

# STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF HEMOGLOBIN

\* Please check out [this link](#) to know if there are any changes or additions.

Revised by

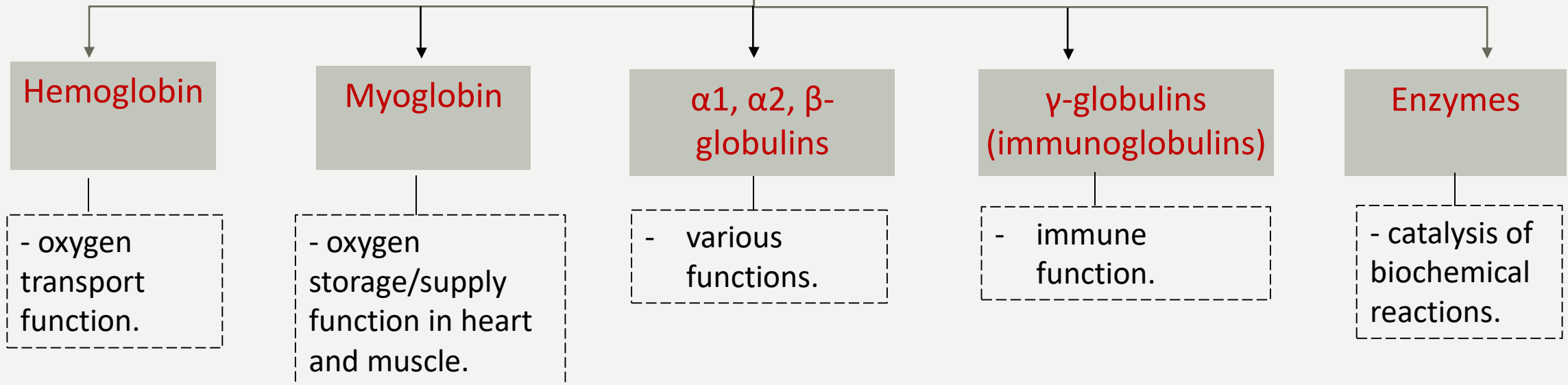
خولة العماري & هشام الغفيلي

**Color index:** **Important** | **Doctors notes** | Further explanation.

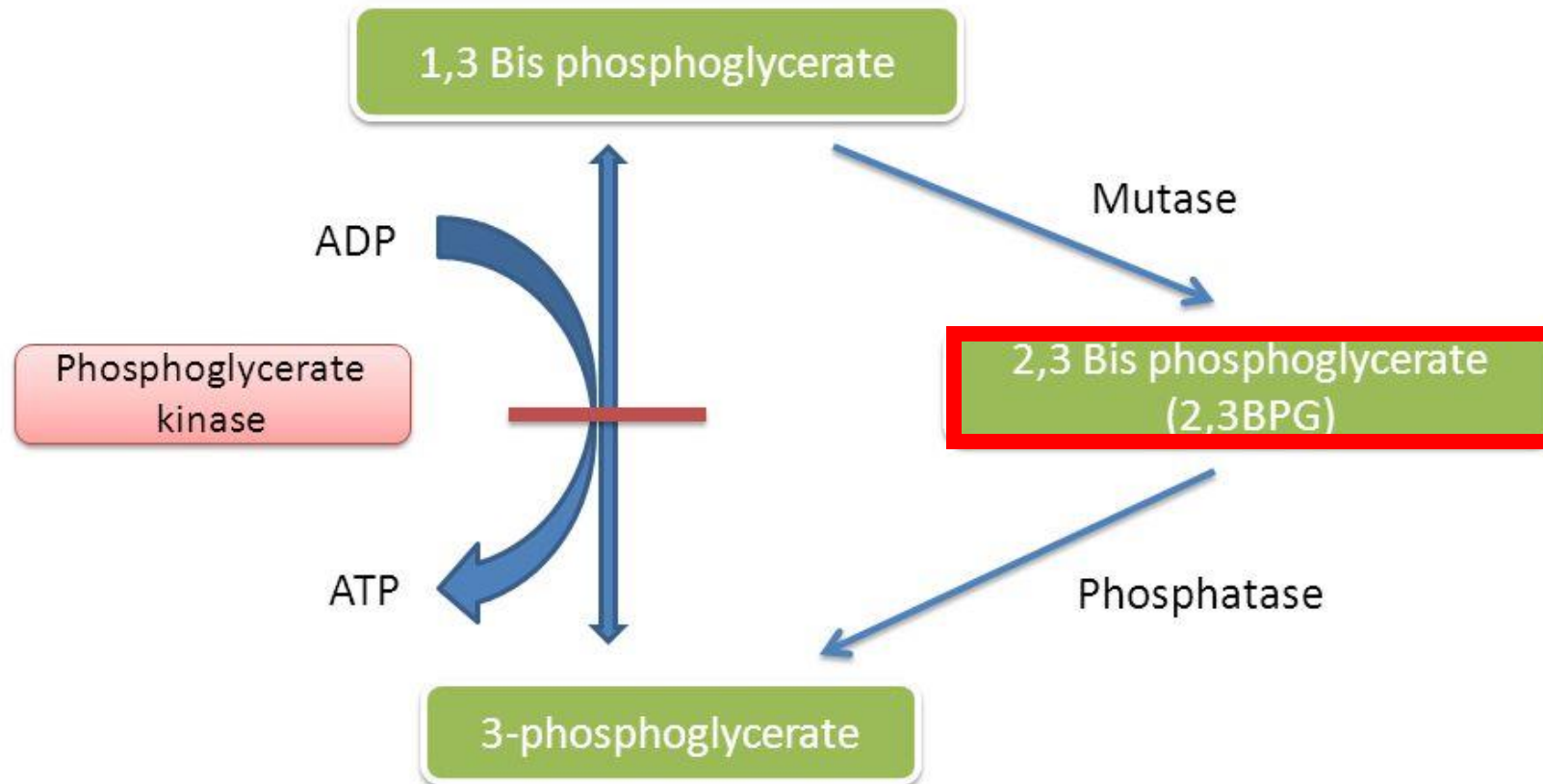
# Globular proteins

- **What are globular proteins ?**
  - Proteins which their Amino acid chains are folded into shapes that resemble “spheres”.
- **Benefit of that folding :**  
**That type of folding increases the solubility of proteins in water.**
  - Polar groups → on the protein’s surface
  - Hydrophobic groups → in the interior

## Examples



# Glycolysis in Erythrocytes:



- Net ATP production during production of 2,3 BPG in RBCs = 0 ATPs
- Increase in 2,3 BPG shifts the oxygen dissociation curve to the right

# OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lecture, the students should be able to know:

- the structure and function of hemoglobin.
- the factors affecting oxygen binding to hemoglobin.
- examples of normal and abnormal hemoglobin structures.

