

# Cardiologists uncover new heart attack warning sign

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Cardiologists at the University of Connecticut Health Center have identified a protein fragment that when detected in the blood can be a predictor of heart attack.

Their research, led by Dr. Bruce Liang, director of the Pat and Jim Calhoun Cardiology Center, is published in the Jan. 11 issue of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*. It found [heart attack](#) patients had elevated levels of the protein fragment known as Caspase-3 p17 in their blood.

"We've discovered a new [biomarker](#) for heart attack, and showed that apoptosis, or a particular kind of [cell death](#), is a cause of heart muscle damage." Liang says. "The ability to see a heart attack coming with a simple blood test and to develop new therapies to block apoptosis would enable us to get a head start on treatment and preserve crucial heart muscle and cardiac function."

If it is successfully applied one day, researchers say the discovery would mean another way to diagnose heart attack and the possible development of new treatment.

**More information:** The article is available online at [content.onlinejacc.org/cgi/reprint/57/2/220.pdf](http://content.onlinejacc.org/cgi/reprint/57/2/220.pdf)

Provided by University of Connecticut

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