

# HAIR ELEMENTS



LAB#:  
 PATIENT:  
 SEX: Male  
 AGE: 5  
 CLIENT#:

POTENTIALLY TOXIC ELEMENTS				
TOXIC ELEMENTS	RESULT µg/g	REFERENCE RANGE	PERCENTILE	
			68 <sup>th</sup>	95 <sup>th</sup>
Aluminum	5.6	< 8.0		
Antimony	0.084	< 0.066		
Arsenic	0.12	< 0.080		
Beryllium	< 0.01	< 0.020		
Bismuth	0.028	< 0.13		
Cadmium	0.033	< 0.15		
Lead	0.13	< 1.0		
Mercury	0.10	< 0.40		
Platinum	< 0.003	< 0.005		
Thallium	< 0.001	< 0.010		
Thorium	0.001	< 0.005		
Uranium	0.010	< 0.060		
Nickel	0.06	< 0.40		
Silver	0.02	< 0.20		
Tin	0.38	< 0.30		
Titanium	0.77	< 1.0		
Total Toxic Representation				

ESSENTIAL AND OTHER ELEMENTS							
ELEMENTS	RESULT µg/g	REFERENCE RANGE	PERCENTILE				
			2.5 <sup>th</sup>	16 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup>	84 <sup>th</sup>	97.5 <sup>th</sup>
Calcium	304	125- 370					
Magnesium	14	12- 30					
Sodium	330	12- 90					
Potassium	240	12- 40					
Copper	6.0	8.0- 16					
Zinc	100	100- 190					
Manganese	0.18	0.20- 0.55					
Chromium	0.22	0.26- 0.50					
Vanadium	0.019	0.030- 0.10					
Molybdenum	0.076	0.050- 0.13					
Boron	2.5	0.60- 4.0					
Iodine	0.32	0.25- 1.3					
Lithium	0.008	0.007- 0.023					
Phosphorus	193	160- 250					
Selenium	0.68	0.95- 1.7					
Strontium	0.27	0.16- 1.0					
Sulfur	44900	45500- 53000					
Barium	0.32	0.16- 0.80					
Cobalt	0.006	0.013- 0.035					
Iron	4.6	8.0- 19					
Germanium	0.030	0.045- 0.065					
Rubidium	0.23	0.016- 0.18					
Zirconium	0.14	0.040- 1.0					

SPECIMEN DATA			RATIOS		
<b>COMMENTS:</b> 96999			<b>ELEMENTS</b>	<b>RATIOS</b>	<b>EXPECTED RANGE</b>
Date Collected: 6/26/2006	Sample Size: 0.196 g		Ca/Mg	21.7	4- 30
Date Received: 7/1/2006	Sample Type: Head		Ca/P	1.58	0.8- 8
Date Completed: 7/6/2006	Hair Color:		Na/K	1.38	0.5- 10
Methodology: ICP-MS	Treatment:		Zn/Cu	16.7	4- 20
	Shampoo:		Zn/Cd	> 999	> 800
		V06.99			

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## HAIR ELEMENTS REPORT INTRODUCTION

Hair is an excretory tissue for essential, nonessential and potentially toxic elements. In general, the amount of an element that is irreversibly incorporated into growing hair is proportional to the level of the element in other body tissues. Therefore, hair elements analysis provides an indirect screening test for physiological excess, deficiency or maldistribution of elements in the body. Clinical research indicates that hair levels of specific elements, particularly potentially toxic elements such as cadmium, mercury, lead and arsenic, are highly correlated with pathological disorders. For such elements, levels in hair may be more indicative of body stores than the levels in blood and urine.

All screening tests have limitations that must be taken into consideration. The correlation between hair element levels and physiological disorders is determined by numerous factors. Individual variability and compensatory mechanisms are major factors that affect the relationship between the distribution of elements in hair and symptoms and pathological conditions. It is also very important to keep in mind that scalp hair is vulnerable to external contamination of elements by exposure to hair treatments and products. Likewise, some hair treatments (e.g. permanent solutions, dyes, and bleach) can strip hair of endogenously acquired elements and result in false low values. Careful consideration of the limitations must be made in the interpretation of results of hair analysis. The data provided should be considered in conjunction with symptomology, diet analysis, occupation and lifestyle, physical examination and the results of other analytical laboratory tests.

**Caution:** The contents of this report are not intended to be diagnostic and the physician using this information is cautioned against treatment based solely on the results of this screening test. For example, copper supplementation based upon a result of low hair copper is contraindicated in patients afflicted with Wilson's Disease.

