

## Understanding and preventing wrong-patient electronic orders: a randomized controlled trial.

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Patient [misidentification errors](#)—such as laboratory results or [notes](#) being entered into the wrong patient chart—have been shown to occur in the [emergency department](#) and inpatient settings. Misidentification errors have the potential for serious patient harm when combined with [computerized provider order entry](#), as patients could receive unintended medications. In this study, investigators at an academic medical center first developed a measurement tool within their electronic medical record to identify wrong-patient orders (and found that they were surprisingly common), then conducted a randomized trial investigating the efficacy of two different strategies to prevent wrong-patient orders. A forcing function that mandated re-entry of patient identifiers before allowing order entry resulted in significant reduction in wrong-patient orders. In another [study](#), simply placing the patient's photograph on the order entry screen also appeared to reduce wrong-patient orders.