

TRANSFERRIN, SERUM

mg/dL

(Immunoturbidimetry)

Note: Pregnancy and use of oral contraceptive cause increase in transferrin levels

Comments

Transferrin is a transport protein which transfers ferric iron from iron stores to bone marrow. In response to short term iron deficiency, transferrin levels rise markedly to twice the normal levels or higher. An elevated level on electrophoresis can have the appearance of a paraprotein in cases of severe iron deficiency. Administration of iron to deficient patients increases the saturation followed by return of transferrin to normal level. Chronic saturation of transferrin occurs in Idiopathic hemochromatosis and Transfusional hemosiderosis. In severe cases of Protein losing nephropathy, transferrin is lost from the circulation in the urine carrying iron with it, thus leading to Hypochromic anemia. Simultaneous measurement of transferrin with ferritin helps to differentiate anemia due to iron deficiency and chronic inflammation.