### Antimony High

Hair is a preferred tissue for analysis of Antimony (Sb) exposure and body burden. Elevated hair Sb levels have been noted as long as a year after exposure.

Sb is a nonessential element that is chemically similar to but less toxic than arsenic. Food and smoking are the usual sources of Sb. Thus cigarette smoke can externally contaminate hair, as well as contribute to uptake via inhalation. Gunpowder (ammunition) often contains Sb. Firearm enthusiasts often have elevated levels of Sb in hair. Other possible sources are textile industry, metal alloys, and some antihelminthic and antiprotozoic drugs. Sb is also used in the manufacture of paints, glass, ceramics, solder, batteries, bearing metals and semiconductors.

Like arsenic, Sb has a high affinity for sulfhydryl groups on many enzymes. Sb is conjugated with glutathione and excreted in urine and feces. Therefore, excessive exposure to Sb has the potential to deplete intracellular glutathione pools.

Early signs of Sb excess include: fatigue, muscle weakness, myopathy, nausea, low back pain, headache, and metallic taste. Later symptoms include hemolytic anemia, myoglobinuria, hematuria and renal failure. Transdermal absorption can lead to "antimony spots" which resemble chicken pox. Respiratory tissue irritation may result from inhalation of Sb particles or dust.

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A confirmatory test for recent or current exposure is the measurement of Sb in the urine.

#### Arsenic High

In general, hair provides a rough estimate of exposure to Arsenic (As) absorbed from food and water. However, hair can be contaminated externally with As from air, water, dust, shampoos and soap. Inorganic As, and some organic As compounds, can cause toxicity. Some research suggests that As may be essential at extremely low levels but its function is not understood. Inorganic As accumulates in hair, nails, skin, thyroid gland, bone and the gastrointestinal tract. Organic As is rapidly excreted in the urine.

As can cause malaise, muscle weakness, vomiting, diarrhea, dermatitis, and skin cancer. Long-term exposure may affect the peripheral nervous, cardiovascular and hematopoietic systems. As is a major biological antagonist to selenium.

Common sources of As are insecticides (calcium and lead arsenate), well water, smog, shellfish (arsenobetaine), and industrial exposure, particularly in the manufacture of electronic components (gallium arsenide).

As burden can be confirmed by urine elements analysis. Comparison of urine As levels pre and post provocation (DMPS, DMSA, D-penicillamine) permit differentiation between recent uptake and body stores.

#### Tin High

Hair Tin (Sn) levels have been found to correlate with environmental exposure. Depending on chemical form, Sn is a potentially toxic element. Inorganic Sn has a low degree of toxicity, while organic Sn has appreciable toxicity.

The main source of Sn is food. Other possible sources are: dental amalgams, cosmetics, preservatives, food and beverage containers, pewter, bronze, and anticorrosive platings. Symptoms of excess Sn include: skin, eye, and GI tract irritation, muscle weakness, anemia, and testicular degeneration.

A confirmatory test for excessive accumulation of Sn is the measurement of Sn in urine before and after provocation with a chelation/complexing agent.

#### Sodium High

Sodium (Na) is an essential element with extracellular electrolyte functions. However, these functions do not occur in hair. Hair Na measurement should be considered a screening test only; blood testing for Na and electrolyte levels is much more diagnostic and indicative of status. High hair Na may have no clinical significance or it may be the result of an electrolyte imbalance. A possible imbalance for which high hair Na is a consistent finding is adrenocortical hyperactivity. In this condition, blood Na is elevated while potassium is low. Potassium is elevated (wasted) in the urine. Observations at DDI indicate that Na and potassium levels in hair are commonly high in association with elevated levels of potentially toxic elements. The elevated Na and potassium levels are frequently concomitant with low levels of calcium and magnesium in hair. This apparent

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phenomenon requires further investigation.

Appropriate tests for Na status as an electrolyte are measurements of Na in whole blood and urine, and measurements of adrenocortical function.

#### Potassium High

High hair Potassium (K) is not necessarily reflective of dietary intake or nutrient status. However, elevated K may be reflective of metabolic disorders associated with exposure to potentially toxic elements.

K is an electrolyte and a potentiator of enzyme functions, but neither of these functions take place in hair. Elevated K in hair may reflect overall retention of K by the body or maldistribution of this element. In adrenocortical insufficiency, K is increased in blood, while it is decreased in urine; cellular K may or may not be increased. Also, hair is occasionally contaminated with K from some shampoos. Observations at DDI indicate that K and sodium levels in hair are commonly high in association with toxic element burden. The elevated K and sodium levels are often concomitant with low levels of calcium and magnesium in hair. This apparent phenomena requires further investigation.

