



American
Heart
Association.

Lipoprotein(a) and Heart Disease

Lipoprotein (a) and Heart Disease | Lesson Overview

Health Lesson

- What is lipoprotein (a) [Lp(a)]?
- How does a high lipoprotein (a) level impact your heart health?
- What are your risk factors?
- Lipoprotein (a) testing

Closing Thoughts

- Key Points to Remember
- Resources
- Post-Survey



Program Objectives

After the lesson you will:

- Understand what lipoprotein (a) is
- Learn how a high lipoprotein (a) level is linked to heart attack and stroke
- Learn how to manage your risk factors to reduce your heart disease risk
- Gain confidence in talking to your doctor about lipoprotein (a)

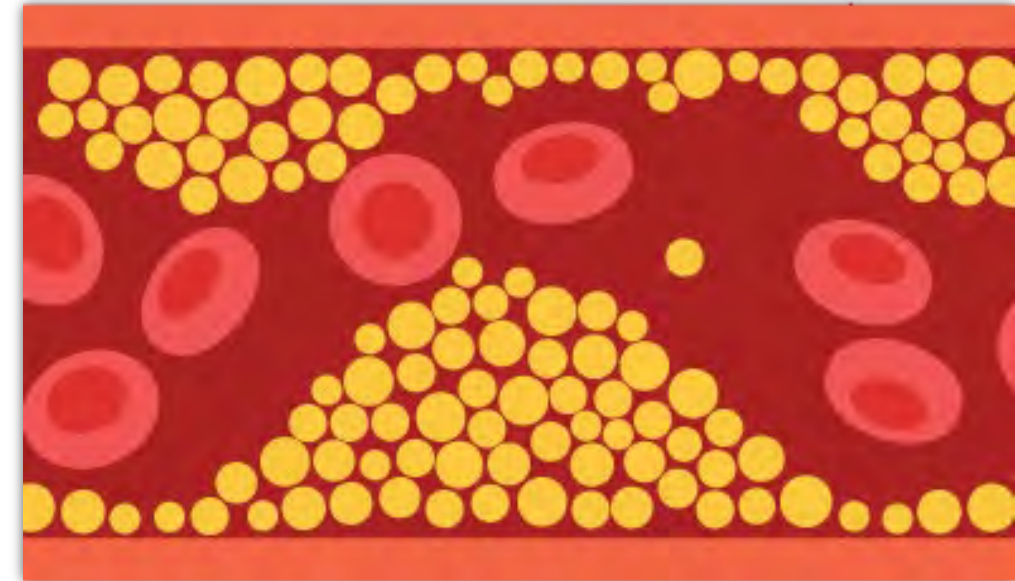


What Are Lipoproteins?

Lipoproteins are particles made of fat (lipids) and proteins that travel in your bloodstream. They carry cholesterol and triglycerides to your body's cells.

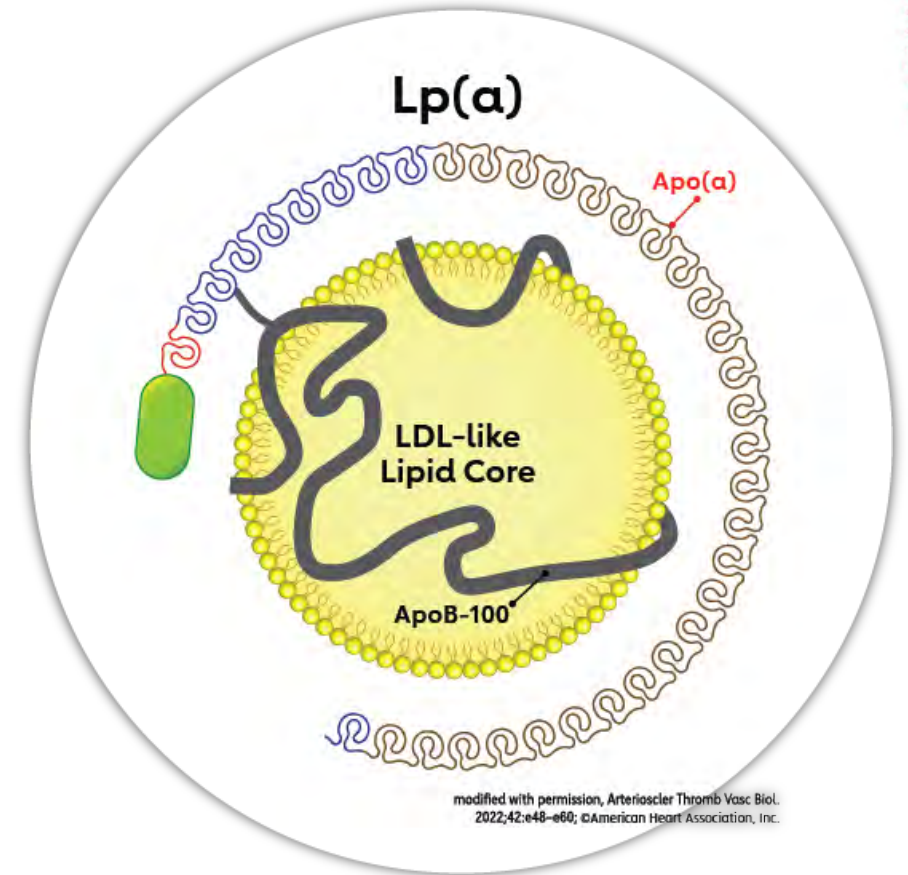
The body produces different types of lipoproteins.