A **hemeprotein** found only in red blood cells.

**What is "Hemoglobin"?**

**Hemoglobin:**  
 Males: 14-16 g/dL  
 Females: 13-15 g/dL

It Contains heme as **prosthetic** group.  
 Prosthetic means it acts as a co-factor ( it doesn't consume the oxygen itself but it delivers O2 to the tissues).

**Functions:**

Oxygen transportation  
 "from the lungs to tissues"

Carries carbon dioxide from tissues back to the lungs

**Types**

Abnormal

- Carboxy Hb
- Met Hb
- Sulf Hb

Normal

النسب هنا هي نسب وجود هذه الأنواع في الإنسان الطبيعي

- HbA (97%)
- HbA<sub>2</sub> (2%)
- HbF (1%)
- HbA<sub>1c</sub>

# The heme group

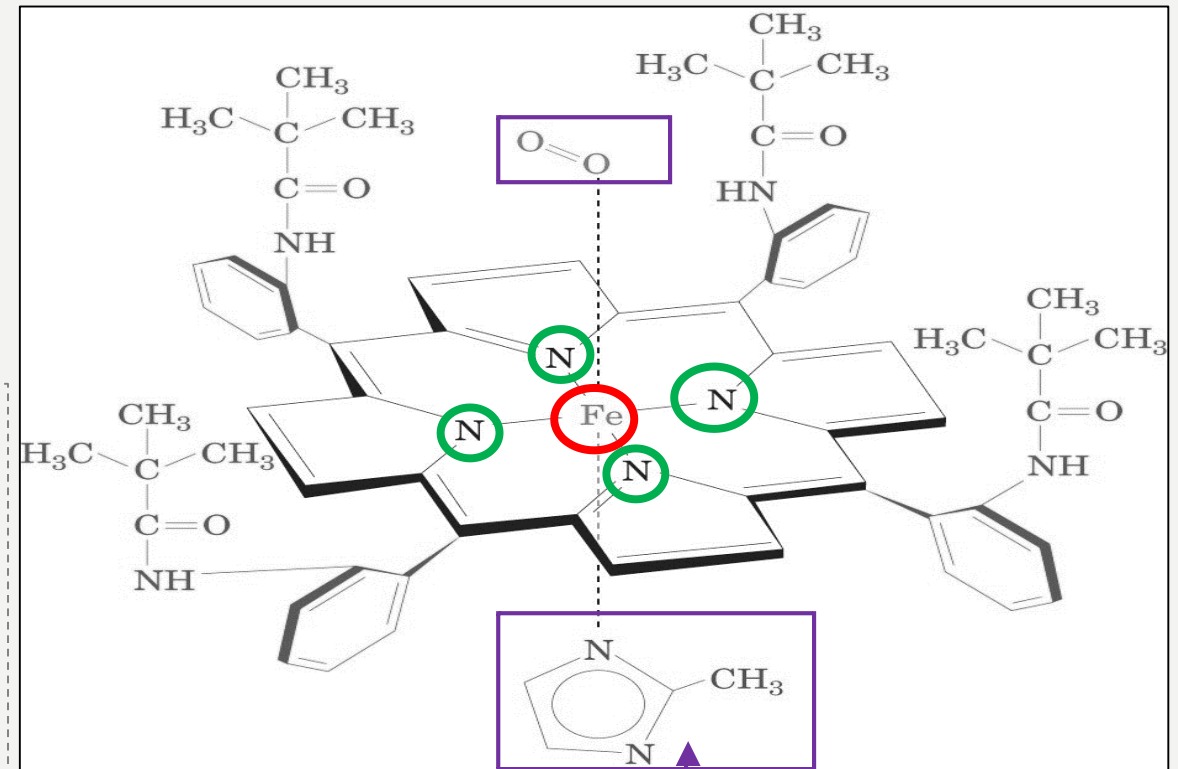
## ❖ What is "Heme"?

A complex of **protoporphyrin IX** and **ferrous iron (Fe<sup>2+</sup>)**. Iron has to be in the ferrous state, otherwise it will not bind to Hb

## ❖ Structure:

- **Fe<sup>2+</sup>** is present in the **center** of the heme.
- It binds to **4 nitrogen** atoms of the **porphyrin** ring.
- It also Forms two additional bonds with:
  - 1- **Histidine residue** of globin chain.
  - 2- **Oxygen**. "Molecule not atom"

الحديد يكوّن ٦ روابط ، فلذلك يرتبط بأربع ذرات نيتروجين - التي تعتبر جزء من تركيب البورفيرين - ويبقى عنده رابطتين فاضيات:  
 - يرتبط برابطة مع الهستيدين الخاص بأحد الـ globin chains.  
 - ويرتبط بالأخرى مع الاكسجين ليكوّن بالنهاية الهيم.  
 \*طيب وش ممكن نستنتج من التركيب؟ ان الهيموجلوبين يحمل ٤ اكسجين.  
 \*كيف؟ الهيموجلوبين يتكون من ٤ هيم.. وبما ان كل هيم يحمل اكسجين فهو يحمل ٤ اكسجين.  
 فائدة أخرى: المايوجلوبين يحمل جزيء اكسجين واحد "لأنه يتكون من هيم واحد فقط".



Histidine residue of one of the subunits

# Hemoglobin A (HbA)

- ❖ **Major Hb in adults.**
- ❖ A Hb molecule contains 4 heme groups and carries 4 molecules of  $O_2$ .

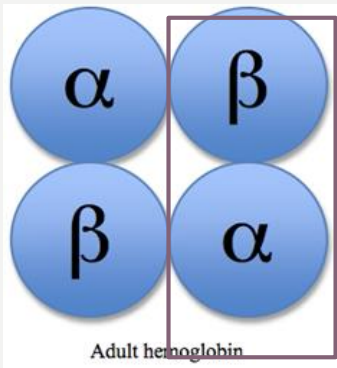
## Structure:

Composed of **four** polypeptide chains:  
Two  $\alpha$  and two  $\beta$  chains.

These chains form **two dimers** of  $\alpha\beta$  subunits

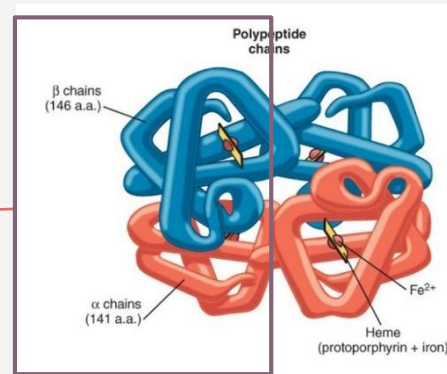
The dimers are Held together by **non-covalent interactions** ( weak hydrogen and ionic bonds).

