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DYSLIPIDEMIA CONSEQUENCES AND MANAGEMENT

Fatmah Saeed Baqar[1], Amjed Abdulameer Hussein Alhilfi[2], Atif Mohammed Hakami[3], Hamad Abdulrahman Algaeed[4], Nabeel Jaber Alharbi[5], Deena Abdullah Al Saglab[6], Wael Elsaid Khedr[7], Saad M. Alqahtani[8], Wafa Abdullah Alshamrani[9], Zahrh Husain Alkhalifah[10], Egbal Lateef Mefleh Al-Fadhli[11], Mased Ayedh Almutairi[12], Hussain Marzooq Lasloom[12], Mohammed Saeed Alnefaie[13]

[1] King Abdullah Medical City – Jeddah – Saudi Arabia
[2] University Hospitals of Bristol and Weston – Bristol
[3] Ajyad Emergency Hospital – Makkah – Saudi Arabia
[4] King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz University Hospital – Riyadh – Saudi Arabia
[5] Chest Diseases Hospital - Jazan – Saudi Arabia
[6] Majeedia Primary Health Care – Qatif– Saudi Arabia
[7] Kind Fahad Hospital of University – Alkhobar – Saudi Arabia
[8] Dammam Medical Complex – Dammam – Saudi Arabia
[9] King Fahad Military Medical Complex – Dammam – Saudi Arabia
[10] Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University – Dammam – Saudi Arabia
[11] Dammam General Medical Committee – Dammam – Saudi Arabia
[12] Erada Complex and Mental Health - Dammam – Saudi Arabia
[13]East Nakhb Primary Health Care – Taif – Saudi Arabia

Abstract:

Background: *The pathophysiology of dyslipidemia involves genetic predispositions, dietary factors, insulin resistance, hepatic lipid metabolism, inflammation, hormonal influences, and medications. Genetic variations affecting lipid metabolism and lifestyle factors, such as an unhealthy diet and insulin resistance, contribute to the accumulation of atherogenic biomolecules and the development of atherosclerosis. Furthermore, hormonal imbalances, as seen in thyroid disorders and hormonal medications, can disrupt lipid homeostasis.*

Objective: *This review will review the most recent medical literature on the consequences and management of dyslipidemia.*

Methodology: *Comprehensive research on the consequences and management of dyslipidemia. PUBMED and Google Scholar search engines were the databases used for the search process, and articles were collected from 1980 to 2023.*

Conclusion: *dyslipidemia, characterized by abnormal lipid levels in the blood, poses a significant risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD) and other health complications. The interplay of genetic, environmental, and hormonal factors contributes to disruptions in lipid metabolism, leading to elevated levels of cholesterol and triglycerides. This dysregulation is associated with severe consequences, including atherosclerosis, coronary heart disease, ischemic stroke, pancreatitis, and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. understanding the complex interplay of factors contributing to dyslipidemia is essential for effectively managing and preventing associated health risks. A comprehensive approach that addresses lifestyle factors and utilizes appropriate pharmacotherapy can significantly reduce the burden of dyslipidemia-related complications, promoting cardiovascular health and overall well-being.*

Keywords: *dyslipidemia, etiology, pathophysiology, consequences, and management*

Corresponding author:
Fatmah Saeed Baqar,
Consultant Family Medicine,
Assistant Professor at King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences

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INTRODUCTION:

Dyslipidemia, characterized by abnormal levels of lipids in the blood, has several consequences. It is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD). It is considered a critical risk factor for early CVD due to dysregulated cholesterol trafficking and accumulation, which can lead to an overactive systemic inflammatory response, perpetuating the early development of CVD [1,2]. Patients with dyslipidemia often have elevated triglycerides, decreased high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, and normal or minimally elevated low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol levels [3]. This lipid profile is commonly seen in insulin resistance, metabolic syndrome, and obesity [4]. Severe dyslipidemia, such as hypertriglyceridemia, can manifest as eruptive xanthomas and acute pancreatitis, while hypercholesterolemia is associated with premature coronary heart disease [5]. Lifestyle interventions, including exercise, a healthy diet, weight management, and smoking cessation, are recommended for all individuals with dyslipidemia, along with lipid-lowering therapy for those at moderate to high risk for CVD.

