**Letter to Family** *(copy & paste)*

Dear ***[Insert Family Member Name]***,

I hope all is well. I am writing to you to let you know about some important health information I recently learned that may also affect you as one of my relatives. My healthcare provider gave me this letter to help me notify you about this, and to encourage you to take action as well.

I was recently diagnosed with a serious genetic condition called elevated Lipoprotein(a), also known as Lp(a). Lp(a) is a complex lipoprotein that appears to [increase the risk](https://thefhfoundation.org/risk-with-fh-and-high-lpa) for both heart disease and stroke. Lp(a) contains 3 different components: one component can cause artery blockages another appears to lead to clotting within arteries and still another to inflammation.

The challenging thing about elevated Lp(a) is it can be invisible. A person can have a totally normal cholesterol panel and still harbor a very high Lp(a). The only way to know if someone is at risk, is to measure it. The blood test for Lp(a) is simple and should cost about $30, but it is important to find out if your insurance will cover the test, and important to know that some labs charge far more than $30.

Elevated Lp(a) is genetic and caused by a dominant gene. Because I have inherited the gene for elevated Lp(a), each of my first-degree relatives (parents, siblings, children) have a 50% chance of also having elevated Lp(a). Other family members (aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, grandchildren, etc.) may also have inherited this serious genetic condition. I have an elevated Lp(a) because I inherited it from one of my parents.

My healthcare provider has recommended that you and all my other first-degree relatives be screened with an Lp(a) blood test. While there is currently only one approved treatment for elevated Lp(a), called lipoprotein apheresis, other therapies are in clinical trials right now. If someone has elevated Lp(a), it is crucial to make sure they manage any other cardiac risk factor such as high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol and diabetes. It is important that they eat a heart healthy diet, get regular exercise, avoid excess weight and smoking.

I have sent you this information by email so that you will have it in writing and can bring it to your next medical appointment. I also wanted to write to you so you will have time to think about this before I call you. I will plan to call you in a few days. I might not have all the answers to your questions, but I can point you to the Family Heart Foundation website (<http://www.FamilyHeart.org>), which has many resources to support you.

The Family Heart Foundation is a patient advocacy and research organization and is a collaboration of people living with elevated Lp(a), researchers, and clinicians. I have found the website very helpful and the community I have met through the Foundation to be very supportive.

Fondly,

***[Insert Sender’s Name]***