
Info Bulletin: Change to clinical decision limit for serum ferritin testing

Effective September 9, 2024, the lower limit of serum ferritin will move to a clinical decision limit of under 30 µg/L for adult patients and under 20 µg/L for pediatric patients at all major community laboratories in the province of Ontario.

This change is informed by the best available scientific evidence and will facilitate detection of iron deficiency. Iron deficiency is the most common micronutrient deficiency and is the number one cause of anemia worldwide; its detection and treatment has been declared a global priority by the World Health Organization. Non-anemic iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia are associated with both morbidity and mortality especially in females of reproductive age (including girls, women, and all people with the anatomy that allows for menstruation, pregnancy and lactation)

Iron deficiency is completely correctable using low-cost interventions, and oral iron supplementation is the first line treatment. Clinical decision support on diagnosis and treatment of iron deficiency can be found at: <https://www.hemequity.com/raise-the-bar-home>

This change in the serum ferritin reference interval to a clinical decision limit will be an important first step to increase the detection of both non-anemic iron deficiency and iron deficiency anemia in Ontario.

The next update of the Schedule of Benefits - Laboratory Services of the Ministry of Health of Ontario will include this change as a recommendation in the essential specifications section (previously preamble) associated with the ferritin test.

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