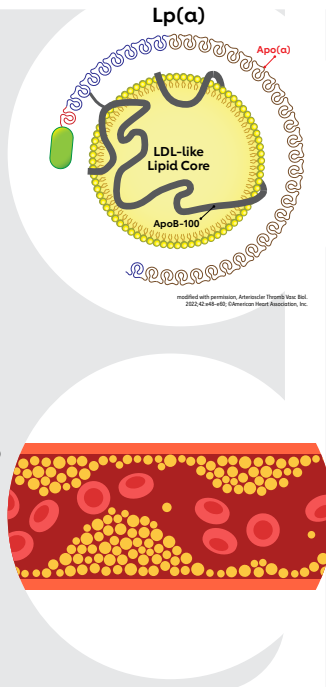


## What is Lp(a)?

- 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.
- Imagine your blood is like a river flowing through your body, with boats called lipoproteins carrying cholesterol and similar substances. Both lipoprotein (a) [Lp(a)] and low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or “bad” cholesterol, have a passenger called ApoB-100, but Lp(a) has an extra passenger called Apo (a). If there are too many Lp(a) boats in your blood, they can stick to the walls of your blood vessels, making the river narrower and harder for blood to flow smoothly. **Doctors check for Lp(a) because having too much can increase your risk of heart disease.**
- High Lp(a) levels affect **about 1 in 5 people** worldwide.



## Why Should I know my Lp(a) level?

- A high Lp(a) level can cause plaque buildup, narrowing arteries and reducing blood flow. It also increases inflammation and blood clotting, making it harder to break down clots, which can cause plaque rupture. Both plaque buildup and rupture can end up blocking blood flow to vital organs like the heart, brain, kidneys, and lungs.
- A Lp(a) of **50 mg/dL (or  $\geq 125$  nmol/L) or more** increases your risk of heart attack, stroke, peripheral artery disease (PAD), aortic stenosis and other heart conditions.

### Many people don't have symptoms.

You can have high Lp(a) even if you live a healthy lifestyle and manage other heart disease risks. Talk to your doctor if you have:

- Family or personal history of premature heart disease (meaning under 45 for men and under 55 for women)
- Known family history of high Lp(a)
- Diagnosis of familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) - inherited condition where the body poorly recycles LDL cholesterol or bad cholesterol

## Are there other factors that put me at risk for high Lp(a)?

- **Ethnicity** – Black individuals of African descent and South Asian populations often have the highest Lp(a) levels.
- **Genetics** – Your Lp(a) level is mostly genetic, but some conditions can increase your level such as diabetes, chronic kidney disease, and post menopause.

If a close family member has high Lp(a), it's important to get tested and encourage other family members like parents, siblings, and children to do the same. Ask your doctor about genetic testing options like [cascade screening](#).

## What can I do if I have high Lp(a)?

Although lifestyle changes can't lower Lp(a) levels, it's important to lower your overall risk of heart disease by:



**Talk to your doctor about Lp(a) and how to reduce your risk of a heart attack and stroke.**

Learn more at [heart.org/lpa](https://heart.org/lpa)