

Health Journal Apr 2012

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Liver (Part 2)

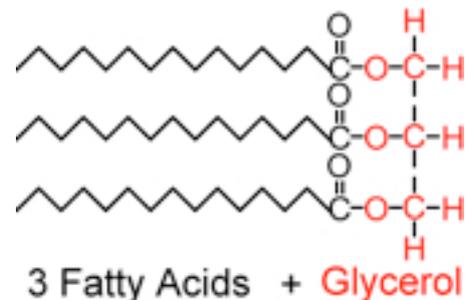
Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)

NAFLD is the term for a wide range of conditions caused by a build-up of fat within the liver cells. It is usually seen in people who are overweight or obese. This is caused by the build-up of fats called triglycerides. These are the most common fats in our bodies. They belong to a group of fatty, waxy substances called lipids that your body needs for energy and cell growth.

We get triglycerides from our diet and they are also made in the liver. The liver processes triglycerides and controls their release. It combines them with special proteins to form tiny spheres called lipoproteins which it sends into the bloodstream to circulate among the cells of your body. When this process is interrupted and the flow of triglycerides to the liver is increased, their release, or 'secretion', from the liver is slowed down. This is what leads to the build-up of fat in your liver cells.

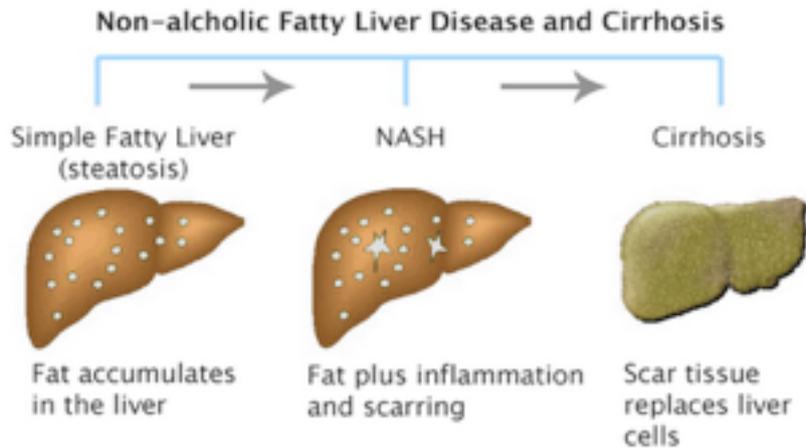
People most at risk of NAFLD are those who:

- are obese
- have insulin resistance, associated with diabetes
- have hypertension (high blood pressure)
- have hyperlipidaemia (too much cholesterol and triglyceride in their blood)
- are taking certain drugs prescribed for other conditions
- have been malnourished, starved or given food intravenously



Triglycerides





Non alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH)

Non alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) is a more advanced form of NAFLD in which there is inflammation in and around the fatty liver cells. This may cause swelling of your liver and discomfort or pain around it. If you place your right hand over the lower right hand side of your ribs it will cover the area of your liver.

With intense, on-going inflammation a build up of scar tissue may form in your liver. This process is known as fibrosis, and can lead to cirrhosis. NASH is now considered to be one of the main causes of cirrhosis.

NASH should be distinguished from acute fatty liver disease, which may occur during pregnancy or with certain drugs or toxins (poisons). This condition is very rare and may lead rapidly to liver failure.

Cirrhosis

Cirrhosis is usually the result of long-term, continuous damage to the liver. This is where irregular bumps, known as nodules, replace the smooth liver tissue and the liver becomes harder. The effect of this, together with continued scarring from fibrosis, means that the liver will run out of healthy cells to support normal functions. This can lead to complete liver failure.

Hepatitis

Having hepatitis means that your liver has become inflamed and can be caused by:

- Over consumption of alcohol (the most common cause of liver damage)
- Virus infection
- the side effects of some drugs and chemicals.

Hepatitis A is an infection of the liver caused by the hepatitis A virus. The hepatitis A virus is found in the faeces of infected people. It's spread because of poor personal hygiene, such as when people don't wash their hands after using the toilet. Food prepared or washed with contaminated water can also easily transmit the infection. Fruits, salads, raw vegetables and any uncooked foods are considered to be high risk, as are ice, iced drinks and ice cream.

Hepatitis B is a viral infection of the liver, which follows a very variable course. The hepatitis B virus (HBV) can cause an acute illness that resolves itself quickly without causing long-term liver damage. The people most at risk of contracting hepatitis B are injecting drug users, people who have unprotected sex with different partners, close family members of someone with the infection, babies born to infected mothers and travelers to high-risk countries who come into contact with infected blood and other bodily fluids.

