

CRP (High Sensitivity C-Reactive Protein)

A high sensitivity CRP test is a blood test that is used to evaluate the risk of cardiovascular disease, heart attacks and strokes. The test measures the levels of CRP in the blood to identify low grade inflammation that can lead to heart disease.

What causes increased levels of CRP?

C-reactive protein increases in the blood due to inflammation from infection or tissue injury, as well as following a heart attack, surgery, or trauma. Average to high risk levels of CRP in your blood may mean the lining of your arteries are inflamed and can occur even when cholesterol levels are within an acceptable range. This inflammation can lead to atherosclerosis, the narrowing and hardening of blood vessels due to build-up of cholesterol and other lipids, which is often associated with cardiovascular disease.

What's the difference between a standard CRP test and a high sensitivity CRP test?

The standard CRP test measures markedly high levels of the protein (from 10 to 1000 mg/L) to detect diseases that cause significant inflammation. A high sensitivity CRP test accurately detects lower levels of the protein than the standard CRP test and is used to evaluate individuals for risk of cardiovascular disease. It measures CRP in the range from 0.5 to 10 mg/L.

What should I do if my results are abnormal or out of range?

It is always recommended you meet with a healthcare provider to determine what your laboratory test results mean to you. Your healthcare provider will review all of your test results and, combined with your health history, will be able to provide an accurate picture of your health status.

The American Heart Association and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have defined risk groups as follows:

- Low risk: less than 1.0 mg/L
- Average risk: 1.0 to 3.0 mg/L
- High risk: above 3.0 mg/L

If your results were in the average risk to high risk range: Individuals who have results at the high end of the normal range have 1.5 to 4 times the risk of having a heart attack as those with values at the low end of the normal range. You should share the results with your healthcare provider, who may order additional testing to help develop a treatment plan, as well as encourage lifestyle changes to your diet and exercise habits.

What other resources are available to learn more about my health and laboratory tests?

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: cdc.gov
- American Heart Association: heart.org
- Lab Tests Online: labtestsonline.org
- WebMD: webmd.com

DLO Direct offers direct access to laboratory testing for informational purposes. A DLO Direct lab test result is not a medical diagnosis and is not intended as medical advice. Only a healthcare provider can interpret lab results and diagnose a medical condition or disease.

Because tests have not been ordered by a healthcare provider, third party entities, including Medicare and Medicaid, will not reimburse for these tests.



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