



Diagnosis of Iron Deficiency: What You Should Know



What it covers

- Diagnosis of iron deficiency in adults, children aged 9 months to 4 years, menstruating and pregnant individuals, and individuals with inflammation



Why it matters

- Iron deficiency is a common but under-recognized condition due to lack of screening in high-risk populations as well as variability in laboratory reference ranges, which often include values within the deficient range, leading to underdiagnosis and undertreatment.
- Highest risk individuals include young children and individuals who are menstruating or pregnant, with prevalence being highest in women and persons of lower socioeconomic status disproportionately affected.
- Individuals with gastrointestinal conditions (e.g. celiac disease, inflammatory bowel disease, and those who have undergone bariatric surgery), dietary restrictions, blood loss or other chronic conditions (e.g. heart failure, rheumatologic disease, chronic kidney disease) are also at risk.



Who it affects

- Internist, hospitalists, family medicine practitioners, pediatricians, hematologists, GI specialists, obstetricians, gynecologists, and additional specialties involved in diagnosis of iron deficiency



What are the highlights

- In children aged 9 months to 4 years, a serum ferritin threshold of ≤ 20 ng/mL is diagnostic for iron deficiency.
- In adults, menstruating and pregnant individuals, a serum ferritin threshold of ≤ 30 ng/mL is diagnostic for iron deficiency. A higher threshold of ≤ 50 ng/mL can be considered in high risk populations.

Total number of panel recommendations: 5

REFERENCE

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For more information on the ASH Clinical Practice Guidelines on Iron Deficiency, visit hematology.org/IDA-guidelines

The American Society of Hematology (ASH) (www.hematology.org) is the world's largest professional society of hematologists dedicated to furthering the understanding, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disorders affecting the blood. For more than 50 years, the Society has led the development of hematology as a discipline by promoting research, patient care, education, training, and advocacy in hematology.