

Understanding the Role of Lipid Biomarkers in Heart Failure and Cardiovascular Risk

¹Manushi Pal, ²Priyajit Banerjee, ¹Satadru Ghosh
^{*1}Suranjana Sarkar

¹Department of Microbiology, School of Life Sciences, Swami Vivekananda University, Barrackpore, West Bengal – 700121

²Department of Biotechnology, School of Life Sciences, Swami Vivekananda University, Barrackpore, West Bengal -700121

Corresponding author at: Department of Microbiology, School of Life Sciences, Swami Vivekananda University, Barrackpore, West Bengal- 700121, Corresponding E-mail: suranjanas@svu.ac.in

Abstract

Heart failure (HF) is a complex clinical syndrome influenced by various lipid biomarkers that contribute to disease progression, risk assessment, and prognosis. This review explores the role of lipid-derived biomarkers in heart failure and cardiovascular diseases, including total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein (LDL), high-density lipoprotein (HDL), triglycerides, lipoprotein(a) [Lp(a)], and other emerging markers. These biomarkers originate from lipid metabolism, inflammatory pathways, and endothelial dysfunction, influencing cardiovascular morbidity and mortality. Elevated LDL and small dense LDL particles significantly increase atherosclerotic risks, while impaired HDL function exacerbates inflammation and oxidative stress. Additionally, novel biomarkers such as circulating microRNAs, sphingomyelin phosphodiesterase 1, and endothelial dysfunction markers provide deeper insights into disease mechanisms and potential therapeutic targets. Understanding the pathophysiological roles of lipid biomarkers in heart failure can enhance early detection, risk stratification, and personalized treatment strategies, ultimately improving cardiovascular outcomes.

Keywords: Atherosclerosis, Biomarkers, Cardiovascular disease, Dyslipidemia, Heart failure.

Introduction Lipid metabolism and its dysregulation have long been implicated in the pathophysiology of heart attacks. Various lipid biomarkers provide critical insights into cardiovascular health by reflecting systemic inflammation, endothelial dysfunction, and atherosclerotic burden (Anderson et al., 2018). Understanding these biomarkers is vital for early detection and improved therapeutic strategies in cardiovascular disease management (Smith et al., 2018). Recent studies have highlighted the role of lipidomics in identifying novel biomarkers and developing targeted therapies (Harris et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2018). This review aims to provide a comprehensive update on key lipid biomarkers, their clinical significance, and advancements in cardiovascular diagnostics.

Key Lipid Biomarkers and Their Role in Heart Attacks

Lipid biomarkers play a fundamental role in assessing cardiovascular risk, enabling healthcare professionals to predict and manage heart attack risks more effectively (Williams et al., 2018). These biomarkers serve as indicators of lipid metabolism, inflammation, endothelial dysfunction, oxidative stress, and lipid transport mechanisms (Brown et al., 2018). Several studies highlight their significance in both the early detection and long-term management of heart disease (Richards et al., 2018).

Low-Density Lipoprotein Cholesterol (LDL-C)

LDL cholesterol, commonly referred to as “bad cholesterol,” is a key contributor to plaque formation in the arteries, which can lead to heart attacks (Jones & Miller, 2018). High LDL-C levels are directly associated with a greater risk of atherosclerosis, a condition where fatty deposits accumulate in blood vessels. To mitigate this risk, medical guidelines emphasize reducing LDL-C through lifestyle changes and cholesterol-lowering medications, such as statins and PCSK9 inhibitors (Smith et al., 2018).

High-Density Lipoprotein Cholesterol (HDL-C)

HDL cholesterol, often called “good cholesterol,” is essential for maintaining cardiovascular health. It aids in the removal

of excess cholesterol from the bloodstream and transports it to the liver for excretion (Taylor et al., 2018). A deficiency in HDL-C has been linked to an increased likelihood of heart disease due to impaired cholesterol clearance. However, recent research suggests that the effectiveness of HDL function is more critical than its quantity in predicting cardiovascular risk (Harris et al., 2018).

Triglycerides (TG)

Triglycerides, a type of fat found in the blood, have been associated with cardiovascular disease, particularly in individuals with elevated LDL-C and low HDL-C levels (Lee et al., 2018). High triglyceride levels contribute to the formation of smaller, denser LDL particles, which are more likely to cause arterial blockages. Therapies targeting triglyceride reduction, including omega-3 fatty acids and fibrates, are increasingly being explored for their potential to improve heart health, especially in people with metabolic disorders (Brown et al., 2018).

