Understanding Hemochromatosis:Types, Symptoms, Diagnosis, andTreatmentaa

Exploring the Causes, Diagnosis, and Management of Iron Overload Disorder

Hemochromatosis is a common genetic disordercharacterized by excessive iron
absorption from foods. It occurs due to a defect in agene that regulates the absorption and storage of iron in the body. Thisdefect causes the body to absorb too much iron from foods consumed withoutany ability to regulate the
levels. Over time, the excess iron accumulates invital organs like the liver, heart and pancreas and can cause serious tissuedamage and organfailure if
left untreated.

Types of Hemochromatosis

There are two main types of hemochromatosis –hereditary and secondary.

Hereditary Hemochromatosis

Hereditary hemochromatosis, also called primaryhemochromatosis, is the most
common form. Hemochromatosis
is an autosomal recessive condition passed downthrough families. The faulty gene controlling iron absorption can beinherited from both parents even
if they do not have symptoms themselves.Symptoms usually appear later in life,
often between the ages of 40-60 years. A simpleblood test can detect the genetic mutation associated with this type ofhemochromatosis.

Secondary Hemochromatosis

Secondary hemochromatosis develops as a result ofother conditions that cause
iron overload. These include certain blood disorderslike thalassemia major which requires frequent blood transfusions, hepatitis C which interfereswith iron excretion, andrare metabolic disorders affecting iron metabolism. Itcan also occur as a side effect of chemotherapy treatments or from drinking contaminated well water with high iron content. Unlike hereditary hemochromatosis,
secondary type is not inherited and usually requires treatment of the underlying condition.

Signs and Symptoms

In early stages, hemochromatosis often presents no visible symptoms. As iron