



# Your Hemochromatosis Diagnosis, Diet, Treatment and Alternatives Guide

*Ron Wellmann*

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Hemochromatosis is an inherited genetic condition that causes the body to absorb and store too much iron in its tissues. The condition is also called "iron overload" or "iron storage overload" disease. It's dangerous because while iron is an essential component of the hemoglobin in our red blood cells that enables these cells to transport oxygen, in its unbound form it also has a destructive nature that accelerates the oxidation or "rusting" of body tissues.

Of all the genetic disorders hemochromatosis is the most common, and routinely affects over one million people in just the United States alone. Additionally, hereditary hemochromatosis is also the most commonly inherited liver disease in Europe. Usually, most people have inherited the gene from an ancestor of centuries ago ... in particular, ancestors of Irish, German, English, Scottish, Welsh origin. A person who inherits two special identical genes will always pass on the disease to their offspring.

The physical basis of hemochromatosis is simple: the intestines absorb twice as much iron from food as normal, and thus excess iron slowly builds up in the body tissues. Many cases of hemochromatosis go undiagnosed because doctors and patients are unaware of the condition and don't know what to look for. The early symptoms include fatigue, sore joints and frequent infections, so they are easy to mistake for other conditions. As the excess iron due to hemochromatosis builds up in the organs - especially in the liver, heart, spleen, and pancreas - it tends to destroy cells. Some people have no outward symptoms whatsoever until the condition matures in mid-age, at which time they may have 200 times the normal levels of iron! Liver cirrhosis, liver cancer, heart failure, diabetes, arthritis are all common possibilities for hemochromatosis sufferers if the excess iron builds up to extremely high levels. The damage to one's liver and pancreas is especially dangerous because the harmful results can be permanent.

Joint pain and sore joints are the most common early complaints of people who have hemochromatosis. Other common symptoms include fatigue, weakness and lack of energy. There can also be a loss of libido/sex drive, abdominal pains and swelling, and various heart problems, such as heart flutters. There can also be a history of frequent infections, skin bronzing or hair loss. The buildup of excess iron levels within our bodies is one of the ways by which our body becomes oxidized, and therefore suffers from premature aging.

The screening to check for hemochromatosis involves multiple tests rather than just one blood test. Because the symptoms can be diverse and vague and can mimic the symptoms of many other conditions, and because blood tests can be misinterpreted, hemochromatosis often goes undiagnosed and untreated. This book tells you what to look for in terms of genetics, blood tests and symptoms. Frankly, many doctors just don't think to test for hemochromatosis and doctors most often focus on the conditions caused by hemochromatosis rather than search for the underlying cause.

The good news is that there are a number of treatment solutions available for hemochromatosis when it is diagnosed so a person can live a normal, healthy life. The treatments commonly employ phlebotomies, which means donating blood, but alternative therapies are also available to help slow the absorption of iron from the diet. If you are seeking the basis of a hemochromatosis diet as to what to eat and avoid, such as

using calcium to block iron absorption and avoiding vitamin C supplements, as well as what other steps you might take to inhibit iron absorption, you will find them all covered in this excellent self-help guide. This book reveals the proper hemochromatosis diet to follow for anyone who has the condition.

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