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Contributions: MG designed the research, recruited the patients, gathered data, performed in-vitro experiments, analyzed and interpreted the data and wrote the paper, as part of his Ph.D. thesis at the UCL. PE helped gather data and performed serum assays (NTBI, LPI, TfSat, sTfR1, GDF-15). EV helped conduct in-vitro experiments. RH donated crucial reagents (CP40), helped interpret the data and contributed to the discussion. JP co-designed and supervised the research, helped interpret the data and write the paper. All authors critically reviewed and accepted the manuscript before submission.