

Iron Homeostasis: Current Understanding

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Iron is an integral part of haemoglobin molecule. Its deficiency leads to the commonest type of anaemia in all geographic regions and racial groups. Its overload, if associated with presence of unbound iron in tissues, is characterized by tissue injury which may be severe enough to cause significant morbidity as a result of damage to heart, liver, pancreas, endocrines and almost any tissue. During the last decade, many poorly understood areas of iron homeostasis have been unraveled, especially pertaining to the influx of iron in the upper part of small intestine, its trafficking in the plasma, metabolism in the macrophage, red cell precursors & hepatocytes, and role of genes in iron metabolism.