Each chain ( $\alpha$  or  $\beta$ ) is a **subunit** with a heme group in the center that carries oxygen.



A dimer:  
 **$\alpha\beta$  subunits**

Also called heterodimer

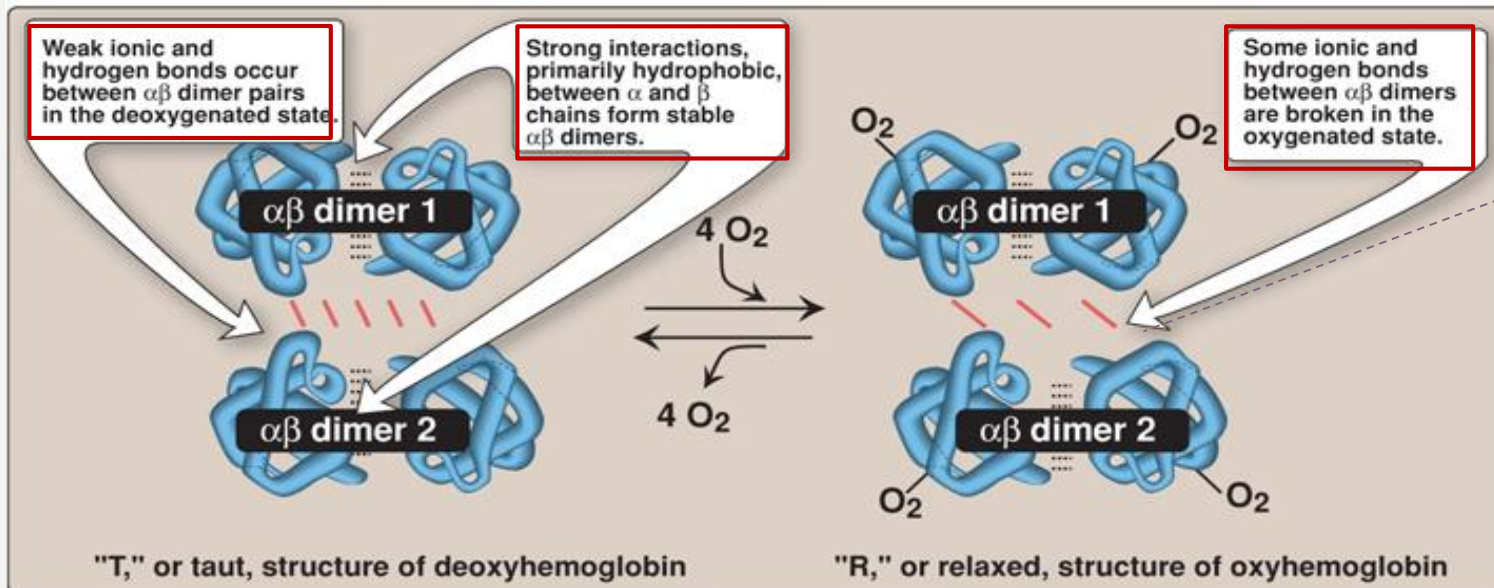


The two polypeptide chains **within** each dimer are held tightly together by hydrophobic interactions. These multiple interchain interactions form **strong** association between  $\alpha$ -subunits and  $\beta$ -subunits in the dimers, so there is almost no movement between the subunits “with chains”!  
In contrast, **the two dimers** are held together by polar bonds. The weaker interactions between the dimers allow them to move with respect to one other. This movement results in the two dimers occupying different relative positions in deoxyhemoglobin as compared with oxyhemoglobin (see next slide).



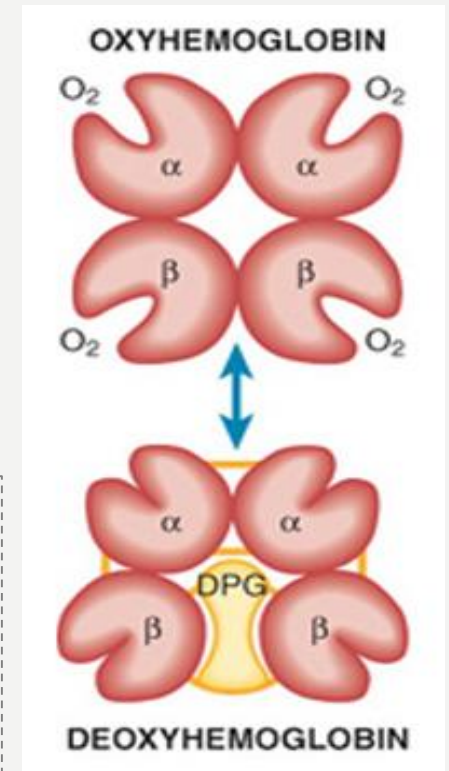
# HbA forms:

<b>T-form (Taut form)</b>	<b>R-form (Relaxed form)</b>
<b>Deoxygenated form</b>	The oxygenated form
The movement of dimers is <b>constrained</b> by DPG (will be explained in next slides).	The dimers have <b>more freedom of movement</b> .
<b>Low-oxygen-affinity form</b>	<b>High-oxygen-affinity form.</b>



Copyright © 2008 Wolters Kluwer Health | Lippincott Williams & Wilkins

\*الصورة اعادة للشرح اللي بالرمادي اللي بالشريحة السابقة.



لاحظوا ان بعض الروابط الهيدروجينية او الأيونية تكسرت في الريلاكسد فورم، هذا صار عشان توفر مكان للأكسجين لتحمله.

Recall: RBCs use anaerobic pathway ( due to lack of mitochondria), so the net ATP for RBCs is 2, but the "shunt" consumes these 2 ( to unload O<sub>2</sub>), this shunt is DPG.



# Oxygen Dissociation Curve

- ❖ It is a curve that plots the proportion of hemoglobin in its saturated (oxygen-laden) form on the vertical (Y) axis against the prevailing oxygen tension on the horizontal (Y) axis.
- ❖ The curves show important differences between hemoglobin and myoglobin (e.g the graph illustrates that myoglobin has a **higher oxygen affinity** at all pO<sub>2</sub> values than does hemoglobin).

