



Thalassemia

Thalassemia includes several different types of anemia. Alpha and beta thalassemias are named for the part of the oxygen carrying protein that is lacking in the hemoglobin of the red blood cells. Thalassemia occurs most frequently in people of Italian, Greek, Middle Eastern, Asian and African descent. The disease can cause the child to have frequent infections and an enlarged spleen, liver and heart. A hemoglobin electrophoresis to diagnose thalassemia is indicated if the MCV value on the routine blood count (CBC) is less than 80.