- High-density lipoprotein (HDL) has health benefits and is considered the “good cholesterol” that gets rid of LDL
- Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) is known as the “bad cholesterol” that can clog arteries



What is Lp(a)?

Lp(a) stands for lipoprotein (a) and is pronounced “L-P- little-a.” It is a type of lipoprotein passed down through families and is a common risk factor for heart disease. Like other lipoproteins, Lp(a) carries cholesterol through the bloodstream to the cells.



Why is Lp(a) Important?

High levels of Lp(a) are a lot more common:

- About 1 in 5 people have high Lp(a) globally
- Lipoprotein(a) is a common independent risk factor for heart disease
- Lp(a) levels are set in early childhood and stay mostly the same throughout life
- A high Lp(a) level can result in atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD), a type of heart disease that affects most adults over 60
- ASCVD-related conditions such as heart attack and stroke are the leading cause of death globally



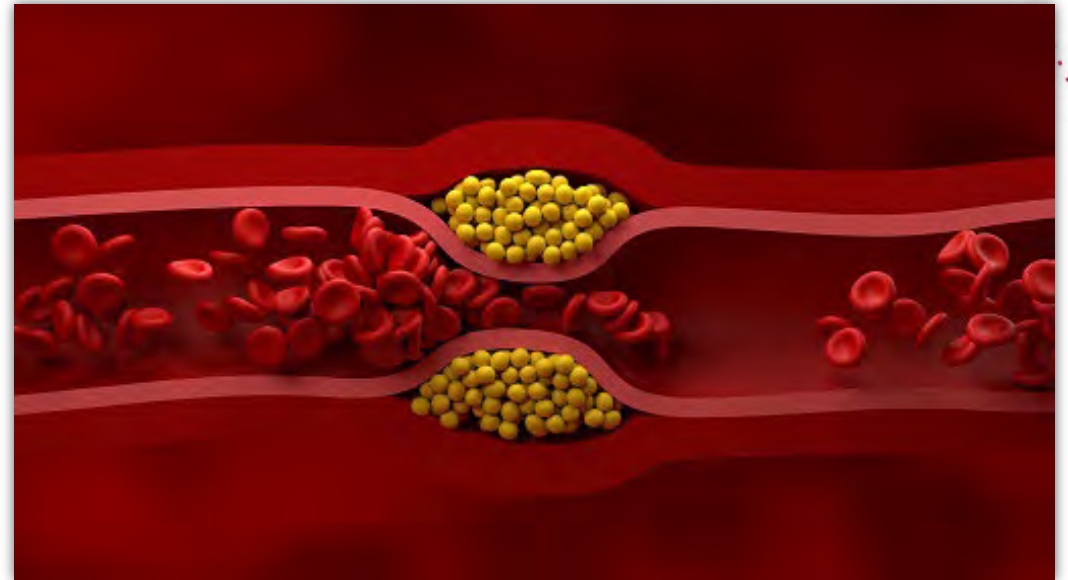
What Does It Mean to Have A High Lp(a) Level?

