

Connecting the dots: Understanding high Lp(a) and heart health

Heart disease may feel inevitable in the Black community, but it doesn't have to be. If you or a family member had a heart attack or stroke earlier in life, exploring a hidden risk like high Lipoprotein(a) (also known as *Lp(a)* or "*L-p-little a*") can make a difference.

What is High Lp(a)? - An Inherited Condition

Lp(a) is in your blood, made of fat (lipo) and protein. It's set by about age 5, and stays mostly the same for life. High Lp(a) is an inherited condition and means there is too much Lp(a) in the blood. About 1 in 5 Americans have high Lp(a) and it is even more common in Black people.

Why High Lp(a) Matters - The Facts

Too much Lp(a) in the blood can easily attach to artery walls and cause harmful blockages. High Lp(a) may explain heart attacks or strokes that occur before age 55 in men or 65 in women.

How to Get Tested - A Simple Blood Test

You can find out if you have high Lp(a) with a simple blood test; no genetic testing is needed. It's not part of routine bloodwork, so you'll need to ask your doctor to add it to your lab order.*

Talking to Your Doctor - What to Say

Ask your doctor about an Lp(a) test, especially if you or a family member had a heart attack or stroke before age 55 (men) or 65 (women). An Lp(a) level greater than 125 nmol/L or 50 mg/dL indicates a high level. If you have high Lp(a), ask how it affects your heart and what steps to take.

Turning Knowledge into a Plan

If you have high Lp(a), work with your doctor to protect your heart by:

- managing diabetes, high blood pressure, or cholesterol
- not smoking
- staying active
- eating a heart-healthy diet
- getting 7+ hours of sleep

Family Conversation - Protecting Loved Ones

High Lp(a) runs in families. If you or a family member had an early heart attack or stroke, others could be at risk. Talking about high Lp(a) helps loved ones get tested and helps to protect future generations.

Knowing your Lp(a) level is an important step to protecting your heart for you and your family.



To learn more about heart health, Lp(a), and getting tested, go to [WhatIsLpa.com](https://www.whatislpa.com) or scan the QR code.

*The cost of the Lp(a) test varies.



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2/25

FA-11346758