

Biographical Sketch
Daniel Steinberg, M.D., Ph.D.



Dr. Steinberg is Professor of Medicine, Emeritus, at the University of California, San Diego. He received his M.D. degree from Wayne State University in 1944 and his Ph.D. in Biological Chemistry from Harvard University in 1950. Dr. Steinberg became involved in research on lipids and lipoproteins very early in his career at the National Institutes of Health, where he worked for 17 years. During his years with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute he and his colleagues helped establish the central role of hormone-sensitive lipase in controlling mobilization of fat and showed that the hormones regulating it worked by way of cyclic AMP-dependent protein kinase. While at the NIH, he succeeded in identifying the precise metabolic error leading to a neurologic disease characterized by accumulation of an abnormal tissue fatty acid, phytanic acid. In 1968 he moved to the University of California, San Diego, and began to concentrate his efforts on the mechanisms underlying atherosclerosis. He and his colleagues headed one of the centers involved in the landmark Lipid Research Clinics trial of the effectiveness of lowering cholesterol levels to prevent heart disease. They were also awarded one of the first large grants for research on arteriosclerosis under the Specialized Centers of Research program of the NIH. Over the past two decades he and his colleagues have put forward and supported with a number of lines of evidence a new hypothesis with respect to atherogenesis. In brief, they suggest that the low density lipoproteins, the main carriers of cholesterol, only become maximally atherogenic after they have undergone modification by an oxidative process. This hypothesis has proved to be strongly heuristic and many laboratories around the world are now engaged in exploring it further.

Dr. Steinberg and his colleagues have published over 400 papers relating to lipid and lipoprotein metabolism and atherosclerosis.

Dr. Steinberg has received a number of honors, including the Duff Lectureship of the American Heart Association in 1982, the Mayo Soley Award of the Western Society for Clinical Investigation in 1984, and the Lucian Award from McGill University in 1987. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1982, to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1986, and to the Institute of Medicine in 1995. In 1988 he received the Distinguished achievement Award of the American Heart Association Council on Arteriosclerosis and in the same year the first Award for Scientific Achievement from the National Cholesterol Conference. In 1994 he received the Distinguished Achievement Award from George Washington University. In 1995 he received the Bristol-Myers Squibb Award for Outstanding Cardiovascular Research and was invited to give the Conner Memorial Lecture for the American Heart Association.

In 2004 he was designated a Distinguished Scientist of the American Heart Association and in 2005 he received the Eugene Braunwald Academic Mentorship Award from that Association. He was the Levi Professor of Medicine and Aging at the University of California San Diego until 2000, when he became a Research Professor Emeritus.