**Sample Acceptance Criteria**

**Sample Suitability**
In order to provide the most reliable patient results possible, IH Labs must adhere to strict guidelines for accepting patient specimens and requisitions. Most lab errors originate due to either incomplete or illegible requisitions, improperly labelled specimens, or unsuitable specimens. Samples where there is a discrepancy of information or lack of sufficient information with either the sample or the requisition cannot be processed until the discrepancy is resolved. The correct information must be obtained and confirmed in a timely manner or the specimen will be discarded.

- Specimens will be evaluated for adequacy by staff throughout the testing process.
- Inadequate or unsuitable specimens will be recollected.
- Samples processed with pre-testing conditions that may affect the test result will include a comment advising the physician of the condition.

**Specimen Rejection Criteria**

**Unacceptable specimens risk being discarded for the following reasons:**

- Unlabelled, illegibly-labelled, mislabelled, or inadequately labelled specimens
- Specimens received with incomplete requisition information or without a requisition
- Discrepancies between specimen label and requisition information
- Improper patient preparation (e.g. not fasting when required) prior to collection
- Incorrect time of collection where timing impacts result interpretation
- Incorrect container for test requested
- Visibly contaminated, leaking, damaged or inappropriate collection containers
- Broken slides
- Contaminated requisitions
- Inadequate sample size or volume, including over-filled samples
- Presence of interfering substances: Lipemic, hemolyzed, icteric or clotted specimens
- Duplicate requests or unnecessary specimens (i.e., more than one specimen for Stool C&S)
- Obviously incomplete 24 hour urine collection
- Syringe specimen with needle attached (attach supplied cap prior to transporting to lab)
- Improper specimen storage or transport temperature
- Transportation delays to the lab which may adversely affect the test result

**Irreplaceable Specimens**

- Improperly labelled specimens that are difficult to obtain or cannot be recollected must be correctly labelled prior to sample processing by the requesting physician or person responsible for the primary sample collection. A "Documentation of Inadequately Labelled or Mislabelled Irreplaceable Sample Form" (obtained in the lab) must be signed by the person making the correction.
- Corrections to specimen labels must not obscure the original information.
- A comment will be attached to the result indicating that the identification of the specimen may have been compromised and must include the name or computer mnemonic of the person correcting the information.

**Irreplaceable specimens include but are not limited to:**

- Sterile Body Fluids
- Tissue for biopsy or culture
- OR specimens for culture
- Fetal Fibronectin
- Amniotic fluid

**Resolution of Discrepancies**

- Every attempt will be made to resolve discrepancies due to requisition or specimen labelling with the ordering practitioner before testing is to proceed.
- Sample integrity will be maintained during the holding period.
- If resolution is delayed and the integrity of the sample will be compromised, the sample may be:
  - Processed with a comment documenting the discrepancy
  - Results may be held until the discrepancy has been resolved
  - This will be done at the discretion of the laboratory

*Please consult the Laboratory Medical Director with any uncertainties.*

**Sample submitted for Transfusion Medicine testing which are not properly labelled will be rejected, without exception.** All such samples must be redrawn.