



# APS Foundation of America, Inc.

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Signs and Symptoms of Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome: Silent but Deadly!

The Antiphospholipid (APS) Antibody Syndrome Foundation of America, Inc. (APSFA) urges the public, as well as the medical community, to learn more about this rare disease. APS Awareness Month runs throughout June.

APS is an autoimmune disorder. Such illnesses occur when the body's tissues are attacked by its own substances. In APS, the body recognizes certain components of blood or cell membranes as foreign substances and produces antibodies--a specialized protein the body uses to prevent infection--against them. It is the major cause of strokes in persons under 40 years old, blood clots (thrombosis) -- which can lead to heart attack or stroke -- vision disturbances and repeated, otherwise unexplainable miscarriages.

While more general practitioners have become familiar with APS in the last few years, many physicians -- and most of the public -- are still unfamiliar with both its symptoms and the damage it can cause.

People who arrive at emergency rooms and doctor's offices with the following issues should be tested for APS:

- Heart attacks and strokes in those under 50
- Transient ischemic attacks, known as "mini-strokes." TIAs last 10 minutes or less and leave no permanent damage.
- Multiple miscarriages and stroke
- Blood clots in the lung (called pulmonary emboli) or deep veins in arms and legs (called deep vein thrombosis, or DVT)
- Diminishing mental alertness, such as loss of concentration, memory loss and difficulty with reading comprehension
- Migraine headaches
- Partial or total vision loss
- Dizziness
- Seizures

APS shares symptoms with more well-known disorders such as multiple sclerosis and lupus. Diagnosis and treatment delays can cause serious, sometimes fatal complications. A simple blood test can determine whether someone has APS.

Founded in 2005, the APS Foundation of America, Inc. is the leading United States health agency dedicated specifically to bringing national awareness to APS. We are a volunteer-run, community-based, non-profit organization dedicated to spreading awareness and support to those with the disease.

Knowing more about APS can make all the difference. APS: Know the Symptoms of the Syndrome!

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

\* The key blood tests are Anticardiolipin (aCL) antibodies (IgG, IgM, and IgA), Lupus anticoagulant (LAC) – a panel of blood clotting tests that may include the dilute Russel Viper venom time (dRVVT), lupus aPTT, mixing studies, and hex phase phospholipid test, platelet neutralization procedure and Antibodies to b2-glycoprotein I (IgG, IgM, IgA).

\* The conservative estimate of people at risk from Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome (APS) is 1% - 5% of the population.

\* In pregnancy clotting of the placenta can cause miscarriage or stillbirth. Typically, women are not tested for APS until after three consecutive miscarriages.

\* The recognition and treatment of APS improves the chances of preventing miscarriage from below 20% to above 80%.

\* One third of strokes occurring in younger people (under the age of 50) are due to APS.

\* Some cases are misdiagnosed as multiple sclerosis. Some APS patients also have Lupus.

\* Founded in 2005, the APS Foundation of America, Inc. is the leading United States nonprofit health agency dedicated to bringing national awareness to Antiphospholipid Antibody Syndrome (APS), the major cause of multiple miscarriages, thrombosis, young strokes and heart attacks. We are a volunteer run, community based 501(c)3 non-profit Public Charity organization and is dedicated to fostering and facilitating joint efforts in the areas of education, support, public awareness, research and patient services. Our URL is <http://www.apsfa.org>

\* All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from <http://www.apsfa.org>.