

# The PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test

Know your risk<sup>™</sup> for a heart attack or stroke.



## What is the PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test?

The PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test measures the amount of Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> in the bloodstream. Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> is an enzyme that can assess the amount of inflammation in your arteries due to a build-up of cholesterol.

## Why should I get the PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test?

The PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test can help assess your risk for heart disease or stroke. When LDL cholesterol (the carrier of “bad” cholesterol) gets into your artery wall, the body tries to get rid of it by making Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub>. Unfortunately, the actions of Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> contribute to increased inflammation and increased cholesterol accumulation in the artery wall, forming what is called plaque. Inflammation can also make the cap covering the plaque thinner, which makes it more likely to rupture. The body responds to the rupture by forming a blood clot, which can block the flow of blood. If the blood flowing to the heart is blocked, it may cause a heart attack, while blocked blood flow to the brain may cause a stroke.

In short, the PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test can help your medical provider better understand the health of your arteries and determine if you are actively growing plaque that is at risk for rupturing and developing a heart attack or stroke.

Traditionally, the risk of having a stroke is associated with many factors including high blood pressure. Although high blood pressure is known to increase stroke risk, having high blood pressure and a high PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test result can put you at a much higher risk for stroke. But, it’s important to remember that even if your blood pressure is controlled, a high PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test result alone still puts you at risk for a stroke.

## When should the PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test be performed?

The PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test can be performed at the same time your medical provider runs other tests, such as a cholesterol test, to determine if you are at increased risk for heart disease or stroke. The PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test is recommended if you have two or more risk factors for heart disease, such as high cholesterol or obesity.

## How should I prepare for the PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test?

The PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test does not require any special preparation. You do not need to be fasting, and can be taking medications.

## What can I do to help lower my Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> levels?

There are a number of things you can do to lower your overall risk of heart disease, as well as lowering your Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> levels.

- Adopting a heart-healthy diet can help to lower your Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> levels. Eat more vegetables, fruits, and whole grain foods and reduce the amount of fatty foods you eat.
- Exercise can also help to reduce your Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> levels.
- If you smoke, quit. It is not easy but there are programs and strategies (including over-the-counter and prescription medications) that can improve your chance of success. Talk with your medical provider to find what works best for you.

- See your dentist. Periodontal disease may elevate Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub>.

- There are prescription and non-prescription medicines, as well as supplements, your medical provider can give you that reduce Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> levels.

Your medical provider will work with you to develop a treatment plan that is right for you to help reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.

**The PLAC<sup>®</sup> Test measures the amount of inflammation inside your arteries.**

## RELATIVE RISK

Lp-PLA<sub>2</sub> (ng/mL)

≤200 Low

>200 High

