



***Mission:***

Iron Disorders Institute (IDI) exists so that people with iron disorders receive an early, accurate diagnosis, appropriate treatment and are equipped to live healthy lives.

***For more information about iron:***

**Books:**

*Guide to Hemochromatosis*  
*Guide to Anemia*  
*Exposing The Hidden Dangers of Iron*  
*The Hemochromatosis Cookbook*

**Newsletter:**

*nanograms* for patients

**At-a-Glance Desk Reference Charts**

**for Physicians:**

*Hereditary Hemochromatosis*  
*Iron Overload with Anemia*

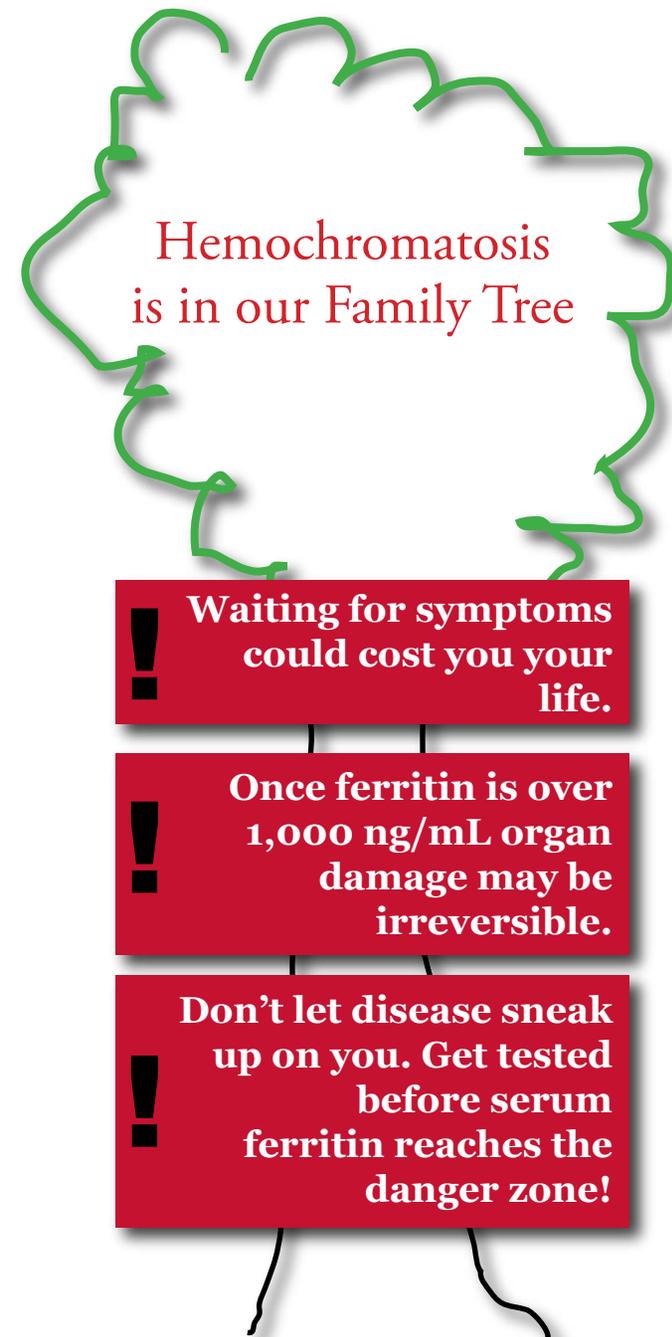
**Web sites:** [www.irondisorders.org](http://www.irondisorders.org)  
[www.hemochromatosis.org](http://www.hemochromatosis.org)

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For more information about iron, visit our website  
[www.irondisorders.org](http://www.irondisorders.org)

**... more than  
one million  
Americans  
have the  
genes...**



## Definition

**Hemochromatosis (HHC)** is an inherited metabolic condition that causes a person to absorb extra iron from the diet. The body has no natural way to get rid of **excess iron** except through blood loss or in some cases with medications formulated to remove iron.

**Most at risk for HHC** are white adult males and females who no longer have a period.

If **not detected or treated** hemochromatosis can result in damage to major organs which leads to diseases, such as, heart or liver failure, bone and joint disease, diabetes, impotence, infertility and hormone imbalances.

During the early stages most people with hemochromatosis **have no symptoms**. Later, they may **suffer many symptoms**. Chronic fatigue and joint pain are the most commonly reported but these two symptoms can occur in many diseases so hemochromatosis often is not detected until other disease develops. Some people are never diagnosed and may die prematurely of heart failure, liver cancer or liver failure, or they may need liver transplantation.

**...excess iron  
damages vital  
organs &  
can be fatal...**

## Detection

**Hereditary hemochromatosis can be diagnosed with a genetic test.**

**Excess iron** is determined with an **iron panel** which includes:

- 1. fasting serum iron** (*nothing by mouth after midnight except prescription medications*)
- 2. TIBC (total iron binding capacity)**  
*Fasting serum iron & TIBC are used to determine the transferrin-iron saturation percentage (TS%).*
- 3. serum ferritin (SF)**
- 4. hemoglobin (Hgb)**

### RESULTS:

*Normal Ranges For Adults*

- **TS%: 25-35%**
- **SF: 50-150ng/mL**
- **Hgb: men: >13.5 g/dL  
women >12.0 g/dL**

**Because HHC runs in families,** *all blood relatives are at risk and need to have their iron levels checked.*

## Treatment

The treatment for excess iron is **therapeutic phlebotomy (TP)**. *TP is just like a blood donation, except that therapeutic phlebotomy requires a physician's prescription.*

*If hemochromatosis is found **early enough** a person may never need therapeutic phlebotomy. Instead they may become **regular blood donors** and modify their diet.*

**Iron Disorders Institute provides many resources for hemochromatosis patients.**

**Visit our websites:**

[www.hemochromatosis.org](http://www.hemochromatosis.org)

[www.irondisorders.org](http://www.irondisorders.org)