

Serum Ferritin and Iron Status of a Saudi Population Assessed from Birth to Adolescence

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The serum iron, total-iron binding capacity, and serum ferritin were measured in a normal Saudi population of both sexes, covering ages from birth to adolescence. Normality was assured by including only those subjects whose haemoglobin concentrations fell within the accepted range for Saudi Arabians in the particular sex and age group. Both serum iron and ferritin levels conformed to recognised patterns. The serum iron was highest at birth, lowest in children aged 6(0 12 months, and in adolescent girls. The serum ferritin after peaking during the first four weeks of life, also reached its lowest levels in young children and adolescent girls. In the age groups between 12 to 14 years. individuals are expected to have precarious iron stores, necessitating supplementation. Comparison was also made with several published series and differences in the Saudi iron status stressed