High Lp(a) levels can lead to plaque buildup (fatty deposits) in artery walls, reducing blood flow and potentially causing blockages in vital organs

High Lp(a) increases the risk of heart attack, stroke and can also lead to:

- Peripheral artery disease (PAD), a narrowing of arteries carrying blood from the heart to other parts of the body, such as the legs
- Aortic stenosis, a narrowing of the aortic valve that can restrict blood flow from the heart

Levels higher than 50 mg/dL (125 nmol/L) are considered to be high

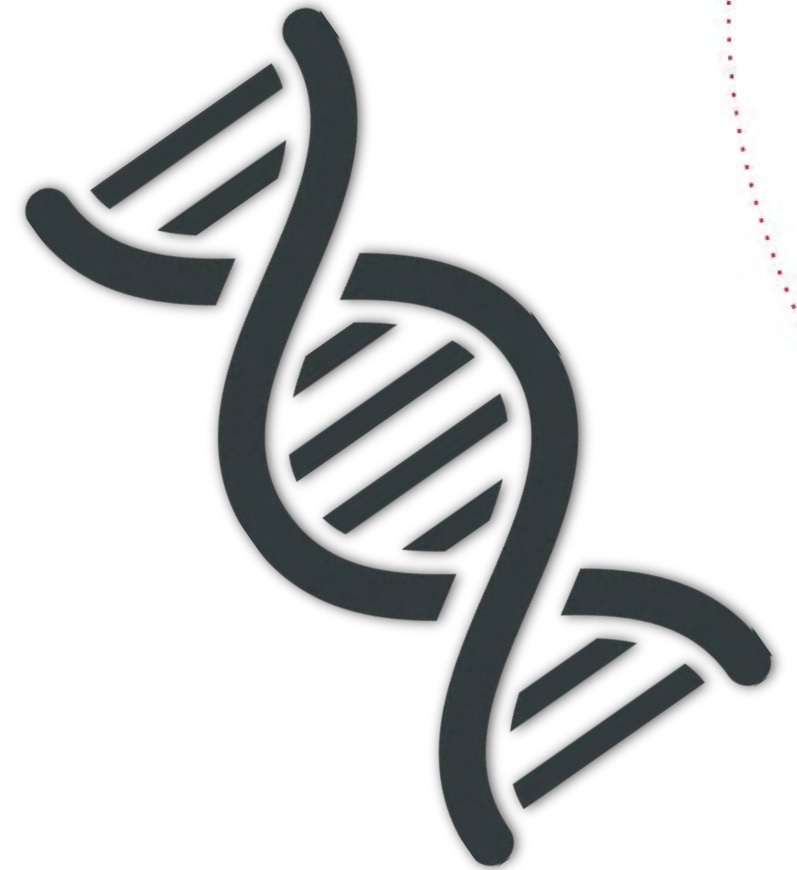


Understanding Your Lp(a) Risk

The major cause of high Lp(a) is genetic.

Other factors include:

- **Race and ethnicity:** Although people of all races can have high Lp(a) levels, people of South Asian and African descent have the highest levels
- **Sex:** Women 50 years or older are more likely to have high Lp(a) levels
- **Related Conditions:** People with high cholesterol and kidney disease are also more likely to have high Lp(a) levels



How to Lower Your Heart Disease Risk

Although Lp(a) is not directly affected by lifestyle changes, it's still important to lower your overall risk of heart attack, stroke and peripheral artery disease.

You can lower your risk by:



Eating healthy



Being physically active



Maintain a healthy weight



Stopping tobacco use



Getting enough sleep

Don't Overlook Lp(a)

Many people don't have symptoms

- You can have a high Lp(a) level even if your lifestyle is healthy and all other heart disease risk factors are controlled
- Healthy habits, plus taking medications as prescribed, can help reduce your risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity and diabetes



Understanding the Lp(a) Test

Lp(a) isn't part of the standard cholesterol test or lipid panel. Talk to your doctor about adding Lp(a) to your cholesterol test during your visit. This simple blood test can be done at your doctor's office or a diagnostic lab center.

- Finding high Lp(a) levels early lets people make healthy changes and manage other risk factors, lowering their risk of heart disease
- If you have high Lp(a), encourage your close family members to get tested

