

SELF-TESTING FOR INFLAMMATION

WHY SELF-TEST?

There are many reasons why a person would want to test themselves for inflammatory markers in the privacy of their own home using FDA-approved Certified Clinical Laboratory tests. A wish to actively manage one's own health care, a lack of insurance and/or financial resources to visit a health care practitioner, or a wish to keep test results private are but three reasons.

These test kits are also attractive to dental and other health care specialty offices wanting to

improve client care because they avoid the pitfalls of complicated lab licensing requirements, the threat of government inspections, and possible rejection of malpractice coverage.

There are several online labs that offer these tests and soon Whole Foods stores will carry a line of self-tests. Keep in mind you should be consistent in your lab choice as variations between individual labs exist due to different testing methods.

WHERE CAN I FIND TEST KITS?

Two companies that offer an excellent suite of FDA approved in-office or in-home tests at reasonable cost are Healthy Heart Dentistry (<http://healthyheartdentistry.com/index.php>) and Healthy Life Labs (www.healthylifelabs.com) They both offer kits that screen



for tests mentioned in *Mouth Matters* – hsCRP, an immediate result glucose test in combination with a lab-tested A1C, and a comprehensive kit that measures total cholesterol, LDLs, triglycerides, HDLs, glucose, hsCRPs, A1C, and fasting insulin. A vitamin D test independently monitors D₂ and D₃ levels.

Separate lab processing fees apply for some of the tests. The Healthy Heart Dentistry program offers additional support services to doctors.

Mouth Matters introduced hsCRP levels, but beyond knowing what levels of the marker predict heart attack risk, home testers should know several other things. The high sensitivity CRP test (hsCRP) is used to determine risk for heart disease because it measures a particular inflammatory molecule called CRP in the range from 0.5 to 10 mg/L.

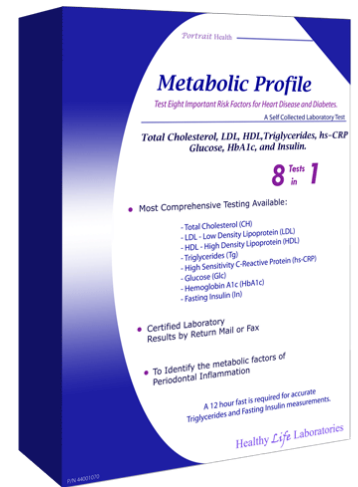
A less sensitive test measuring the same marker is usually ordered when a patient has a known chronic inflammatory disease like rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, an active bacterial or viral infection, or if they suffer from obesity. The tested range is much greater – from 10 to 1000 mg/L. If

you have had a recent illness, infection, or suffered recent tissue damage, CRP levels will be elevated and you will not receive an accurate result.

Some doctors will look more deeply into health issues if elevated hsCRP levels continue after successful treatment for a known inflammatory condition like gum disease. Continuing elevated CRP levels clue the practitioner that a patient has some other undiagnosed health issue – cancer, an autoimmune disease, or a chronic condition like diabetes.

Keep in mind that anti-inflammatory medications like statins or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs like aspirin or ibuprofen) usually reduce CRP levels in blood.

As Healthy Life Labs say: “It is a well known fact that most people do not see their health care



practitioners as often as recommended. The typical person does not make an appointment until they are not feeling well or until a concerned family member or friend makes an appointment. By that time, it is possible, even probable, that the impacts of a developing or untreated disease state

like diabetes may have already begun to set in. Early detection is the key to curbing and reducing the growing epidemic of diabetes and other disease states. We believe that given the opportunity and the right tools, individuals can take an active role in managing their own healthcare.”

The lab does not suggest their tests are a substitute for routine check-ups. They simply offer their products as an easy and convenient way to jumpstart a person’s “ownership” of their own health.