## hemoglobin.

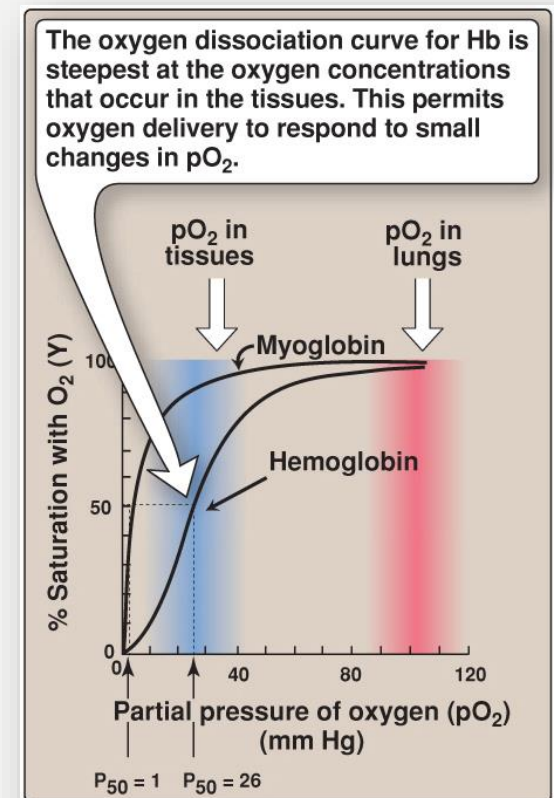
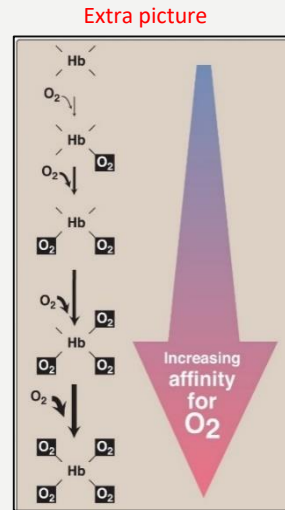
- **Curve's shape: sigmoidal** in shape. We get the Sigmoidal shape because as you slowly start to increase O<sub>2</sub> the degree of saturation does not go up directly.
  - Indicates cooperation of subunits in O<sub>2</sub> binding.
- **Cooperative binding of oxygen by 4 four subunits of Hb means:** Binding of O<sub>2</sub> to one heme group increases O<sub>2</sub> affinity of others.
- **This effect is referred as: Heme-heme interaction.**

Cooperativity is when one O<sub>2</sub> binds to Hb it will cause a conformational change that goes to the other subunits and facilitate the binding of the second molecule and so on.

يعني إذا "شبكة" أكسجين مع مجموعة هيم راح تزيد قابلية ارتباطه مع المجموعات الأخرى ، كأن مجموعة الهيم هذه تشجع صديقاتها.

## Myoglobin.

- Myoglobin curve is called : hyperbolic curve.
- Notice that the p<sub>50</sub> of myoglobin is 1 mmHg (because it has one subunit), while the p<sub>50</sub> of hemoglobin is 26 mmHg.



# Factors affecting oxygen binding (**allosteric effectors**)

We have 3 allosteric factors ( pO<sub>2</sub> & pCO<sub>2</sub>) are counted as one.

pO<sub>2</sub> (partial oxygen pressure)

pH of the environment

pCO<sub>2</sub> (partial carbon dioxide pressure)

Availability of 2,3-bisphosphoglycerate

**P<sub>50</sub>**:

- ❖ It is the pressure at which Hb is **50%** saturated with O<sub>2</sub> (mm Hg).
- ❖ It indicates **affinity of Hb to O<sub>2</sub>**:
  - **High** affinity → **slow** unloading of O<sub>2</sub> → **low P50 value**
  - **Low** affinity → **fast** unloading of O<sub>2</sub> → **high P50 value.**

باختصار: كلما ازداد الهيموجلوبين بالأكسجين تعلقاً، كلما ازدادت صعوبة استخلاصه من قبل الأنسجة، تخيلوا الهيموجلوبين ماسك مجموعة كرات، وأنسجة الجسم تحاول تأخذ هذه الكرات منه، فكل ما كان تشبته بالكرات اقوى كل ما صار أصعب على الأنسجة أنها تأخذ الكرات منه

- Lung pO<sub>2</sub> is **100** mmHg → Hb saturation **100%**.
- Tissue pO<sub>2</sub> is **40** mmHg → Hb saturation **reduces**.
- Hence O<sub>2</sub> is delivered to tissues.

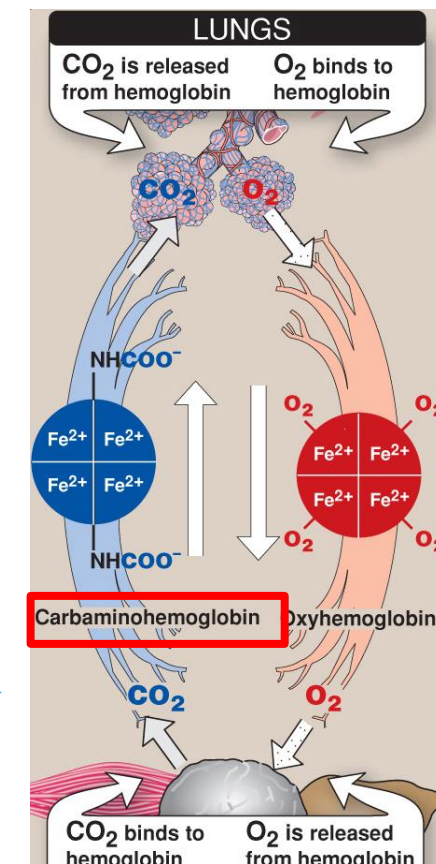
- ضغط الاكسجين في الانسجة أقل من ضغطه في الرئة، فيكون اسهل على الهيموجلوبين انه ينزله فيها

## The body get rid of CO<sub>2</sub> by to ways :

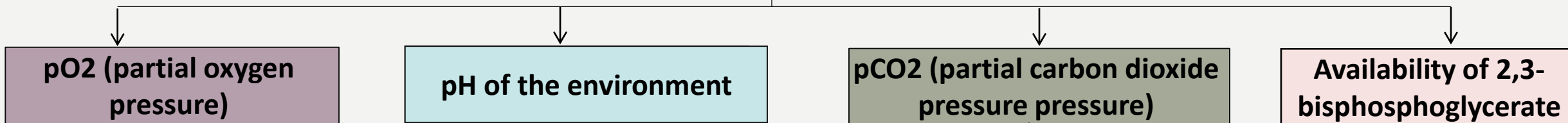
- 1- by binding to hemoglobin ( 10%).
- 2- by Bohr effect (90%).

