

**Name of the test:**

Ferritin test

**Alternative name(s) of the test:**

None.

**What this test is used for:**

This test measures the amount of ferritin in the blood. Ferritin is a protein which stores iron in the body and later, releases it when needed.

When iron deficiency is present, the ferritin levels decrease in the blood, and vice versa – if there is an excessive amount of iron in the body, the ferritin levels increase.

Pregnant women have an increased need for iron and if its uptake is not sufficient, then ferritin levels decrease.

**When the test is ordered:**

The ferritin test is ordered, when a patient has symptoms of iron deficiency or iron overload.

Iron-deficiency anemia often occurs in pregnant women, so the ferritin test is sometimes ordered during pregnancy as well.

**How this test is performed:**

A blood sample is taken from a vein.

**How to prepare for the test:**

Usually the ferritin test is performed in the morning and fasting is required several hours prior to the test.

**Interpretation of results:**

Low ferritin levels may be due to iron deficiency, however the ferritin test results alone are not enough for diagnosis, so other tests may be performed as well.

High ferritin levels may be caused by numerous different disorders. It is essential to consult a doctor in order to correctly interpret the ferritin test results.