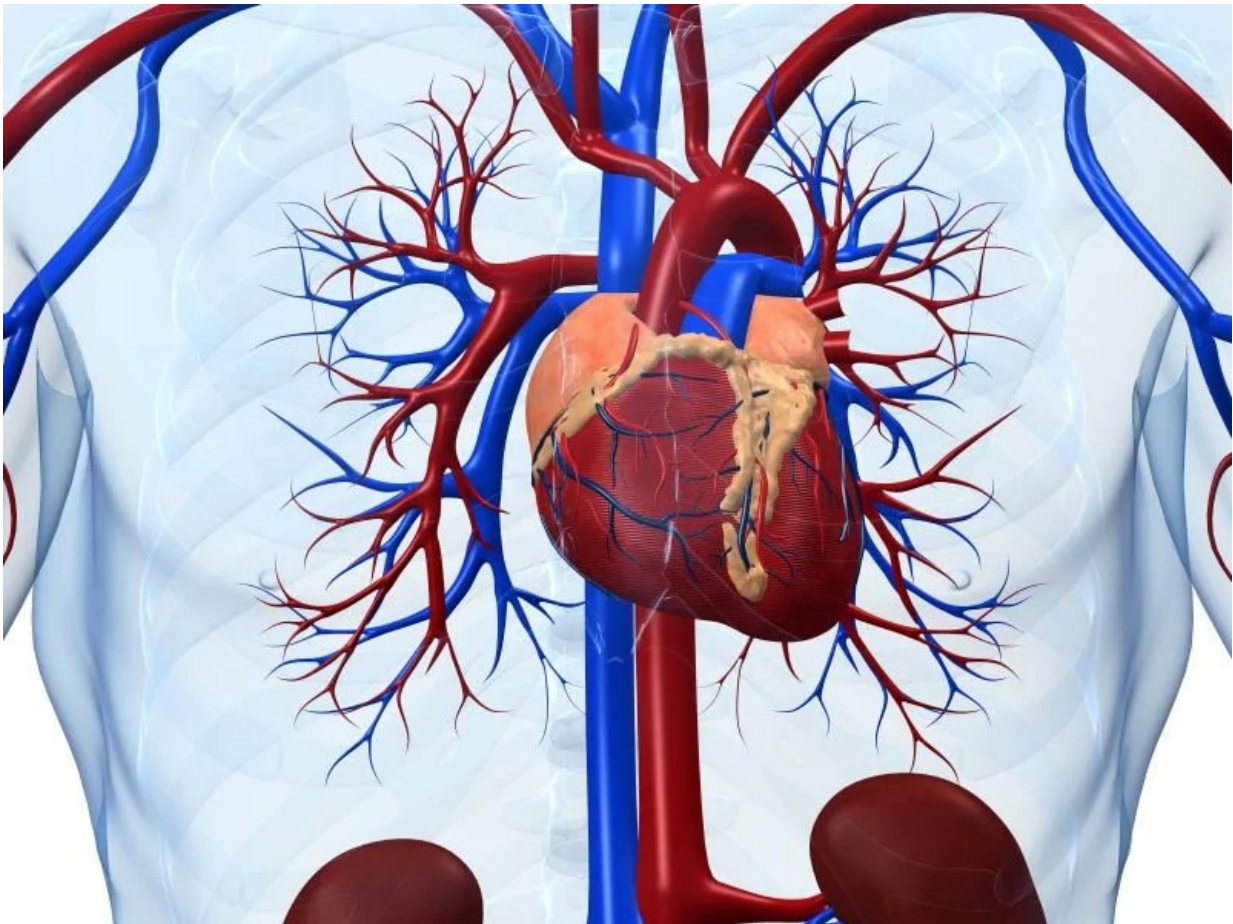


# An allergy to red meat may be tied to heart disease

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(HealthDay)—An allergen in red meat may be tied to heart disease,

according to a study published in the July issue of *Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis, and Vascular Biology*.

Jeffrey M. Wilson, M.D., Ph.D., from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, and colleagues analyzed blood samples for total immunoglobulin E (IgE) and specific IgE to galactose- $\alpha$ -1,3-galactose ( $\alpha$ -Gal) among 118 [patients](#) who presented for cardiac catheterization and underwent intravascular ultrasound.

The researchers found that 26 percent of patients had antibodies to  $\alpha$ -Gal, indicating sensitivity to [red meat](#). The sensitized patients had significantly higher levels of arterial plaque (30 percent higher) versus non-sensitized patients. These plaques also tended to be more structurally unstable, increasing the likelihood of heart attack and stroke. The association between  $\alpha$ -Gal-specific IgE and atheroma burden remained significant after adjusting for sex, diabetes, hypertension, statin use, and total IgE.

"While more studies are needed, the current work provides a potential new approach or target for preventing or treating [heart disease](#) in a subgroup of people who are sensitized to red meat," Ahmed Hasan, M.D., Ph.D., program director in the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's Atherothrombosis and Coronary Artery Disease Branch, said in a statement.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry; one author has a patent on ImmunoCAP IgE assays to galactose- $\alpha$ -1,3-galactose.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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