### More explanation for the first method:


You breath in → o<sub>2</sub> is bound to hemoglobin forming **oxyhemoglobin**. → goes to the muscles → oxygen release (due to low o<sub>2</sub> amounts in tissues ) → CO<sub>2</sub> binds to the N-terminus of the amino groups of each globin, forming **carbaminohemoglobin**, then it travels through the circulation to the lungs, and then got unloaded in the lungs to be excreted.



# Factors affecting oxygen binding (**allosteric** effectors)



## The Bohr effect :

❖ The Bohr effect is a physiological phenomenon stating that Hemoglobin's oxygen binding affinity is **inversely related** both to acidity and to the concentration of carbon dioxide. That is, an increase in blood CO<sub>2</sub> concentration, which leads to a decrease in blood pH, will result in hemoglobin proteins releasing their load of oxygen.  [Bohr effect](#)

### ❖ What is “Bohr effect”?

- It is the effect of **pH** and **pCO<sub>2</sub>** on:

1-Oxygenation of Hb in the lungs.

2-Deoxygenation in tissues.

- Protons (low PH – High CO<sub>2</sub>) reduce O<sub>2</sub> affinity of Hb → Hb releases its load of oxygen

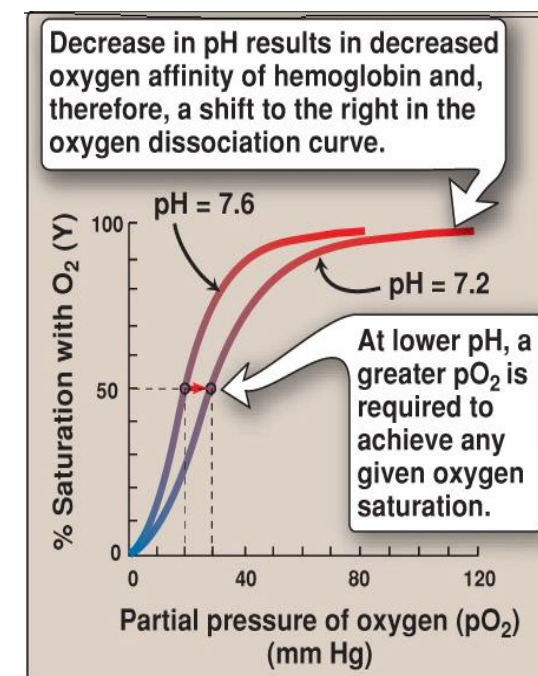
### ❖ Source of the protons that lower the pH:

▪ Tissues have lower pH (**acidic**) than lungs.

✓ **Due to** proton generation:



In tissues, Co<sub>2</sub> is converted by carbonic anhydrase to carbonic acid which spontaneously loses a proton, becoming bicarbonate. The H<sup>+</sup> produced by this pair of reactions contributes to the lowering of pH.



# Factors affecting oxygen binding (allosteric effectors)

pO<sub>2</sub> (partial oxygen pressure)

pH of the environment

pCO<sub>2</sub> (partial carbon dioxide pressure)

Availability of 2,3-bisphosphoglycerate

## The Bohr effect : \*الدكتور ه شرحت المکانزم بذمة وضمير فركزوا بالمذاكرة\*

### ❖ Mechanism of the Bohr effect:

Tissues have **lower pH** (acidic) than lungs.  
**Due to proton generation:**  
 $CO_2 + H_2O \rightarrow H_2CO_3 \rightarrow HCO_3^- + H^+$

Protons (low PH – High CO<sub>2</sub>) **reduce** O<sub>2</sub> affinity of Hb.

Causing **easier O<sub>2</sub> release** into the **tissues**.

The **free Hb** binds to **two protons**.

Protons are released (in the lungs) and react with HCO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> to form CO<sub>2</sub> gas  
 $(HCO_3^- + H^+ \rightarrow CO_2 + H_2O)$

Result: The Bohr effect **removes insoluble CO<sub>2</sub>** from blood stream (Produces soluble bicarbonate).

The proton-poor Hb now has **greater affinity** for O<sub>2</sub> (in lungs).

البروتونات الناتجة عن التفاعل السابق قللت الاقنتي! يعني خلاص الهيموجلوبين ماهو متمسك بالاكسجين ولا يبييه ☹️

الهيموجلوبين تخلت عن الاكسجين واعطته الأنسجة واصبحت حرة ☺️ "كله من البروتونات!"

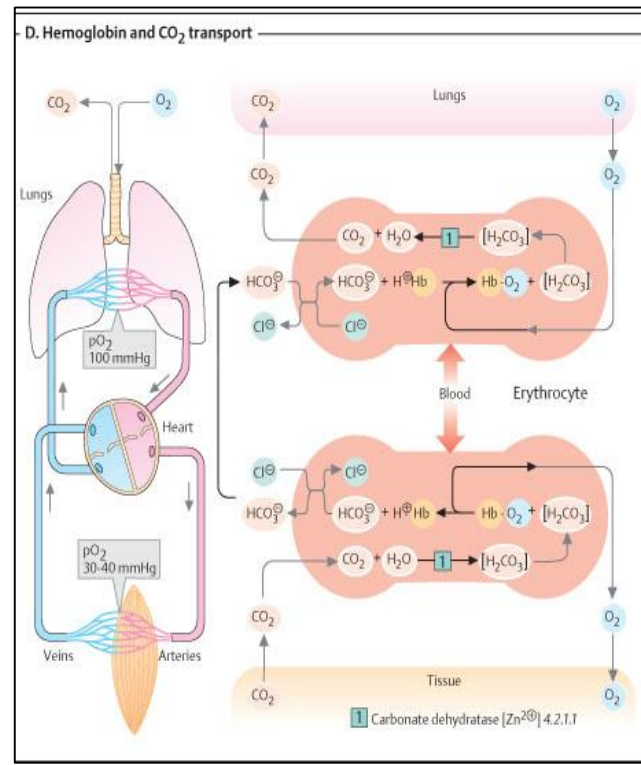
بعد ماصارت حرة ارتبطت مع البروتونات، كأنها عملية استبدال خوزي الاكسجين وعطيتي البروتونات "الهيدروجين الناتج من التفاعل".

بنهاية القصة بس وده يوصل فكرة ان ثاني اكسيد الكربون طلع "للي ما انتبه لنواتج التفاعل العكسي".

