  - Place a label on each vial submitted.
  - Do not cover expiration date of collection tubes. Trim labels as needed to fit.
- For **FFPE tissue blocks**:
  - Place the specimen in a small bag and apply the label on the outside of the bag. Do not place the label directly on the tissue block.
  - The block must be labeled with the Surgical Pathology ID# (Accession#) *and* SWOG Participant ID.
- For **FFPE tissue slides**:
  - Place labels directly on the slide container or on each individual slide.
  - If placing labels on the slide container, then the SWOG Participant ID, surgical pathology ID (accession #) and block number must be included on each individual slide.
- For **frozen specimens**, cold storage can make the labels come off easily. Consider these tips:
  - For best results: Label specimens prior to freezing. Use laboratory marking pens or a cryogenic marker to label frozen biofluids and use labels that are designed to adhere to frozen surfaces.
    - Cryogenic labels designed to print on standard inkjet printers and adhere to frozen cryovials can be purchased at: Labtag.com. Please note that the labels are smaller than the standard label templates accessible from SWOG.org (via above links).
  - Wrap the label tightly all the way around the tube so the overlap is on top of the label (without covering the labeling data). Wrap the label with a bit of a tail so that the label can stick to itself instead of the tube.
  - Handwrite required information on the tubes in case the label comes off.

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