Overview

Useful For
- Diagnosing vitamin A deficiency and toxicity
- Monitoring vitamin A therapy

Method Name
Liquid Chromatography-Tandem Mass Spectrometry (LC-MS/MS)

NY State Available
Yes

Specimen

Specimen Type
Serum

Specimen Required
Patient Preparation: Fasting overnight (12-14 hours) (infants: collect specimen prior to next feeding)
Collection Container/Tube:
Preferred: Red top
Acceptable: Serum gel
Submission Container/Tube: Plastic vial
Specimen Volume: 0.5 mL

Forms
If not ordering electronically, complete, print, and send a General Request (T239) with the specimen.

Specimen Minimum Volume
0.25 mL

Reject Due To
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OK</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross hemolysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross lipemia</td>
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<td>Gross icterus</td>
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Specimen Stability Information

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<tr>
<th>Specimen Type</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Time</th>
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Test Definition: VITA

Vitamin A, Serum

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<th>Serum</th>
<th>Refrigerated (preferred)</th>
<th>28 days</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambient</td>
<td></td>
<td>28 days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frozen</td>
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Clinical & Interpretive

Clinical Information
The level of vitamin A in the plasma or serum is a reflection of the quantities of vitamin A and carotene (provitamin A) ingested and absorbed by the intestine (carotene is converted to vitamin A by intestinal absorptive cells and hepatocytes).

Vitamin A plays an essential role in the function of the retina (adaptation to dim light), is necessary for growth and differentiation of epithelial tissue, and is required for growth of bone, reproduction, and embryonic development. Together with certain carotenoids, vitamin A enhances immune function, reducing the consequences of some infectious diseases.

Degenerative changes in eyes and skin are commonly observed in vitamin A deficiency. Poor adaptation of vision to darkness (night blindness) is an early symptom that may be followed by degenerative changes in the retina. In developing countries, vitamin A deficiency is the principal preventable cause of blindness. Severe or prolonged deficiency leads to dry eye (xerophthalmia) that can result in corneal ulcers, scarring, and blindness. Another important consequence of inadequate intake is acquired immunodeficiency disease, where an increased incidence of death is associated with deficient vitamin A levels. Increased susceptibility is associated with vitamin A deficiency. In patients with HIV, vitamin A deficiency is associated with increased disease progression and mortality.

Vitamin A in excess can be toxic. In particular, chronic vitamin A intoxication is a concern in normal adults who ingest more than 15 mg per day and children who ingest more than 6 mg per day of vitamin A over a period of several months. Manifestations are various and include dry skin, cheliosis, glossitis, vomiting, alopecia, bone demineralization and pain, hypercalcemia, lymph node enlargement, hyperlipidemia, amenorrhea, and features of pseudotumor cerebri with increased intracranial pressure and papilledema. Liver fibrosis with portal hypertension may also result. Congenital malformations, like spontaneous abortions, craniofacial abnormalities, and valvular heart disease have been described in pregnant women taking vitamin A in excess. Consequently, in pregnancy, the daily dose of vitamin A should not exceed 3 mg.

Reference Values
0-6 years: 11.3-64.7 mcg/dL
7-12 years: 12.8-81.2 mcg/dL
13-17 years: 14.4-97.7 mcg/dL
> or =18 years: 32.5-78.0 mcg/dL

Interpretation
The World Health Organization recommendations supplementation when vitamin A levels fall below 20.0 mcg/dL.

Severe deficiency is indicated at levels less than 10.0 mcg/dL.
Vitamin A values above 120.0 mcg/dL suggest hypervitaminosis A and associated toxicity.

**Cautions**
Acute ethanol ingestion may result in increased serum vitamin A levels.

Testing of nonfasting specimens or the use of vitamin supplementation can result in elevated serum vitamin concentrations. Reference values were established using specimens from individuals who were fasting.

**Clinical Reference**

**Performance**

**Method Description**
Deuterated vitamin A (d6-all-trans retinol) is added to serum as an internal standard. Vitamin A (all-trans retinol) and the deuterated internal standard are extracted from the specimens using on-line turbulent flow high-performance liquid chromatography and analyzed by liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry using multiple reaction monitoring in positive mode. (Unpublished Mayo method)

**PDF Report**
No

**Day(s) Performed**
Monday through Friday

**Report Available**
2 to 5 days

**Specimen Retention Time**
14 days

**Performing Laboratory Location**
Rochester

**Fees & Codes**

**Fees**
- Authorized users can sign in to Test Prices for detailed fee information.
Test Classification
This test was developed, and its performance characteristics determined by Mayo Clinic in a manner consistent with CLIA requirements. This test has not been cleared or approved by the US Food and Drug Administration.

CPT Code Information
84590

LOINC® Information

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