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Subject:	CLINICAL LABORATORY				
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CLINICAL LABORATORY

Laboratory tests may be requested by the following priorities:

S - STAT: Emergency and critical patient status.

U - ASAP: Results needed quickly but patient status is not critical.

R - Routine: Collected and performed at lab's convenience (normally within same day of order).

STAT (or Now): Draw, analyze, and report immediately. It is the responsibility of the unit nurse to call these results to the doctor.

ASAP (or early): Analyze as soon as possible after time of collection. Collection will also be ASAP unless otherwise noted. Any order may be upgraded from ASAP to STAT.

Routine: Routines will typically be collected within 6 to 8 hours, as time permits without delaying STAT or ASAP collections. The test will be completed and reported on the day of order or at the next date scheduled for the test to be done. All Tests not ordered STAT or ASAP will be processed as routines according to schedules.

Routine Admission Tests: In order to assure testing on day of admission, send orders with patient or give them to the admitting clerk when you schedule admission. Analyses will be run according to the Test Schedule.

Emergency Room: All emergency room requests will be treated as STAT.

Arterial Blood Gases: Drawn when ordered and analyzed immediately (Stats and ASAP have priority, Routine order collections may be delayed up to 60 minutes).

Scheduled Routine Admissions: Send patient with orders for pre-admission lab work to the admissions office for pre-admission information and medical record assignment. The patient will be routed to the laboratory or pre-admission office for specimen collection. The lab results will be filed in the admitting office until the date of admission, when they will be added to the chart which accompanies the patient to the nursing unit.

Outpatient Surgery: Send patient with orders for pre-admission to the admissions office for pre-admission information and medical record assignment. The patient will be routed to the laboratory or pre-admission office for specimen collection. The lab results will be filed in the admitting office until the date of admission, when they will be added to the chart which accompanies the patient to the unit.

Pre-registration Testing: When feasible, pre-admitting the patient is greatly preferred. Type and screen collections can be included in the pre-admission lab work if the patient:

- Signs a consent form noting no pregnancies or blood transfusions in the past three months.

Computer Downtime: Orders should be forwarded to the Laboratory on manual requests forms. The following protocol applies.

Protocol: Send "daily" lab orders only. "Future" orders should remain on the floor and entered by nursing when the computer system comes back up. The laboratory will not enter "Future" orders.

Additional information pertaining to special instructions for ordering tests or patient preparation is in the nurse's procedure manual located at each nursing station. The pathologists are available to assist in interpretation of test results and will render consultation reports when requested.