زي ماقلنا قبل شوي حنت وقطت البروتونات وزادت الاقنتي وارتبطت بالاكسجين وبتوديهم للأنسجة والقصة بتعيد نفسها

لمن وصلت الهيموجلوبين للرئة حنت للاكسجين وقطت البروتونات ورجعت ارتبطت بالاكسجين. البروتونات بعدين راحت وارتبطت مع البايكاربونات وعكست التفاعل اللي صار اول بالأنسجة

### Extra picture





# Factors affecting oxygen binding (allosteric effectors)

pO<sub>2</sub> (partial oxygen pressure)

pH of the environment

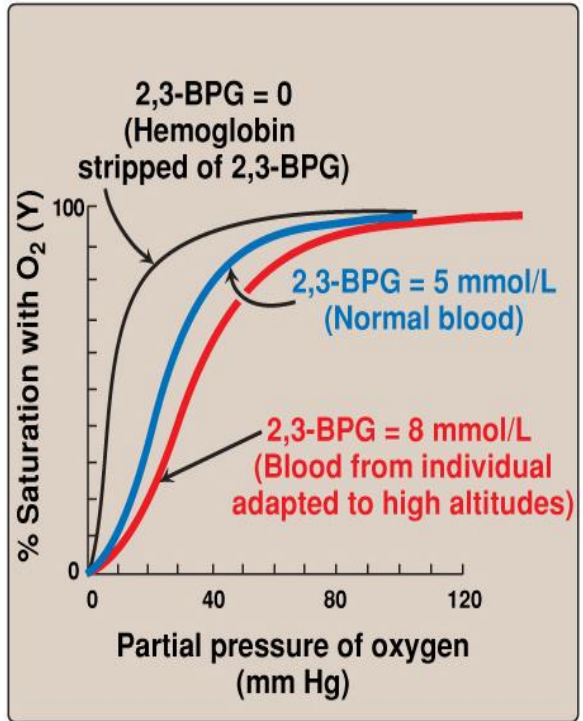
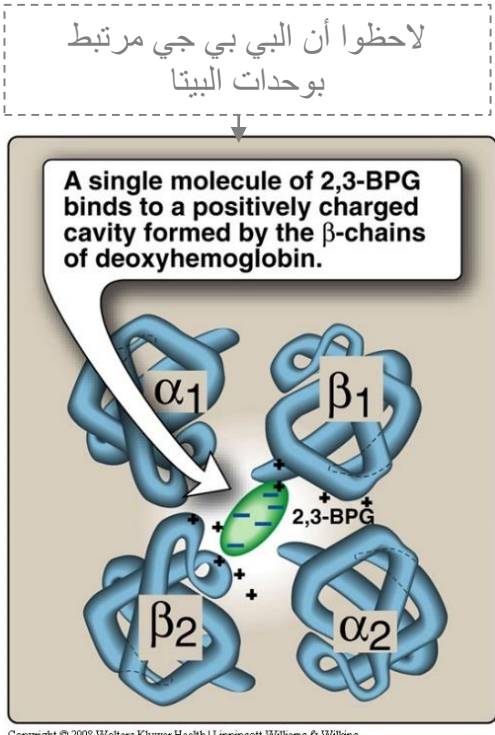
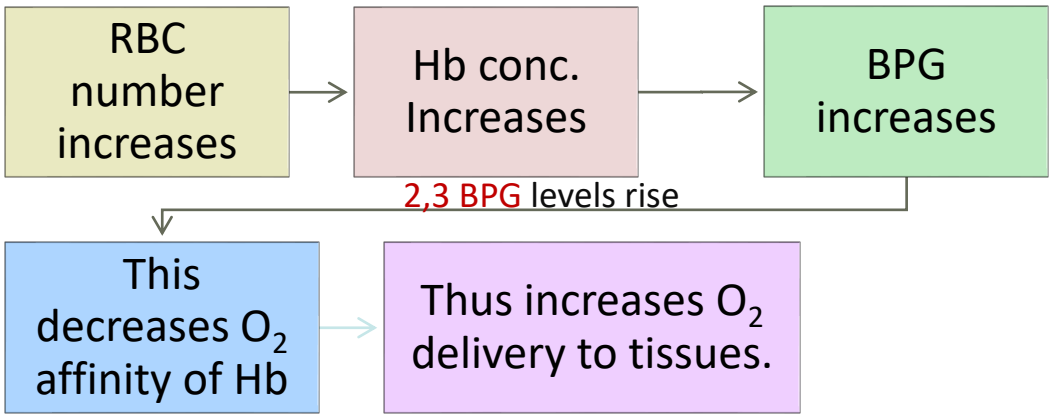
pCO<sub>2</sub> (partial carbon dioxide pressure pressure)

Availability of 2,3-bisphosphoglycerate

## Effects of 2,3-bisphosphoglycerate on oxygen affinity:

- ❖ **Binding of 2,3-BPG to deoxyhemoglobin:**
  - It binds to **deoxy-hb** and stabilizes the **T-form**.
  - When oxygen binds to Hb, **BPG** is released.

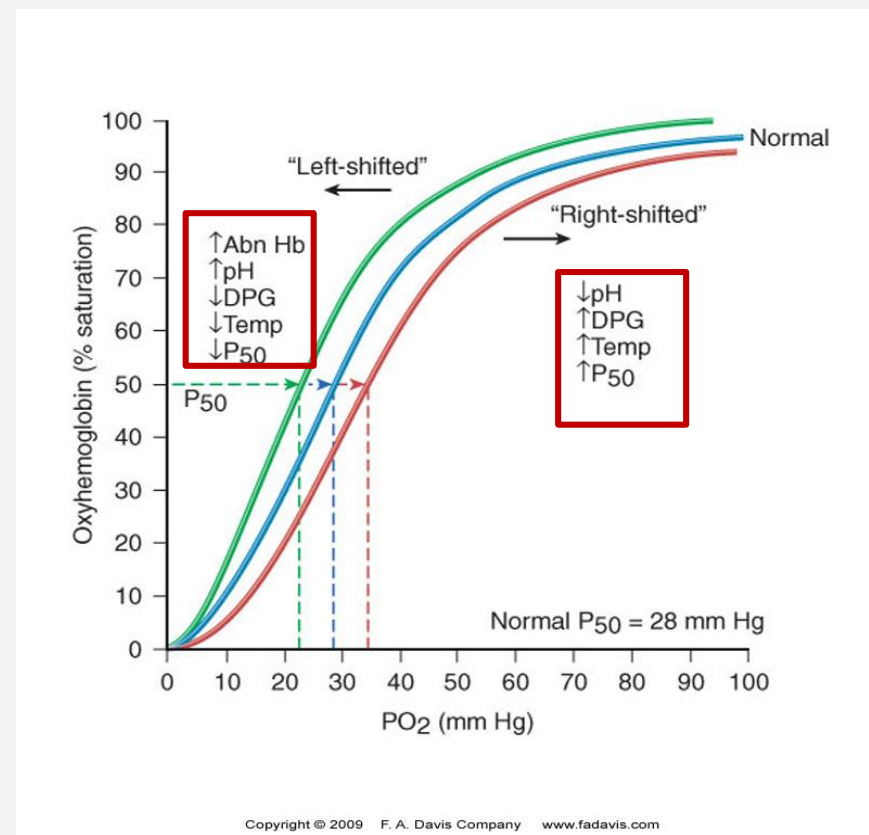
- ❖ **At high altitudes & hypoxia :**



\*يعني الجسم يزيد عدد خلايا الدم الحمراء وتركيز الهيموجلوبين عشان بالنهاية يزيد البي بي جي فيأخذ مكان الاكسجين مما يؤدي الى زيادة كمية الاكسجين في الانسجة عشان يقاوم الجسم الهايبوكسيا.