Classification & Etiology of Dyslipidemia

Dyslipidemia can be caused by various factors, including genetic, secondary, and environmental causes [6]. Some common causes of secondary dyslipidemia include diabetes mellitus, endocrine disorders, nephrotic syndrome, renal failure, medication use, hypothyroidism, alcohol consumption, diet, and metabolic disorders [7]. Inherited factors, diseases of the thyroid and kidneys, and lack of activity can also contribute to dyslipidemia [8]. Additionally, certain medications such as thiazide diuretics, beta-adrenergic blockers, steroid hormones, immunosuppressive medications, antineoplastic agents, atypical antipsychotics, HIV-1 protease inhibitors, antiepileptics, and other miscellaneous drugs can cause or exacerbate dyslipidemia [9]. Risk factors for dyslipidemia include hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and smoking [10].

Dyslipidemia refers to abnormal cholesterol levels and/or fats in the blood. There are different types of dyslipidemia, including high LDL-C (low-density lipoprotein cholesterol), low HDL-C (high-density lipoprotein cholesterol), high triglyceride levels, and combined hyperlipidemia [10,11]. Dyslipidemia can also be classified based on serum redox status, with different types such as hypercholesterolemia, hypertriglyceridemia, combined hyperlipidemia, low levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol, and hyperlipidemia with low levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol [12].

Pathophysiology of Dyslipidemia:

The pathophysiology of dyslipidemia involves disruptions in lipid metabolism, transport, and clearance, leading to elevated levels of total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C), triglycerides, and/or decreased levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) [13]. Several vital mechanisms contribute to dyslipidemia:

- **Genetic Factors:** Genetic predisposition plays a crucial role in dyslipidemia. Variations in genes involved in lipid metabolism, such as those encoding enzymes like HMG-CoA reductase (involved in cholesterol synthesis) or receptors like LDL receptors, can impact lipid levels [14].
- **Dietary Intake:** Consumption of a diet rich in saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol contributes to elevated LDL-C levels. Excessive intake of refined carbohydrates and sugars may also increase triglyceride levels.
- **Insulin Resistance:** Insulin resistance, often associated with obesity and metabolic syndrome, can contribute to dyslipidemia. Insulin promotes glucose uptake and regulates lipogenesis. Insulin resistance, a condition where cells become less responsive to insulin, produces compensatory hyperinsulinemia. This dysregulation can lead to increased hepatic production of triglycerides and decreased

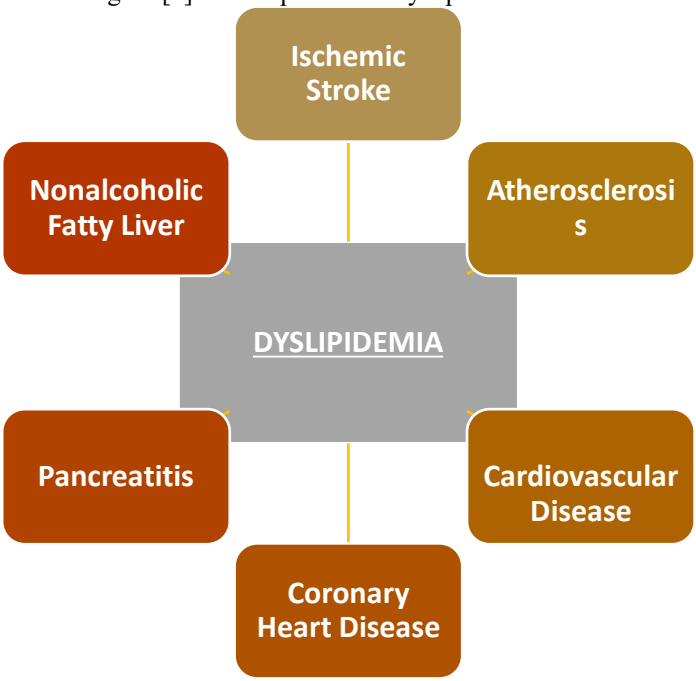
clearance of triglyceride-rich lipoproteins, contributing to dyslipidemia [15].

