

ANTICARDIOLIPIN ANTIBODIES

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The antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) is an important cause of neurological disease. The syndrome is defined by the presence of laboratory markers of antiphospholipid antibodies (aPLAb) and clinical manifestations such as thrombosis and abortions. Neurological manifestations include stroke, dementia and epilepsy. There are however many controversies surrounding the precise definition of APS, the role of aPLAb in causing disease and treatment of APS. Among the issues discussed will be

1. The definition of APS in elderly patients with stroke and elevated aPLAb.
2. The relevance of elevated aPLAb in inflammatory diseases of the brain such as multiple sclerosis
3. The pathogenesis of the neurological disorders associated with APS: The relative roles of thrombosis, endothelial cell activation, general inflammation in the brain and antigen specific mechanisms.
4. The treatment of APS based on pathogenetic mechanisms: Is treating the thrombotic mechanisms enough? Are inflammatory processes similar to MS and SLE important and worth treating. Is there a role for antibody lowering therapies