# High O2 affinity

Affinity:		High O2 affinity:	Low O2 affinity
Shift:		Left shift	Right shift
P50:		Low	High
Factors:	PH	High pH (alkalosis – low pCO2 – Low H+)	Low pH (acidity – high PCO2 – High H+)
	DPG	Low DPG: Multiple transfusion of 2,3 DPG-depleted blood.	High DPG
	Temp.	Low temperature	High temperature
		Abnormal Hb (e.g High levels of Hb F)	-



وش دخل الحرارة؟ في حالة الهايوكسيا والأماكن المرتفعة، تكون حركة الدم في الجسم أسرع علشان تعوض نقص الأكسجين في بعض الأماكن وتحاول توصله بسرعة، فهذي السرعة تولد حرارة، والحرارة بالتالي تنقص الافنتي للأكسجين في الانسجة.

هذي العوامل حفظ! :

Don't forget :  
 Shifting to left = high affinity of O2.  
 Shifting to right = low affinity of O2.

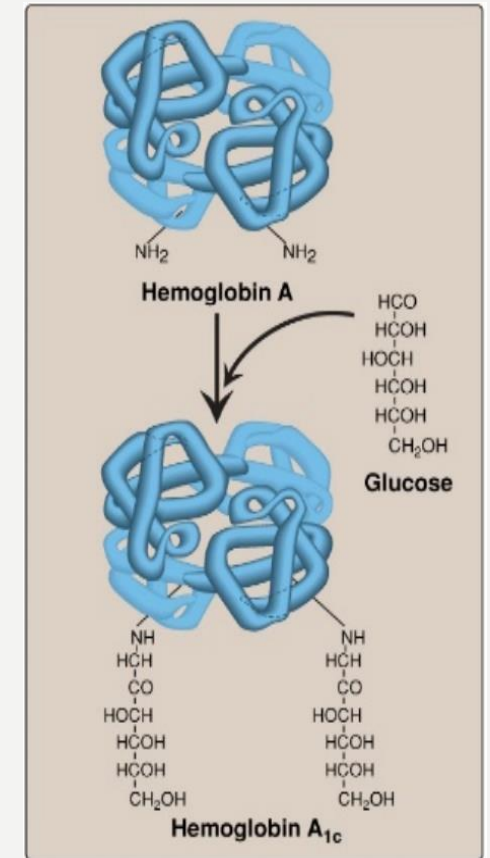
لتسهيل الحفظ: Right shunt = Reduced "Low" affinity.

وبما انه تحرك لليمين فالقيم الموجودة على محور اكس بتزيد "اللي تمثل ضغط الاكسجين" ومعها بيزيد البي ٥٠. وبالنسبة للعوامل كلها تتبع الليدر ضغط الاكسجين "زيادة" إلا البي تش مايجب يتبع احد فصار "نقصان".

[Hemoglobin & Oxygen Dissociation Curves](#)

# Other normal forms of Hb

Fetal Hemoglobin (HbF)	HbA <sub>2</sub>	HbA <sub>1c</sub>
two $\alpha$ and two $\gamma$ chains.	Two $\alpha$ and two $\delta$	Two $\alpha$ and two $\beta$ -Glucose
The major hemoglobin found in the <b>fetus</b> and <b>newborn</b> .	Appears ~12 weeks after birth	High in patients with <b>diabetes mellitus</b> .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It has Higher affinity for O<sub>2</sub> than HbA.</li> <li>- Transfers O<sub>2</sub> from <b>maternal</b> to <b>fetal</b> circulation across <b>placenta</b></li> </ul> <p>الإفتني عالية بهالنوع علشان الجنين يقدر انه يسرق الأكسجين من امه.</p>	Constitutes ~2% of total Hb	<p>An HbA undergoes <b>non-enzymatic glycosylation</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Glycosylation depends on plasma glucose levels.</li> </ul> <p>(علاقة طردية)</p> <p>يكون موجود عند غالبية الناس - اللي ما عندهم سكري - لكن بكمية قليلة</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It indicates a previous history of diabetes ( because it takes 2 to 3 months to change or to get back to normal).</li> </ul>



Copyright © 2008 Wolters Kluwer Health | Lippincott Williams & Wilkins



# Abnormal forms of hemoglobin

## Carboxy-Hb

- Hemoglobin that has carbon mono-oxide instead of the normal oxygen bound to it.
- In smokers.
- **CO** replaces **O<sub>2</sub>** and binds **220X** tighter than O<sub>2</sub>.

Carboxyhemoglobin is formed in carbon monoxide poisoning and leads to oxygen deficiency in the body. The source of the carbon monoxide may be exhaust (such as from a car, truck, boat, or generator), smoke from a fire, or tobacco smoke. The level of carboxyhemoglobin is a measure of the degree of carbon monoxide exposure.

## Met-Hb

Contains **oxidized** (ferric) **Fe<sup>3+</sup>** (~2%) that cannot carry **O<sub>2</sub>**

