Lactoferrin is a glycoprotein found in neutrophils and mucosal secretions. The aim of this study is to compare fecal lactoferrin levels in children with symptomatic inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) versus other GI conditions undergoing colonoscopy x esophagogastroduodenoscopy.

**Methods:** Fresh stool samples from outpatients undergoing colonoscopy were collected and frozen within 72 hours prior to the bowel cleansing regimen. Fecal lactoferrin was determined using a polyclonal antibody-based enzyme-linked immunoassay.

**Results:** Thirty-seven patients (3-16 years old, 24 males) participated: 5 had active IBD (Crohn’s disease = 3, ulcerative colitis = 2) and 32 had non-IBD diagnoses (ritable bowel syndrome = 8, polyposis = 6, functional abdominal pain = 4, constipation = 2, hemorrhoids = 2, others = 10). The mean ± SD fecal lactoferrin was 659 ± 605 µg/g for IBD and 42 ± 176 µg/g for non-IBD patients (p<0.0001). Fecal lactoferrin was elevated in 4/5 IBD (80% sensitivity) and 11/21 non-IBD patients (66% specificity).

**Conclusions:** Fecal lactoferrin is a sensitive test for detecting active IBD and may be a useful screening test in differentiating IBD versus non-IBD patients.