What is it?
Left ventricular hypertrophy (LVH) is a condition in which the muscle wall of the heart’s left pumping chamber (ventricle) becomes thickened (hypertrophy).

How does it happen?
The heart is a muscle. And so, like other muscles, it gets bigger if it is worked hard over time. Several health conditions cause your heart to work harder than normal. The most common cause of LVH is high blood pressure (hypertension). Other causes include athletic hypertrophy (a condition related to exercise), valve disease, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HOCM), and congenital heart disease.

What are the possible symptoms of LVH?
Some patients have no symptoms related to LVH. The condition usually develops over time, and most symptoms occur when the condition causes complications. The most common symptoms of LVH are:

- Feeling short of breath
- Chest pain, especially after activity
- Feeling dizzy or fainting
• Rapid heartbeat, or a pounding or fluttering sensation in your chest

**What are the possible treatment options for LVH?**
If you have LVH, your treatment depends on the cause of the condition and it requires the guidance of your provider.

- **Hypertensive LVH** (caused by high blood pressure) is treated by controlling your blood pressure. This is done with lifestyle changes and medications, when needed.
- **Athletic hypertrophy** does not require treatment. If you have this condition, you will need to stop exercising for 3 to 6 months. At that time, you will have another echocardiogram to measure the thickness of the heart muscle and see if it has lessened.
- **HOCM** is a rare condition that should be followed by a cardiologist with expertise in this area. If you have HOCM, you may need medical management or surgery.

**Where can I get additional information?**
For additional information, please seek further guidance from your primary care provider.

**Sources:**