

LIVER HEALTH FACT CARD

Know your liver. Protect it. Catch problems early

~3 lb

about 1.5 kg; your largest internal organ

500+

jobs, from making bile to clearing drugs

1 in 4

of the blood your heart pumps flows through it each minute

Regrows

but repeated injury can scar it

What your liver does

Filters your blood Removes toxins, drugs, alcohol, and germs from blood coming from the gut.	Makes bile Helps digest fats and carries waste out of the body.	Stores and releases energy Keeps blood sugar steady between meals.
Makes proteins Albumin and clotting factors that stop bleeding.	Processes medicines Changes many medicines so the body can use or remove them.	Stores vitamins and iron Holds vitamins A, D, B12, K, and iron for later.

What can harm the liver

Cause	What to know
Fatty liver (MASLD)	Fat buildup linked to excess weight, diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. Affects roughly 3 in 10 adults. Can progress to scarring
Alcohol	Heavy or long-term drinking can cause fatty liver, hepatitis, and cirrhosis
Viral hepatitis	Hepatitis A, B, and C. B and C can be silent for years. Vaccines prevent A and B; C can now be cured
Medicines and supplements	Too much acetaminophen, some herbal products, and some prescription drugs can injure the liver
Immune and inherited diseases	Autoimmune hepatitis, bile duct diseases, and genetic conditions such as hemochromatosis, Wilson disease, and alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency

Common liver tests

Test	What it shows
ALT, AST	Liver cell injury
ALP, GGT, bilirubin	Bile flow and bile duct problems; bilirubin causes jaundice
Albumin, INR, platelets	How well the liver makes proteins; low platelets can signal advanced scarring
FIB-4, elastography (FibroScan)	Estimate scarring (fibrosis) without a biopsy
Ultrasound, CT, MRI	Liver shape, fat, masses, and blood flow

PROTECT YOUR LIVER

Habits, warning signs, tests, and your plan

Seven ways to protect your liver

- 1 **Keep a healthy weight** and stay active. Losing even 5 to 10% of body weight helps fatty liver.
- 2 **Limit or avoid alcohol.** If you have liver disease, most doctors advise no alcohol at all.
- 3 **Get vaccinated** against hepatitis A and B, and **get tested** for hepatitis B and C.
- 4 **Use medicines carefully.** Follow labels, and check every product for acetaminophen. With liver disease, ask your doctor for your daily limit.
- 5 **Be careful with supplements.** "Natural" does not mean safe. Ask before you start any herb or supplement.
- 6 **Protect against infection:** do not share needles, razors, or toothbrushes, and practice safe sex.
- 7 **Control diabetes, blood pressure, and cholesterol,** and do not smoke.

Warning signs

Call your doctor soon	Go to the ER or call 911
• Yellow skin or eyes (jaundice) • Dark urine or pale stools • Itching that will not go away • Swelling in the belly or legs • Easy bruising or bleeding • Ongoing tiredness, nausea, or loss of appetite	• Vomiting blood, or black, tarry stools • New confusion or extreme sleepiness • Severe belly pain with fever or chills • Yellow skin with fever • Fainting or trouble breathing

Early liver disease often has **no symptoms**, so testing matters.

Medicine safety

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is in many cold, flu, and pain products. Count every source. Most healthy adults should stay under 3,000 to 4,000 mg a day; with liver disease or regular alcohol use, ask your doctor for a lower limit, often 2,000 mg or less.

Who should be checked

Ask about liver testing if you have **diabetes, obesity, high cholesterol, heavy alcohol use, or viral hepatitis**, take medicines like methotrexate long term, or have a family history of liver disease.

My liver information

Diagnosis	_____	Liver doctor, phone	_____
Last ALT / AST	_____	Fibrosis stage	_____
Hep A / B vaccines	_____	Next tests due	_____
Medicines to avoid	_____	Emergency contact	_____