

The Villages: VAP TEST HELPS DOCTORS PREDICT KILLING CHOLESTEROL

NEW DIAGNOSTIC, TREATMENT TOOL

By GARY CORSAIR
DAILY SUN

THE VILLAGES – One can only guess how many lives have been saved since Villagers began lining up to take a new test that measures bad cholesterol.

"I believe lives have been saved," said Bob Wyka, manager of The Villages Clinical Laboratory. "The VAP test has changed the way doctors look at hyperlipidemia patients and changed the way they treat them."

A year ago, only a few local physicians were aware of **Atherotech's** VAP Test, which directly measures bad cholesterol and provides measurements for 11 more lipid components than a routine cholesterol test. Today, the VAP test is on the tip of tongues in many doctors' offices.

"We are doing approximately 300 VAP tests a month," Wyka said. "We started off with only a handful of physicians ordering them. Now, there's

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about 20 doctors doing so."

Combining the VAP test with the PLAC Test developed by Diadexus Inc. provides an even more complete picture. The PLAC test measures the level of an enzyme highly specific to vascular inflammation and implicated in the formation of rupture-prone plaque.

"Both work hand-in-hand; one in identifying who's at risk, and the other tells us what to do with that person," said Paul

E. Ziajka, director of the Florida Lipid Institute.

"The VAP test is in vogue nationwide because it is superior to cholesterol tests that only measure good HDL and bad LDL. The PLAC test pinpoints the risk of developing rupture-prone plaque, the malady that last year killed news commentator Tim Russert, whose LDL cholesterol level was considered healthy.

"We can now lower your risk for having a heart attack by 80 percent to 90 percent, not the 30 percent reduction statin drugs alone are able to achieve," said James E. Ehrlich, M.D., chief medical officer of Atherotech, developer of the VAP test. "Ninety-percent reduction has been reported in multiple studies. And that's going to be the new standard."

And now physicians have a new tool to further reduce the risk of sudden-death and sudden-stroke events. The apoE genotype test, which was developed to identify the likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease, also provides information physicians can use to lower your chances of heart attack or stroke. The Villages Clinical Laboratory is currently the only area lab offering the apoE genotype test.

And chances are your medical insurance will cover the cost of the tests.

"Most payers pay for these tests when medically necessary, and this includes Medicare," said Kenneth French, Atherotech director of research

and new test development. "Even if your insurance denies the test, the out-of-pocket expense is well below \$100. Why take the risk? Get a VAP and apoE test today. It is information that can save your life."

The apoE genotype test identifies which apoE genes a person has (each person receives one from each biological parent).

"People will be one of six different possibilities: E2/E2, E2/E3, E3/E3, E3/E4, E4/E4 and E2/E4," Wyka said. "About 60 percent of the population will be E3/E3, which is normal."

The remaining 40 percent will need treatment.

"If you test E2 from both parents, you are at a very high risk for Type 3 hyperlipidemia. That's associated with plaque in the arteries, which increases the risk for stroke and heart attacks," Wyka said.

People who carry at least one copy of E4 have an increased chance of developing arteriosclerosis, an accumulation of fatty deposits in the lining of the arteries.

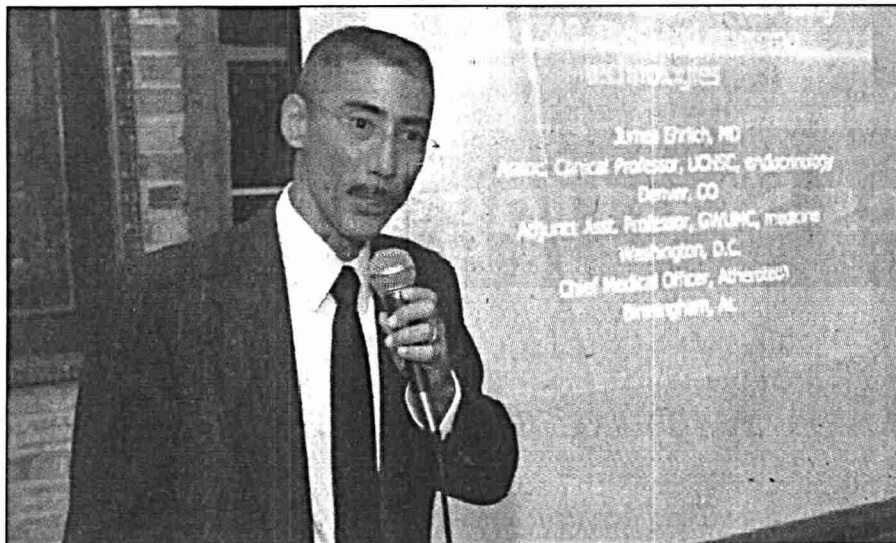
People with an E4 gene also are more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.

"A single E4 result is associated with a 2.2-4 times increase in the likelihood of developing Alzheimer's," French said.

So what's your apoE profile? Don't know? You can speak with your physician about the apoE genotype test.



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George Horsford / Daily Sun
Bob Wyka, manager of The Villages Clinical Laboratory, talks to physicians and health care specialists from the tri-county area June 24 at Palmer Legends Country Club.



George Horsford / Daily Sun
James Ehrlich, M.D., right, chief medical officer of **Atherotech**, developer of the VAP test, talks to Robert Meade, M.D., of Florida Heart & Vascular Center on June 24 at Palmer Legends Country Club.