



KJARTAN D. ARMANN, M.D.
Infant, Child and Adolescent Medicine

2516 Samaritan Dr., Suite J
San Jose, CA 95124
Phone: (408) 356-0578
Fax: (408) 353-9886
www.kjkidmd.com

Blood Test: Lipid Panel

What It Is

By ordering a test called a lipid panel for your child, the doctor is taking a look at the different kinds of fats in the blood. While many parents don't think about the level of their child's cholesterol, high levels are known to be contributors to heart disease and strokes. Doctors take a close look at lipid panels in kids because heart disease has been shown to develop in childhood.

A lipid panel measures:

- **Total cholesterol**, which is the sum of the different types of cholesterol.
- **High-density lipoproteins (HDL) cholesterol**, commonly called "good" cholesterol. Lipoproteins can be thought of as your child's blood transportation system. High-density lipoproteins carry cholesterol to the liver to be eliminated.
- **Low-density lipoproteins (LDL) cholesterol**, commonly known as "bad" cholesterol. LDLs that build up in the bloodstream can clog blood vessels and increase the risk of heart disease.
- **Triglycerides**, which store energy until the body needs it. If the body holds on to too many triglycerides, blood vessels can get clogged and cause health problems.

Why It's Done

The lipid panel checks the lipid levels in blood, which can indicate a person's risk for heart disease or atherosclerosis (a hardening, narrowing, or blockage of the arteries).

Some experts think that high cholesterol in kids is a major under-reported public health problem. So it's important to be aware of your child's cholesterol levels, especially if either parent has high cholesterol.

Preparation for Lipid Test

Lipid levels can be affected by fat in the diet. Your child should avoid eating fatty foods the evening before the test. Unless otherwise instructed by your doctor, your child shouldn't eat or drink anything other than water after midnight the night before the test. Failing to do so could affect the test results.

Your child should also avoid any exercise 12 to 14 hours before the test. Check with your doctor to see if you should discontinue any medications your child is taking until after the test is done.

Getting the Results

Test results should be available within a few days to a week. Your doctor will want to discuss the results and any concerns with you.