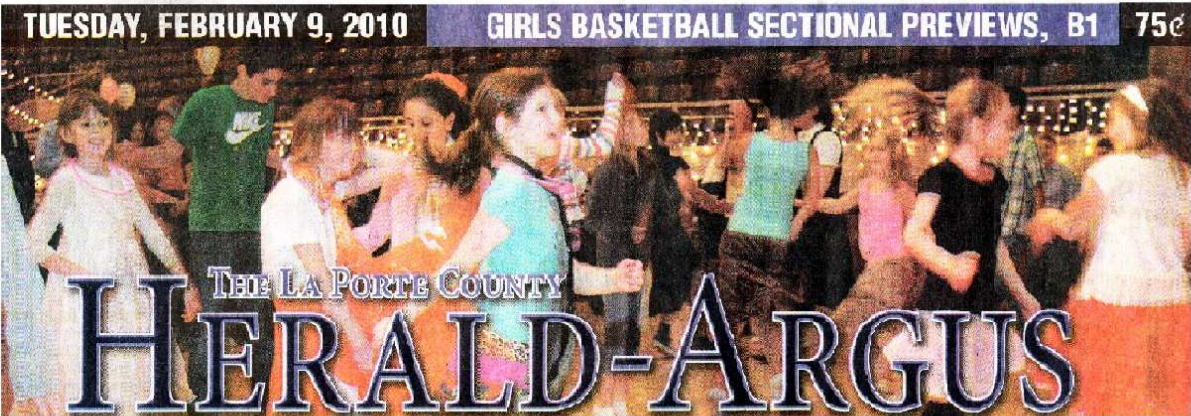




**PULSE GO RED**  
February is American Heart month and a new cholesterol test identifies more people at risk for heart disease  
FOR MORE, SEE PAGE A7



**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2010** **GIRLS BASKETBALL SECTIONAL PREVIEWS, B1** **75¢**

**THE LA PORTE COUNTY HERALD-ARGUS**

www.heraldargus.com Tuesday, February 9, 2010 LA PORTE COUNTY HERALD-ARGUS A7

**FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH**

# The blood test that could save your life

Expanded cholesterol profile test identifies far greater number of people at risk

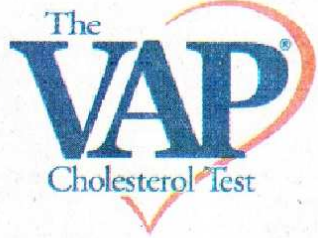
**By Jamie Lober**  
For The Herald-Argus

La Porte Regional Health System is proud to offer the VAP, or Vertical Auto Profile, an expanded cholesterol test. "It is the most comprehensive test out there right now," said Arleen Francis, cardiovascular nurse navigator at La Porte Regional Health System.

The VAP test does not even take ten minutes and is intended for those who are considered to be high risk. "The folks that would benefit are patients who are already on cholesterol medicine, have type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure or a family history of heart disease," said Francis.

The traditional cholesterol test calculates the total cholesterol including HDL, or good cholesterol, LDL, or bad cholesterol, and triglycerides. Results of the VAP are more thorough. "The VAP reveals fourteen cholesterol components in the blood as opposed to just four on the traditional test," said Francis. Even if you are on cholesterol medications, the test would be advantageous. "It provides risk factors that the routine lipid panel cannot identify," said Francis.

There are two measurements on the VAP that you should be familiar with. "The Lp(a) is considered the heart attack cholesterol and it is strongly inherited and does not respond to traditional LDL-lowering drugs. It



only responds to niacin. Another measurement that stands out is the LDL cholesterol size pattern. Pattern A is good and pattern B is associated with increased risk for heart disease," said Francis.

The VAP comes with the added benefit of knowing the hidden risks of premature cardiovascular disease.

"Once you find out what might be elevated or abnormal, you can treat it by making some lifestyle changes or getting on the proper medication or supplement. You can put patients on the proper therapy and get their cholesterol lowered to help stop the progression of build-up of plaque in the arteries or reverse it," said Francis.

It is also the only advanced lipid profile that is commercially available and reports all three lipoprotein parameters deemed necessary by the American Diabetes Association and

American College of Cardiology guidelines.

