

Antiphospholipid syndrome (APS) is a rare autoimmune disorder characterized by recurring blood clots (thromboses). Blood clots can form in any blood vessel of the body. The specific symptoms and severity of APS vary greatly from person to person depending upon the exact location of a blood clot and the organ system affected. APS may occur as an isolated disorder (primary antiphospholipid syndrome) or may occur along with another autoimmune disorder such as systemic lupus erythematosus (secondary antiphospholipid syndrome). APS affects males and females, but a large percentage of primary APS patients are women with recurrent pregnancy loss. Some estimates suggest that 1 in 5 cases of recurrent miscarriages or deep vein thromboses are due to APS. As many as one-third of cases of stroke in people under 50 years of age may be due to APS. Secondary APS occurs mainly in lupus, and about 90% of lupus patients are female.