A Case of Green Blood
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CASE DESCRIPTION
An 86-year-old woman underwent hysterectomy for endometrial adenocarcinoma. A blood sample for routine laboratory testing was drawn into a lithium heparin tube 1.5 h after surgery. After centrifugation, the plasma sample appeared green in color (Fig. 1). The patient had no specific diet or medications that might have accounted for the color change.

QUESTIONS
1. What caused this change in plasma color?
2. What other conditions could cause blood discoloration?
3. Are there any safety concerns or possible interference with laboratory tests?

The answers are below.

ANSWERS
Green blood has occasionally been reported (1–3). During the patient’s laparoscopic surgery, 4 mL isosulfan blue (Lymphazurin), a contrast dye, was given for lymphatic mapping. Isosulfan blue has no known pharmacologic...
action and is excreted in the urine (3). The discoloration may remain for up to 24 h. Side effects are rare, but an allergic reaction occasionally occurs (3). We did not observe any analytical interference with routine chemistry testing, but the dye may produce a factitious low oxygen saturation and increased methemoglobin concentration (3, 4).

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**References**