

Tell your family about high Lp(a)

If you have high Lp(a), your family could too, and it could raise their risk of a heart attack or stroke earlier in life. Here's how to talk about it.

1 Keep it simple

It's important to be direct and use language that is easy to understand.

- High Lp(a) is mostly inherited. That means if I have it, someone else in my family might too
- Lp(a) is also known as *Lipoprotein (a)* or "*L-P-little a*"
- High Lp(a) is an inherited condition that may increase the risk for a heart attack or stroke earlier in life. For men, that means before age 55, and for women, before age 65
- About 1 in 5 Americans have high Lp(a), and it's even more common in Black and South Asian people

2 Be honest

Have an open conversation with your family about your high Lp(a).

For example:

- "I got tested for something called Lp(a), and I found out I have a high level. It's a condition that can run in families and increase the risk of heart attack or stroke."
- "Since heart attacks and strokes run in our family, I wanted to talk to you about it because it could affect you, too."
- "We can't always feel or see what's going on inside, but knowing this gives us the power to manage our overall heart health."

3 Share the facts

For example:

- Too much Lp(a) in the blood can attach to your artery walls and cause harmful blockages
- High Lp(a) may increase your risk of having an early heart attack or stroke, as well as another event in the future
- If your Lp(a) is high, you should ask your doctor what steps are right for you to manage your overall heart health

4 If they choose to get tested

Arm them with information.

For example:

- "It's a simple blood test, but not part of regular checkups. You have to ask your doctor for it."

Bring this to your next family gathering.

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