

HEMOCHROMATOSIS AWARENESS MONTH

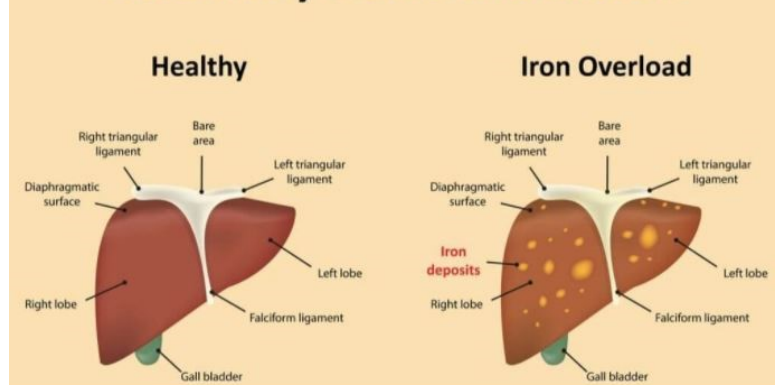
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What is Hemochromatosis?

Hemochromatosis is an iron storage disorder that can cause the body to absorb too much iron from foods and other sources, such as multivitamin supplements with iron. This extra iron can gradually build up in the body's tissues and organs, particularly in the liver cells, heart, pancreas, joints, and pituitary gland. If left untreated, this iron buildup may lead to tissue and organ damage over time. Primary hemochromatosis, also called hereditary hemochromatosis, is an inherited disorder. Secondary hemochromatosis is caused by anemia, alcoholism, and other disorders.

Hereditary Hemochromatosis



Symptoms

It can be difficult to diagnose hemochromatosis in its earliest, most treatable stages because symptoms either don't occur until it's too late or they are mistaken for signs of other disorders.

The Facts:

- At least 16 million Americans are thought to have elevated iron.
- In the United States, about 10% of Americans carry a defective gene that causes most hemochromatosis.
- In the United States, the most common form of hemochromatosis in adults is hereditary hemochromatosis.
- Caucasians are more likely than other groups to have hemochromatosis because the gene mutation is most common in this population.