Elevated hair potassium should be viewed as a screening test. Appropriate tests for excess body K include measurements of packed red blood cell K; serum or whole blood K and sodium/K ratio, measurement of urine K and sodium/K ratio; and an assessment of adrenocortical function.

#### Copper Low

Hair Copper (Cu) levels are usually indicative of body status with two exceptions: (1) addition of exogenous Cu (occasionally found in hair preparations or algacides in swimming pools/hot tubs), and (2) low hair Cu in Wilson's or Menkes' diseases. In Wilson's disease, Cu transport is defective and Cu accumulates, sometimes to toxic levels, in intestinal mucosa, liver and kidneys. At the same time, it is low in hair and deficient in other peripheral tissues. In Menkes' disease, the activity of Cu dependent enzymes is very low. Cu supplementation is contraindicated in these diseases.

Cu is an essential element that is required for the activity of certain enzymes. Erythrocyte superoxide dismutase (SOD) is a Cu (and zinc) dependent enzyme; lysyl oxidase which catalyzes crosslinking of collagen is another Cu dependent enzyme. Adrenal catecholamine synthesis is Cu dependent, because the enzyme dopamine beta-hydroxylase, which catalyzes formation of norepinephrine from dopamine, requires Cu.

Symptoms of Cu deficiency include: elevated cholesterol, increased inflammatory responses, anemia, bone and collagen disorders, reproductive failure, and impaired immunity. Possible reasons for a Cu deficiency include: intestinal malabsorption, insufficient dietary intake, use of oral contraceptives, molybdenum excess, zinc excess, and chelation therapy. Cu status is adversely affected by excess of antagonistic metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium, and manganese.

Confirmatory tests for Cu deficiency are serum ceruloplasmin to rule out Wilson's disease (ceruloplasmin is deficient in Wilson's disease), a whole blood or packed red blood cell elements analysis, and a functional test for Cu (barring zinc deficiency) is measurement of erythrocytes SOD activity. Erythrocyte SOD activity is subnormal with Cu deficiency.

#### Iron Low

Hair Iron (Fe) levels do not correlate with Fe assimilation as determined by serum ferritin, Fe binding capacity, or transferrin saturation. A very low hair Fe result should be viewed only as possible indication for further tests because hair is only a screening test for this element. Fe supplementation is not indicated nor recommended solely on the basis of the measured hair Fe level. Unwarranted Fe supplementation, particularly in combination with ascorbic acid, can result in Fe overload. A large body of scientific literature indicates significant relationships between dietary Fe overload and heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, and arthritis. (Biochem. Mol. Med.; 54(1):1-11, 1995)

#### Manganese Low

Hair Manganese (Mn) levels correlate well with Mn levels in other body tissues. Hair Mn levels are commonly low, in part due to low dietary Mn intake and the interaction of Mn with phosphates in the gut. Intestinal malabsorption also limits Mn uptake.

Mn is an essential element that is involved in energy metabolism, and bone and cartilage formation. Mn is an activator of many important enzymes including: mitochondrial superoxide dismutase, arginase, and pyruvate carboxylase.

Symptoms associated with Mn deficiency include: fatigue, lack of physical endurance, slow growth of fingernails and hair, impaired metabolism of bone and cartilage, dermatitis, weight loss, and reduced fertility. Increased allergic sensitivities and inflammation are often associated with low Mn. Seizures are occasionally reported to be associated with severe Mn deficiency.

An appropriate laboratory test to confirm Mn deficiency is whole blood elements analysis.

#### Chromium Low

Hair Chromium (Cr) is a good indicator of tissue levels and may provide a better indication of status than do urine or blood plasma/serum (Nielsen, F.H. In Modern Nutrition on Health and Disease; 8th Edition, 1994. Ed. Shils, Olson and Shike. Lea and Febiger, Philadelphia). Hair Cr is seldom affected by permanent solutions, dyes and bleaches.

