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Ferritin

Ferritin level is an indication of iron stores in your body. It is the main intracellular iron storage protein of the body. This test is ordered as part of a workup for fatigue, anemia, or restless leg syndrome. It is also included in evaluations of low libido in women.

This value is commonly low in women who are menstruating, who wither have heavy periods, or do not have enough iron in their diet, or both.

Your ferritin level of this date _____ was _____. This is [Deficient, less than optimal, Normal]. Optimal is generally between 50 and 200. It is worth attempting to get to the 50, as clinically we see improvement in energy and wellbeing.

Ferritin is also used as a marker of iron overload disorders such as Hemochromatosis and Porphyria in which the Ferritin level may be abnormally high. This is a potentially life threatening disorder, is genetic, and can easily be treated. Ferritin is also an acute-phase reactant, and can be elevated in the course of disease or acute malnourishment.

Iron treatment: Oral iron taken once or twice a day is recommended. Oral iron can cause intestinal symptoms of constipation, black stools, or nausea. There are some brands that are kinder to women than others. The NOW Iron complex (27mg) is one of the least constipating I have found; Also Twin Labs Iron (18mg) or Fred Meyer's Gentle Iron are often better tolerated. You need to take iron away from other medications and minerals by at least 2 hours. You can take with Vitamin C, with a meal, or on an empty stomach.

Dietary sources of iron include many foods, but the best source for amount of iron is red meat. Beef, Venison, or Buffalo are the top sources. Lean cuts will be your healthiest choices.

Herbal iron can complement the above choices but if we want to see results in a few months, will not replace them.

When women are not menstruating, due to menopause or surgery, iron stores should become a non-issue within five or six months of not bleeding.

Rechecking your Ferritin level in _____ months is recommended. Lab order will be in your chart.

SKP