Brownish bluish color of blood

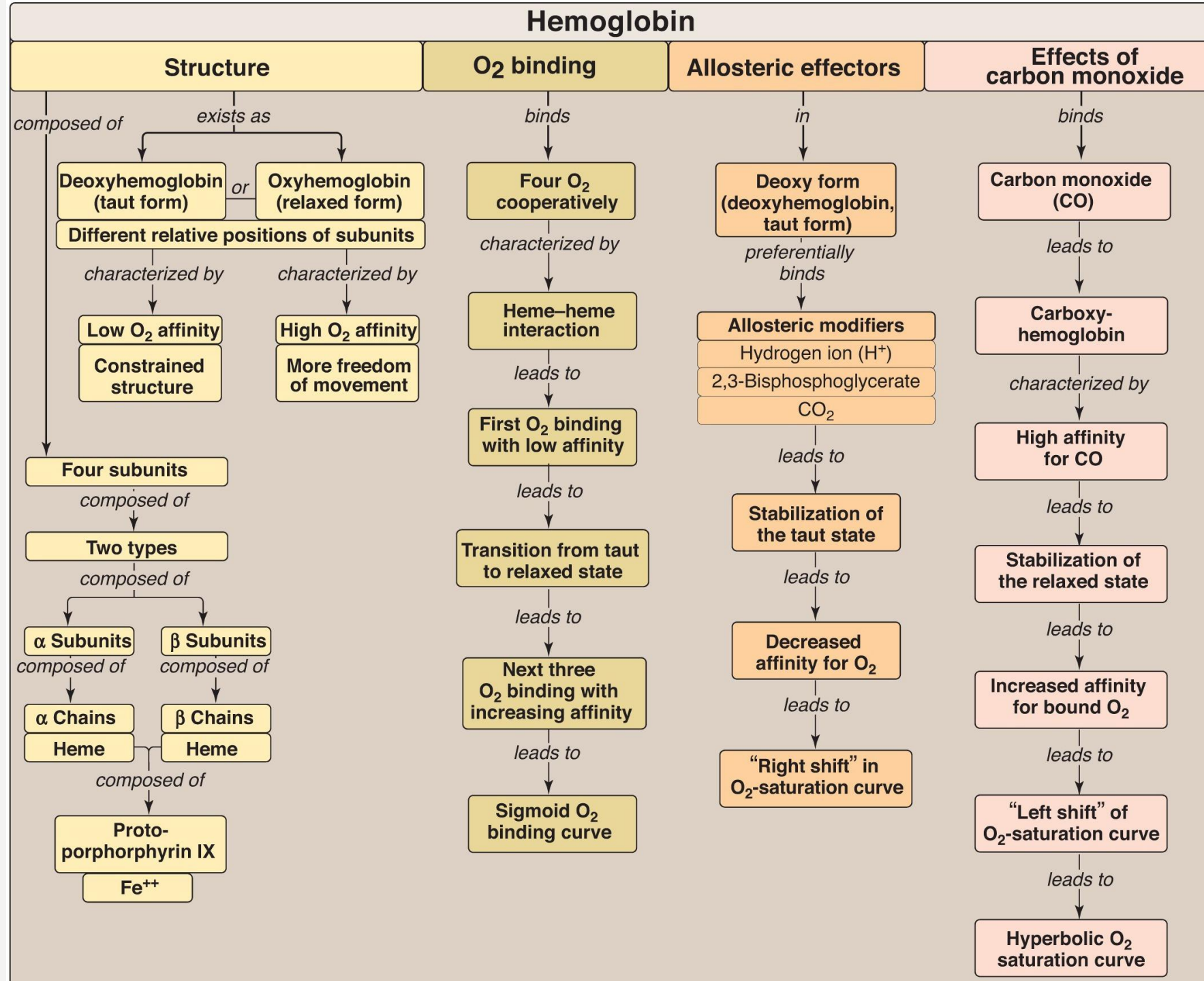
## Sulf-HB

- Forms when **sulfur** levels are high in blood.
- (**irreversible** reaction)

Caused by some mistakenly prescribed medications, or by children who drank some detergents.

# Helpful summary from Lippincott

[Click here](#) to check out team's summary



# Check your understanding!

**Q1: : the heme group is a complex of protoporphyrin IX and ...:**

- A. (Fe<sup>2+</sup>) ferrous iron.
- B. (Fe<sup>3+</sup>) ferric iron.
- C. ferritin.
- D. non of the above.

**Q2: : which of the following is a form of Hb that is unable to transport the O<sub>2</sub>:**

- A. HbA<sub>2</sub>.
- B. HbA<sub>1c</sub>
- C. HbF.
- D. Met Hb.

**Q3: : at the level of the one dimer  $\alpha\beta$  subunits are held by:**

- A. Ionic bond.
- B. hydrogen bond.
- C. hydrophobic bond.

**Q8: : P50 indicate that low affinity = slow unloading of O<sub>2</sub> :**

- A. Fault.
- B. True.

**Q5: : T-form of Hb is :**

- A. taut form.
- B. has Low-oxygen-affinity.
- C. the dimers have more freedom of movement.
- D. A+B.

**Q6: : one of the 3 allosteric effectors that affecting the oxygen binding is:**

- A. partial pressure of the H ions
- B.pO<sub>2</sub>.
- C.Availability of bicarbonate.

**Q7: : from the Oxygen Dissociation Curve tells you that there is a...:**

- A. Cooperation in the O<sub>2</sub> binding to the heme group.
- B. Cooperation in the Co<sub>2</sub> binding to the heme group.
- C. Heme-heme interaction.
- D. A+C.

# Check your understanding!

**Q8:** : depending on Bohr effect which of the following will reduce the affinity of the Hb to the O<sub>2</sub> and cause it release ...:

- A. low pH.
- B. acidity.
- C. Protons.
- D. all of the above.

**Q9:** : Carboxy-Hb is found in ...:

- A. fetus+ newborn.
- B. healthy adult.
- C. smoker.
- D. sulfa users.

**Q10:** : which of the following form of Hb has a high affinity to the O<sub>2</sub> ( in lung ) :

- A. proton-poor Hb
- B. Carboxy-Hb.
- C. deoxygenated form of Hb

**Q11:** : which of the following is true about a person who lives in a 2,400 meters altitude:

- A. his RBC number decreases
- B. his Hb conc. decreases
- C. the availability of the BPG increases.

**Q12:** : Fetal Hemoglobin has a higher affinity to O<sub>2</sub> than:

- A. HbA.
- B. HbA<sub>2</sub>.
- C. all of the above.

## Done by:

- شهد العنزي.
- عبدالله الغزي.
- نورة الطويل.
- عبدالله الشنيفي.
- دلال الحزيمي.
- رغد المنصور.
- احمد الرويلي

## Revised by:

- فارس المطيري.

## Resources:

- 435's slides and notes.
- Lippincott's illustrated reviews: Biochemistry – sixth edition.
- The European Respiratory Journal: [Relating oxygen partial pressure, saturation and content: the hemoglobin–oxygen dissociation curve.](#)

**PAIN MAKES  
YOU STRONGER,  
TEARS MAKE  
YOU BRAVER  
AND HEARTBREAK  
MAKES YOU  
WISER, SO THANK  
THE PAST FOR  
A BETTER FUTURE.**



[@435biochemteam](#)



[435biochemistryteam@gmail.com](mailto:435biochemistryteam@gmail.com)



[@biochemteam435](#)