Cr (trivalent) is generally accepted as an essential trace element that is required for maintenance of normal glucose and cholesterol levels; it potentiates insulin function, i.e., as a part of "glucose tolerance factor". Deficiency conditions may include hyperglycemia, transient hyper/hypoglycemia, fatigue, accelerated atherosclerogenesis, elevated LDL cholesterol, increased need for insulin and diabetes-like symptoms, and impaired stress responses. Marginal or insufficient Cr is common in the U.S., where average tissue levels are low compared to those found in many other countries. Low hair Cr appears to be associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease and an atherogenic lipoprotein profile (low HDL, high LDL). Common causes of deficiency are ingestion of highly processed foods, inadequate soil levels of Cr, gastrointestinal dysfunction, and insufficient vitamin B-6. Cr status is also compromised in patients with iron overload/high transferrin saturation because transferrin is a major transport protein for Cr.

Confirmatory tests for Cr adequacy include glucose tolerance and packed red blood cell elements analysis.

#### Cobalt Low

One can not determine vitamin B-12 status by use of hair analysis, and the clinical significance of low hair Cobalt (Co) levels is not known. Hair is analyzed for Co primarily for detection of excessive intake of the potentially toxic element.

There is little evidence that Co has an essential function in humans other than as an obligatory constituent of the vitamin B-12 molecule. Humans absorb Co as inorganic Co and as vitamin B-12; the body pools of each fluctuate independently. Humans cannot convert inorganic Co to vitamin B-12.

The dietary content of Co is highly variable, depending upon types of foods eaten, geographical location and type of soil. Vegetarians often have lower Co levels than meat eaters.

Appropriate tests for determination of vitamin B-12 status are the measurement of urine levels of methylmalonic acid (elevated with vitamin B-12 coenzyme deficiency/dysfunction), a quantitative blood assay for vitamin B-12, a urine amino acids analysis (several metabolic steps require vitamin B-12), and diet analysis.

#### Vanadium Low

Vanadium (V) is typically found at low levels in hair and the clinical significance of the measured result of lower than average hair V is not known. V is measured in hair for research purposes because it has been postulated to be an essential microtrace element. Indirect data to support this postulate have been derived from experimental models. Suggested functions for V include: regulation of sodium-potassium-ATPase, intracellular glutathione metabolism, thyroid metabolism, and insulin mimetic effects at pharmacological doses.

Average dietary V intake varies considerably between 20 mcg to 2 mg. Food sources of V include: liver, fish, radishes, grains, nuts, and vegetable oils.

#### Selenium Low

Selenium (Se) is normally found in hair at very low levels, and several studies provide evidence that low hair Se is reflective of dietary intake and associated with cardiovascular disorders. Utilization of hair Se levels to assess nutritional status, however, is complicated by the fact that use of Se- or sulfur-containing shampoo markedly increases hair Se (externally) and can give a false high value.

Se is an extremely important essential element due to its antioxidative function as an obligatory component of the enzyme glutathione peroxidase. Se is also protective in its capacity to bind and "inactivate" mercury, and Se is an essential cofactor in the deiodination of T-4 to active T-3 (thyroid hormone). Some conditions of functional hypothyroidism therefore may be due to Se deficiency (Nature; 349:438-440, 1991); this is of particular concern with mercury exposure. Studies have also indicated significant inverse correlations between Se and heart disease, cancer, and asthma.

Selenium deficiency is common and can result from low dietary intake of Se or vitamin E, and exposure to toxic metals, pesticides/herbicides and chemical solvents.

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Symptoms of Se deficiency are similar to that of vitamin E deficiency and include muscle aches, increased inflammatory response, loss of body weight, alopecia, listlessness, skeletal and muscular degeneration, growth stunting, and depressed immune function.

Confirmatory tests for Se deficiency are Se content of packed red blood cells, and activity of glutathione peroxidase in red blood cells.

#### Sulfur Low

Sulfur (S) in hair is covalently bound within the cysteinyl residues of hair protein. On average, cysteine constitutes about sixteen percent of the total amino acid content of hair. Although not well documented, hair S levels may vary with S-containing amino acid status in the body. Interpretation of hair S levels is confounded by the fact some hair conditioners and permanent treatments increase hair S while straighteners can significantly lower hair S levels.

Observations at DDI indicate that hair S and urine sulfhydryl amino acid levels are often low in Hg burdened patients.

Appropriate tests to determine sulfhydryl amino acid status are plasma or urine amino acid analyses.

#### Total Toxic Element Indication

The potentially toxic elements vary considerably with respect to their relative toxicities. The accumulation of more than one of the most toxic elements may have synergistic adverse effects, even if the level of each individual element is not strikingly high. Therefore, we present a total toxic element "score" which is estimated using a weighted average based upon relative toxicity. For example, the combined presence of lead and mercury will give a higher total score than that of the combination of silver and beryllium.