

PROTECTING YOUR LIVER

Practical steps that lower your risk of liver disease

Your liver can repair itself, but repeated injury from fat, alcohol, viruses, or toxins can lead to scarring (fibrosis) and cirrhosis. The good news: **most liver disease is preventable or can be slowed**, and small changes add up. Liver disease is often silent until it is advanced, so prevention and testing matter.

? Know your risk: check any that apply to you

☐ Diabetes or prediabetes	☐ I had a transfusion or transplant before 1992
☐ Overweight, or a large waist	☐ Family history of liver disease
☐ High blood pressure or high cholesterol	☐ I take medicines or supplements every day
☐ I drink alcohol regularly, or binge drink	☐ I have hepatitis B or C, or I am not sure
☐ I have used injected drugs or shared needles	☐ I am not sure I am vaccinated for hepatitis A and B

If you checked even one, ask your doctor about liver tests. Two or more? Do not wait.

What counts as one standard drink (about 14 g of pure alcohol)



Regular beer

12 oz, about 5% alcohol

=



Wine

5 oz, about 12% alcohol

=



Distilled spirits

1.5 oz, about 40% alcohol

=



Malt liquor

8 to 9 oz, about 7% alcohol

Alcohol and your liver

- **If you drink**, U.S. guidelines advise no more than 1 drink a day for women and 2 for men. Less is better, and some people should not drink at all.
- **If you have liver disease or cirrhosis**, most liver doctors advise **no alcohol**, because any amount can speed damage.
- Binge drinking (4 or more drinks for women or 5 or more for men in about 2 hours) is especially hard on the liver.
- Never combine alcohol with acetaminophen. Needing help to cut back? Ask your doctor or call the SAMHSA helpline at 1-800-662-4357.

EAT, MOVE, AND MEDICATE WISELY

Everyday choices that protect your liver

Food, activity, and weight

Habit	Do	Limit or avoid
Eating	A Mediterranean-style pattern: vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, fish, nuts, olive oil	Sugary drinks, fried and ultra-processed foods, large portions, red and processed meat
Moving	About 150 minutes a week of moderate activity, plus 2 days of strength work	Long stretches of sitting
Weight	Steady loss: 5% helps liver fat, 7 to 10% helps inflammation, 10% or more can help scarring	Crash diets and rapid weight loss
Other	Coffee is linked to lower liver risk (not a treatment). Cook shellfish well	Smoking; raw shellfish with cirrhosis

Medicines and supplements

Product	What to know
Acetaminophen (Tylenol)	In many cold, flu, and sleep products; count every source. With liver disease or alcohol use, ask your doctor for a lower daily limit (often 2,000 mg or less)
Ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin	Often avoided with cirrhosis (bleeding and kidney risk). Ask before using
Herbs and supplements	Higher concern: green tea extract, kava, turmeric pills, ashwagandha, weight-loss, bodybuilding, and "detox" products
Prescription medicines	Tell every prescriber about liver disease. Do not stop statins on your own; they are usually safe

Vaccines and testing

Protection	Who and when
Hepatitis B vaccine	Recommended for all children and adults up to age 59; older adults with risk factors
Hepatitis A vaccine	For children, some travelers, and people with chronic liver disease
Hepatitis C test	Once for every adult and in each pregnancy. Hepatitis C can now be cured
Hepatitis B test	At least once for adults; more often if at risk

Prevent infections

Lower infection risk: do not share needles, razors, or toothbrushes; choose licensed tattoo and piercing shops; practice safe sex; wash hands; and avoid unsafe food and water when traveling.

My liver protection plan

Risks I can lower

First step this month

Vaccines I need

Tests I need