- **Hepatic Lipid Metabolism:** The liver plays a central role in lipid metabolism. Dysregulation in hepatic lipid synthesis, secretion, and clearance can increase the production of very low-density lipoprotein (VLDL) and LDL, contributing to elevated cholesterol and triglyceride levels [16].
- **Inflammation:** Chronic inflammation, as seen in conditions like obesity and atherosclerosis, can affect lipid metabolism. Inflammatory cytokines can influence the expression of genes involved in lipid synthesis and contribute to LDL-C retention in arterial walls [17].
- **Hormonal Factors:** The hormonal pathophysiology of dyslipidemia involves various hormones that influence lipid metabolism, including thyroid hormones, cortisol, and sex hormones. Dysregulation of these hormonal pathways can lead to cholesterol and triglyceride level imbalances. The thyroid hormone directly affects key enzymes involved in cholesterol synthesis and metabolism, making hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism disrupt lipid homeostasis, leading to elevated cholesterol levels [18]. On the other hand, Chronic elevation of cortisol levels, as seen in conditions like Cushing's syndrome or chronic stress, may contribute to dyslipidemia by promoting lipolysis, gluconeogenesis, and insulin resistance [19]. Moreover, Sex hormones, particularly estrogen and testosterone, affect lipid metabolism. Estrogen tends to have a favorable effect by increasing HDL-C and reducing LDL-C [20], while low testosterone levels in men may be associated with adverse lipid profiles [21].
- **Medications:** Certain medications, such as corticosteroids, diuretics, and immunosuppressants, may contribute to dyslipidemia by affecting lipid synthesis, metabolism, or clearance. Corticosteroids can lead to dyslipidemia by increasing hepatic triglyceride production, inhibiting lipoprotein lipase, and promoting adipose tissue lipolysis [22,23]. Thiazide diuretics have been found to affect dyslipidemia by increasing serum cholesterol levels, particularly total cholesterol (TC) and triglycerides (TG). Thiazides, such as penflutizide (PFZ), have been shown to induce lipid peroxidation [24]; on the other hand, Thiazolidinediones, a class of antidiabetic agents, have been found to have beneficial effects on dyslipidemia, as they target insulin resistance and can help normalize lipid levels in patients with type 2 diabetes [25]. Beta-blockers can adversely impact lipid profiles by decreasing lipoprotein lipase activity and reducing plasma-free fatty acids [26,27]. Certain antiretroviral medications, particularly protease inhibitors, can lead to dyslipidemia by affecting lipid metabolism, including elevated triglycerides and cholesterol [28]. Isotretinoin can cause significant increases in serum levels of cholesterol, triglycerides, and high-density lipids content. Additionally, isotretinoin has been found to inhibit lipid synthesis and reduce lipid content [29].

Consequences of dyslipidemia:

The Elevated levels of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) due to dyslipidemia significantly affect the heart, vascular system, liver and pancreas. The accumulation of fat plaques in the vascular system restricts blood flow to the received organ, which results in serious diseases such as angina or heart attack, coronary heart disease, and Ischemic Stroke [3,5,30]. Hypercholesterolemia plays a significant role in its development by increasing the formation of atherogenic biomolecules, such as reactive oxygen species, proinflammatory cytokines, and growth factors which cause endothelial cell damage, a key trigger for atherosclerosis, leading to enhanced intimal permeability, leukocyte adhesion, and thrombus formation [31,32]. Moreover, Pancreatitis and dyslipidemia are frequently linked due to vascular occlusions by clumped lipid particles that cause calcium signaling, trypsin activation, and activation of inflammatory cells and mediators that trigger pancreatitis [33,34]. In Addition, the accumulation of fat in the liver causes Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease [35].

Figure [1]: Consequences of dyslipidemia



Management of dyslipidemia:

Effective management of dyslipidemia involves a combination of lifestyle interventions and lipid-lowering therapy[5,36]. Lifestyle interventions include regular aerobic exercise, a healthy diet, maintaining a healthy weight, and abstinence from smoking. Dietary changes such as reducing saturated fat, following a Mediterranean or carbohydrate-restricted diet, and incorporating nutritional supplements like red yeast rice, plant stanols/sterols, fiber, and omega-3 fatty acids can also help improve lipid levels. Regular aerobic exercise, avoiding tobacco use, limiting alcohol intake, and stress reduction are also important in managing dyslipidemia. Lipid-lowering therapy, particularly statin medications, is the first-line medical treatment for dyslipidemia due to its effectiveness and favorable adverse effect profile [37]. Other drug classes that can be used include cholesterol absorption inhibitors, bile acid sequestrants, fibrates, icosapent ethyl, and PCSK9 inhibitors.

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, dyslipidemia, characterized by abnormal lipid levels in the blood, poses a significant risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD) and other health complications. The interplay of genetic, environmental, and hormonal factors contributes to disruptions in lipid metabolism, leading to elevated levels of cholesterol and triglycerides. This dysregulation is associated with severe consequences, including atherosclerosis, coronary heart disease, ischemic stroke, pancreatitis, and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. understanding the complex interplay of factors contributing to dyslipidemia is essential for effective management and prevention of associated health risks. A comprehensive approach that addresses lifestyle factors and utilizes appropriate pharmacotherapy can significantly reduce the burden of dyslipidemia-related complications, promoting cardiovascular health and overall well-being.

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