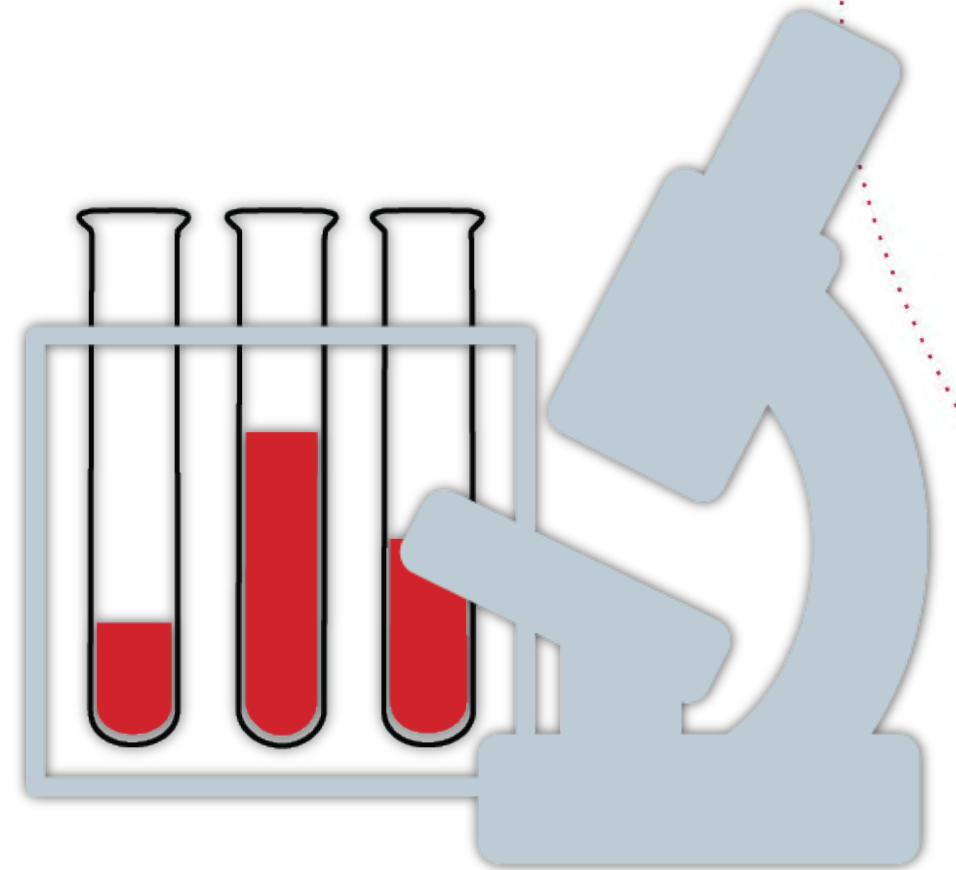


Understanding the Lp(a) Test

About 70% to 90% of Lp(a) is influenced by genetics, so it's important to talk with your doctor about Lp(a) screening if you have:

- Family history of premature atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (defined as younger than 45 for men and 55 for women)
- Family history of high Lp(a)
- Diagnosis of familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) — an inherited condition in which the body poorly recycles LDL cholesterol

Cascade screening helps check if relatives like parents, siblings, and children are also at risk for high Lp(a) and other genetic conditions.



Questions to Ask Your Doctor About Lp(a)

Knowing your Lp(a) level helps your doctor assess and guide you in reducing your heart disease risk. Use these questions to start the conversation with your doctor.

- What does my Lp(a) level mean?
- What level is considered to be high?
- How can I reduce my heart attack and stroke risk?
- Does cholesterol-lowering medications lower my Lp(a) level?
- Should I encourage my family members to get screened?
- Can you recommend any resources that will help me understand Lp(a) more?

Remember

If you have a high Lp(a) level, you didn't do anything to cause it, and now that you know, take control and reduce your overall heart disease risk!



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 1:

High Lp(a) levels can increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

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High Lp(a) levels can increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 2:

Lp(a) is measured as part of a standard cholesterol test.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 2:

Lp(a) is measured as part of a standard cholesterol test.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 3:

If one family member has high Lp(a), other family members may also have high levels.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 3:

If one family member has high Lp(a), other family members may also have high levels.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 4:

Exercise and a healthy diet can lower Lp(a) levels.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 4:

Exercise and a healthy diet can lower Lp(a) levels.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 5:

High Lp(a) levels can only affect heart health in older adults.

TRUE

FALSE



Lp(a) and Heart Disease Quiz

Question 5:

High Lp(a) levels can only affect heart health in older adults.

TRUE

FALSE



Call to Action

- Pick one action to take charge of your health to start today
- Visit heart.org/lpa to learn more about Lp(a) and its link to heart disease
- Share what you've learned with family and friends and encourage them to learn more too!

