Circulating Matrix Metalloproteinase-9 Levels as a Possible Marker of Aortic Stiffness

To the Editor,

Yasmin et al have recently reported very interesting findings showing that large artery stiffness has important effects on the cardiovascular risk. They have found increased serum matrix metalloproteinase (MMP)-9 levels in subjects with isolated systolic hypertension compared with healthy subjects. In addition, they have found that serum MMP-9 levels can predict aortic stiffness. However, a major limitation to the conclusions derived from their MMP-9 measurements is that artificially higher MMP-9 concentrations are found in serum samples compared with plasma samples. Importantly, although a high correlation exists between MMP-9 levels in plasma separated from blood drawn into tubes with different anticoagulants, no correlation was found between MMP-9 levels in serum and in plasma. In summary, preanalytical conditions and other methodological issues are of major importance when assessing MMPs in clinical samples.

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doi: 10.1161/01.ATV.0000172661.60304.57
Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis, and Vascular Biology is published by the American Heart Association, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, TX 75231
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Print ISSN: 1079-5642. Online ISSN: 1524-4636

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
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