Results are quickly received after they are processed by Atherotech, Inc., a cardio-diagnostic company. "We get the results in two days and the patient gets them shortly thereafter," said Francis.

When you know your numbers, you are heart smart. "It is a way to learn what is going on, what your risk factors are and how to be ahead of the game by proper therapy and treatment," said Francis. You should not be afraid. "It is a very valuable, simple blood test that can help reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke," said Francis.

The VAP is elective and open to anyone. "It does not require a physician's order," said Francis. The best way to sign up is to call the cardiovascular nurse navigator at (219)-326-2626 to make an appointment.

It has also been recently added to the heart cart service which is a mobile screening unit. "We travel and screen individuals with electrocardiogram, look at the carotid arteries to rule out stroke, check the aorta for an aneurism and check leg circulation along with doing the traditional cholesterol test," said Francis.

Community members understand the need for the VAP. "There has been a great response," said Francis.

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**VAP**  
Vertical Auto Profile

**CHOLESTEROL AND HEART DISEASE FACTS**

**THE VAP™ (Vertical Auto Profile) Cholesterol Test**

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## CHOLESTEROL AND HEART DISEASE FACTS

### About Cholesterol

♥ Cholesterol is a soft, waxy substance found in the bloodstream and in the body's cells. Elevated cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease.

♥ Total cholesterol is made up of three "classes"—low-density lipoprotein (LDL) and high-density lipoprotein (HDL) and very low-density lipoprotein (VLDL)

♥ LDL is known as the "bad" cholesterol because too much LDL (>100 mg/dL) increases the risk of heart disease.

♥ HDL is the protective form of cholesterol. HDL carries cholesterol away from the arteries and back to the liver, where it is passed from the body. High HDL (> 40 mg/dL) reduces the risk of a heart attack.

♥ Triglycerides are a form of fat that come from food and also are made in the body. People with elevated triglycerides often have high total cholesterol, high LDL, and low HDL.

♥ Routine cholesterol tests measure total cholesterol, HDL, and triglycerides. They also calculate, rather than directly measure, LDL cholesterol—a factor that is of growing concern to clinicians since these calculations can underestimate LDL by up to 20 percent.

♥ Nearly 105 million Americans age 20 and older (more than half the adult population) have elevated cholesterol and could benefit from treatment, such as weight loss, smoking cessation, exercise regimens, and medications.

♥ Physicians now have a growing array of effective therapy options for heart disease, including six classes of cholesterol-lowering drugs that may be used alone or in combination, depending upon a patient's individual needs.

♥ Almost half of all heart attack sufferers have "normal" routine cholesterol test results and many exhibit no symptoms—highlighting the need for better cholesterol testing technology.

### The VAP™ (Vertical Auto Profile) Cholesterol Test

♥ The VAP Test is the first accurate, easy-to-use, and affordable means to obtain a complete cholesterol profile and, allowing physicians to better assess heart disease risk and direct patient-specific therapy.

♥ The VAP Test is the first new cholesterol test in 30 years to be available nationwide through national and regional diagnostic laboratories.

♥ The VAP Test provides a more accurate, direct-measured LDL, which helps physicians establish target LDL goals for patients. It also helps doctors diagnose the metabolic syndrome.

♥ Based on the comprehensive cholesterol profile it provides, the VAP Test identifies a far greater number of patients at risk of heart disease than the routine cholesterol tests.

### Heart Disease Facts

♥ Heart disease is caused by the narrowing or blockage of one or more coronary arteries, resulting in decreased blood supply to the heart.

♥ Heart disease affects 12.9 million Americans, divided almost equally between men and women.

♥ About 41 percent of the people who experience a heart attack will die from it.

♥ About 80 percent of heart disease deaths in people under age 65 occurs as a result of the first heart attack.

♥ There are genetic, environmental, and hereditary risk factors for heart disease, including ethnicity, age, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, tobacco use, diabetes, obesity, inactivity, poor nutrition, and menopause.

♥ An estimated 47 million U.S. residents have the metabolic syndrome—a dangerous precursor to diabetes characterized by high triglycerides, low HDL, and small, dense LDL—placing them at significantly increased risk for diabetes and heart disease.

For more information, visit [www.atherotech.com](http://www.atherotech.com)

Source: Atherotech

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**VAP**

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