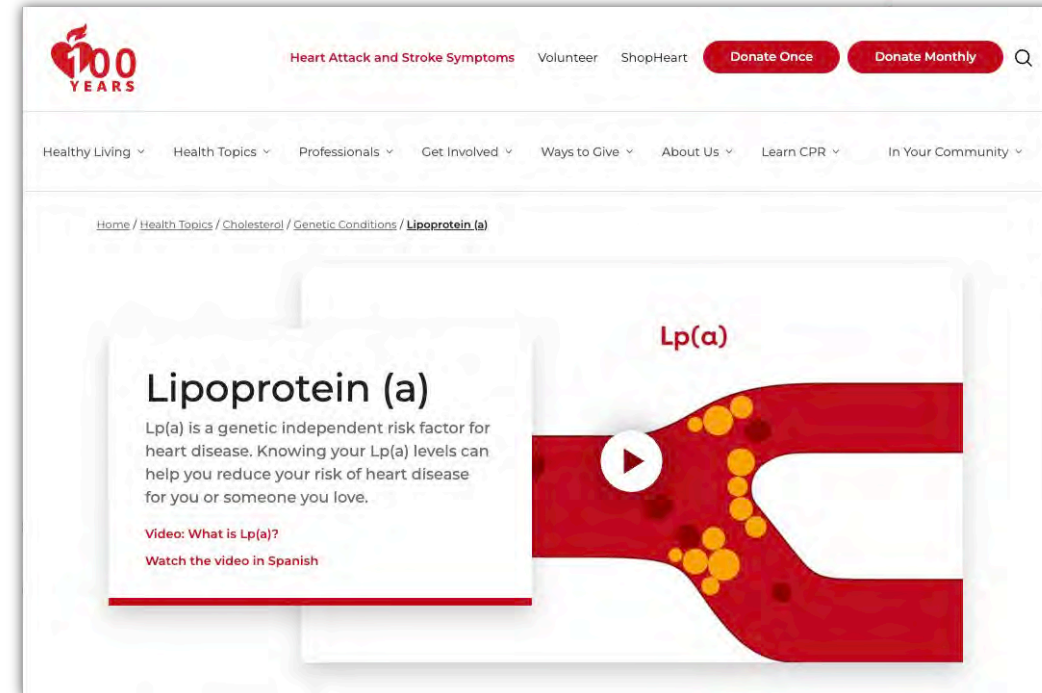


Knowledge is Power

At heart.org/lpa, you'll find:

- Easy-to-understand infographics explaining what Lp(a) is, how the test works, and how a high Lp(a) level can impact your heart health
- Discussion guides to help talk with your doctor about Lp(a)
- A short video that explains what Lp(a) is, its risks and why knowing your Lp(a) level matters

Learn more at heart.org/lpa.



Heart & Stroke Helper App™

Learn how to better manage your health all in one place with the Heart & Stroke Helper app. Download it today to help:

- Track progress on lifestyle habits
- Track health numbers
- Manage medications
- Receive trusted information
- Connect with others for inspiration

You'll have access to four science-based health journeys: **high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart failure, or stroke.**



Scan to download or visit
heart.org/HeartHelper.

The AHA Support Network

You are not alone!

The AHA Support Network is a free online community where people and caregivers impacted by heart disease, stroke, and related conditions can connect with others for support, share their experiences, and find encouragement.



**Signing up is free,
easy and secure.**

For more details, visit
heart.org/supportnetwork.

The AHA Support Network

Join the Lp(a) Peer Group!

- Led by a volunteer with personal experience with high Lp(a)
- Connect with others living with high Lp(a) to share tips, hope and encouragement
- Access helpful educational resources

The screenshot shows the AHA Support Network interface for the Lp(a) Peer Group. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'All Topics', 'All Groups', 'All Resources', and 'All Scores'. A search bar is on the right. Below the navigation is a large banner image of a colorful, abstract structure resembling a cell or a protein, with the text 'Living With Lipoprotein(a)' overlaid. A welcome message reads 'Welcome Lp(a) Peer Group Member! Have you, or someone you care for, been diagnosed with elevated Lp(a)?'. Below this is an 'Announcement' section. The main content area is divided into 'Discussions' and 'Resources'. The 'Discussions' section shows a group profile for 'LP(a) Patients and Family Support' with a 'Public' setting, 'Member' status, and 'Every Post' notification frequency. It includes buttons for 'Manage Notifications' and 'Add Record'. Below the profile is a 'Post' section with a text input field and a 'Share' button. The 'Resources' section includes 'Group Details' with a description: 'High levels of lipoprotein(a) [Lp(a)] are an independent, usually inherited, and causal risk factor for cardiovascular disease. (Please note this is different from having generally high cholesterol levels.) Connect with other patients with Lp(a) and their families, share your experiences, and discover resources in support of each other. Novartis is a proud supporter of the American Heart Association's Lp(a) Discovery Project.' There are also 'Recommended Topics' and 'Support Network Community Terms & Conditions' sections. At the bottom, there's a 'Community Information' section stating 'The Community Manager is available to help you and monitors the site between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. CST, Monday - Friday.'

Thank You for Joining!



Please scan the QR code and complete the **post-lesson survey** from your mobile device.





Thank You.