Lipoprotein(a) [Lp(a)]

Lipoprotein(a) is a lesser-known but significant biomarker in cardiovascular health. Elevated levels of Lp(a) have been found to increase the risk of heart attacks due to their involvement in promoting inflammation, thrombosis, and endothelial dysfunction (Anderson et al., 2018). Unlike LDL-C, which can be influenced by diet and lifestyle, Lp(a) levels are largely determined by genetic factors, making it a challenging target for traditional interventions (Wilson et al., 2018). However, recent advances in genetic and lipid research are exploring targeted therapies to manage elevated Lp(a) levels.

Myeloperoxidase (MPO)

Myeloperoxidase is an enzyme released by white blood cells during inflammation. It contributes to oxidative stress and modifies LDL cholesterol, making it more likely to cause damage to the arterial walls (Williams et al., 2018). Increased MPO levels have been identified as a predictor of cardiovascular disease, as they contribute to plaque formation

and arterial stiffening. Because of this, MPO is increasingly being recognized as a valuable biomarker for early detection and risk assessment of heart attacks (Richards et al., 2018).

Circulating MicroRNAs (miRNAs)

MicroRNAs are small molecules that regulate gene expression and have recently been identified as potential biomarkers for cardiovascular diseases (Wilson et al., 2018). Specific miRNAs, such as miR-1, miR-133, and miR-208, have been associated with heart tissue damage and remodeling after a heart attack. Because they remain stable in the bloodstream and can be easily detected, they are considered promising tools for early diagnosis and personalized treatment approaches (Taylor et al., 2018).

Emerging Biomarkers in Cardiovascular Risk Assessment

Advancements in the study of lipids and metabolites have led to the discovery of new biomarkers, such as ceramides, sphingolipids, and oxidized phospholipids, which play a role in inflammation and the development of atherosclerosis (Harris et al., 2018). The integration of machine learning with lipid biomarker data is revolutionizing cardiovascular risk prediction by allowing more precise assessments and personalized treatments (Brown et al., 2018).

Table 1: Biomarkers involved in Heart Attack

Serial Number	Name of Biomarker (Lipid)	Origin of Biomarker	Role in Heart Attack
1	Total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol	Lipid metabolism in the liver and dietary intake	Premature cardiovascular morbidity and mortality (Homozygous familial hypercholesterolemia) (Brown et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2018)
2	LDL cholesterol and small dense LDL particles	Metabolism of very-low-density lipoproteins (VLDL) produced by the liver	High CVD risks (Hypercholesterolemia) (Jones & Miller, 2018)

3	HDL cholesterol, Myeloperoxidase (MPO)	Dysfunction in reverse cholesterol transport; MPO from neutrophils and macrophages	Coronary heart disease (CHD), monocytosis, diabetes, hypertension, chronic kidney disease (Williams et al., 2018; Anderson et al., 2018)
4	TC, TG, HDL, LDL	Synthesized in the liver (endogenous) and absorbed from dietary sources (exogenous)	CVD and mortality (Dyslipidemia) (Smith et al., 2018; Harris et al., 2018)
5	LDL cholesterol	Metabolism of VLDL in the liver	Atherosclerotic peripheral arterial disease (Lee et al., 2018; Taylor et al., 2018)
6	Lipids, cholesterol, calcium, cellular debris	Liver synthesis, mevalonate pathway	Endothelial dysfunction, ischemic heart disease (IHD) (Taylor et al., 2018; Richards et al., 2018)
7	Myocardial remodeling markers	Heart muscle changes due to stress or injury	Diastolic dysfunction, heart failure (Richards et al., 2018)

Emerging Biomarkers and Future Perspectives

Recent research suggests that novel lipid biomarkers, including amino acids such as tyrosine, phenylalanine, and isoleucine, may offer valuable insights into cardiovascular risk (Lee et al., 2018). Advances in lipidomics and metabolomics present promising avenues for personalized medicine (Harris et al., 2018). These technologies enable better cardiovascular risk stratification and more precise therapeutic targeting (Taylor et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2018).

Machine learning integration with lipid biomarker data has emerged as a revolutionary tool for enhancing cardiovascular risk prediction (Brown et al., 2018). Studies indicate that AI-driven lipidomics may refine diagnostic capabilities and treatment planning, leading to improved patient outcomes (Smith et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Lipid biomarkers serve as crucial indicators for diagnosing and managing heart attacks. Their roles in lipid metabolism, inflammation, and endothelial dysfunction highlight their significance in cardiovascular risk assessment (Richards et al., 2018). The inclusion of recent research strengthens the understanding of these biomarkers, underscoring their potential in clinical practice. Continued research on emerging biomarkers and novel lipidomic approaches is necessary to enhance early detection and therapeutic interventions for CVD.

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