

A background image showing various red blood cells of different sizes and orientations, some appearing as biconcave discs and others as more rounded spheres, all set against a deep red background. The cells are rendered with a metallic, reflective texture.

GENERAL HEALTH TESTING

Ferritin Information Sheet

Iron and Ferritin

Iron is a mineral with several essential functions in the body. It is required to transport oxygen around the body and is also essential for growth, normal cell function, and the production of connective tissue and some hormones (1). Approximately 25% of the iron in a normal adult is present in a storage form (2), with the most common form being ferritin (accounting for about 2/3 of storage iron) (3).

Ferritin analyses

Ferritin analyses provide a sensitive, specific, and reliable measurement for determining iron deficiency at an early stage (4). They are useful for monitoring the reaccumulation of iron stores in iron-deficient individuals who are taking iron supplements. Ferritin analyses are also beneficial for determining iron overload and response to iron chelating agents (5).

What are optimal ferritin levels?

Healthy ferritin levels are 40 – 300 ng/mL for males and 20 – 200 ng/mL for females (6). Ferritin levels below 10 ng/mL are indicative of iron deficiency anemia, while levels above 200-300 ng/mL may indicate hemochromatosis or other health complications.

Ferritin Information Sheet

What are the signs of iron deficiency?

Low iron levels inhibit the production of hemoglobin, resulting in reduced red blood cells and a condition called anemia, which affects an estimated two billion people around the globe (7). Symptoms include:

- Tiredness
- Fatigue
- Pale skin
- Shortness of breath
- Headaches
- Dizziness

These initial symptoms of deficiency can go unnoticed, but if left untreated, anemia can have serious repercussions, including impaired cognitive function, disturbances in the digestive system, and impaired immunity. Pregnant women, young children and frequent blood donors are at a much higher risk of iron deficiency (8).

What are the signs of excess iron?

Increased iron concentrations occur in hemochromatosis and acute liver disease (9). Excess iron cannot be naturally excreted from the body, so it accumulates in organs and tissues, eventually causing serious health complications. The symptoms of iron overload include:

- Fatigue
- Joint pain
- Abdominal pain
- Memory problems
- Depression
- Decreased sex drive
- Shortness of breath
- Heart flutters

Further serious complications can occur in untreated individuals, including heart failure, liver cirrhosis and disease, and endocrine problems (10).

Where can I find more info?

Visit www.genetrackdiagnostics.com for full test information, including specimen collection requirements

CONTACT US:

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NOTE:

This brochure is provided for general information purposes only. It is not intended to replace medical advice from a health professional.

References

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