Hepatitis C is an infection with the hepatitis C virus. Hepatitis C virus is usually transmitted through blood-to-blood contact. One common route is through sharing needles when injecting recreational drugs.



Functional Food	Purpose
Garlic, Onion, Leek	High in vitamin C and have anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, and anti-fungal properties, making them a super detoxifier for the liver
Oat Bran	It's a source of liver-loving, water-soluble fiber which aids in the elimination of bile and cholesterol. Like oatmeal, it contains B complex vitamins, protein, fat, and minerals. In addition, oat bran can help the liver by reducing the bad LDL and raise levels of good HDL cholesterol.
Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Kale, Bok Choy	Some of these veggies have shown the ability to stop the growth of cancer cells for tumors in the breast, uterine lining (endometrium), lung, colon, liver, and cervix, according to the American Institute for Cancer Research.
Artichokes	One artichoke contains approximately one fourth of an average sized adults fiber needs. The artichoke is also rich in vitamin C, potassium, folic acid and magnesium. It is cleansing to the liver, and protects and regenerates the liver.
Beans, Peas, Soybeans	Beans is a good source of essential B vitamins, fiber, protein, and iron, also contains the amino acid arginine, which is shown to increase immune function and the ability to detoxify the liver,
Brown Rice	Brown rice is a great source of fiber, B vitamins, manganese, and of the minerals selenium and magnesium. Selenium works as a cofactor in reducing antioxidant enzymes and some varieties of Thioredoxin reductase. These two aspects of selenium make it special as a liver protective food.
Carrots	An excellent source of antioxidants and the richest vegetable source of the pro-vitamin A carotenes, which help protect your liver. Carrots' antioxidants help protect against cardiovascular disease and cancer and also promote good vision, especially night vision.
Tomatoes	A good blood purifier and tomatoes help in cases of congestion of the liver, protecting the liver from cirrhosis.
Walnuts, Almond, Flaxseeds	Rich in vitamin E and potassium, high in minerals including calcium, iron, magnesium and zinc. Some are good sources of folic acid, niacin, and other B vitamins. Others provide plant protein, fiber, and Omega-3 essential fatty acids. They contain monounsaturated or polyunsaturated oils that also help in lowering cholesterol and heart attack risk.
Various type of fruits	A liver cleansing diet should consist of quality fruits (organic when possible) and plenty of pure water. Apples are very cleansing to the blood; fresh lemon juice is great for cleansing the liver; and pomegranates provide excellent antioxidant protection, and have been proven to lower LDL cholesterol, which can clog the liver. Pomegranates increase blood flow helping the liver function better, considering that there are about three pints of blood that flows through the liver every minute.

Food to Avoid

Limit Fluid and Sodium

When you have liver disease, your blood vessels' ability to retain fluid is diminished because of decreased protein synthesis in your liver, mainly albumin. This causes fluid leaks in your blood vessels, which in turn, causes fluid buildup in other tissues, or ascites. By limiting the amount of salt and fluid in your diet, you can decrease fluid retention and swelling.

Foods that are high in sodium:

- canned soups and vegetables
- processed meats, such as bacon, sausages and salami
- cheeses, condiments
- snack foods such as crisps, biscuits

As a rule of thumb, you should try to limit your sodium intake to less than 2,000mg per day.

Control Protein Intake

Because your liver functions are impaired, your body cannot process proteins well, which may cause a buildup of ammonia in your body. Ammonia is toxic and can cause brain function problems. Ask your physician or your registered dietitian what your individual needs are, but in general, the American Dietetic Association recommends that you should not eat more than 1 g of protein per 1 kg of your weight per day. Foods that are high in protein include meat, poultry, fish, dairy products, legumes, nuts and seeds, and some cereals.

Avoid Saturated Fats

Because liver disease is usually accompanied by unintentional weight loss, you shouldn't limit fat intake completely. Additionally, liver disease might reduce your liver's ability to produce bile. Bile is a substance created by the liver and distributed by the gallbladder into the stomach and is necessary for the digestion and absorption of fats, which is why it is important you consume enough calories from healthy fats. Your body needs some fats for general health, but choose unsaturated fats, rather than saturated or trans fats. Examples of foods with saturated fats include butter, whole milk and all animal products. Examples of foods with healthy fats include olive oil, canola oil and avocados.

Physical Activity Guideline

Global Recommendations on Physical Activity for Health by WHO (2010) for the majority population, we should engage in:



Atleast 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic PA

OR

Atleast 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic PA

OR

equivalent of BOTH

For additional health benefits

Atleast 300 minutes per week of moderate aerobic PA

OR

Atleast 150 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic PA

OR

equivalent of BOTH



We should also involve major muscle group strengthen for 2 times or more per week.