

CAROTENE, BETA

This test is used to confirm carotenoderma, detect fat malabsorption, and detected depressed carotene levels that may be found in cases of steatorrhea. Vitamin A serum levels do not correlate well with liver stores. Carotenemia may be confused with jaundice. Beta carotene levels have also been reported as high with some cases of diabetes mellitus, myxedema, chronic nephritis, nephrotic syndrome, liver disease, hypothyroidism, type I, IIA, and IIB hyperlipoproteinemia, and in a group of amenorrheic hypogonadotropic women. An inverse relationship between serum beta-carotene and the risk of bronchogenic squamous cell carcinoma is reported. The highest carotene levels are found when large amounts of vegetables are ingested. Oral leukoplakia responds well to beta-carotene therapy. Low beta-carotene levels are associated with oral contraceptives and smoking.

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