



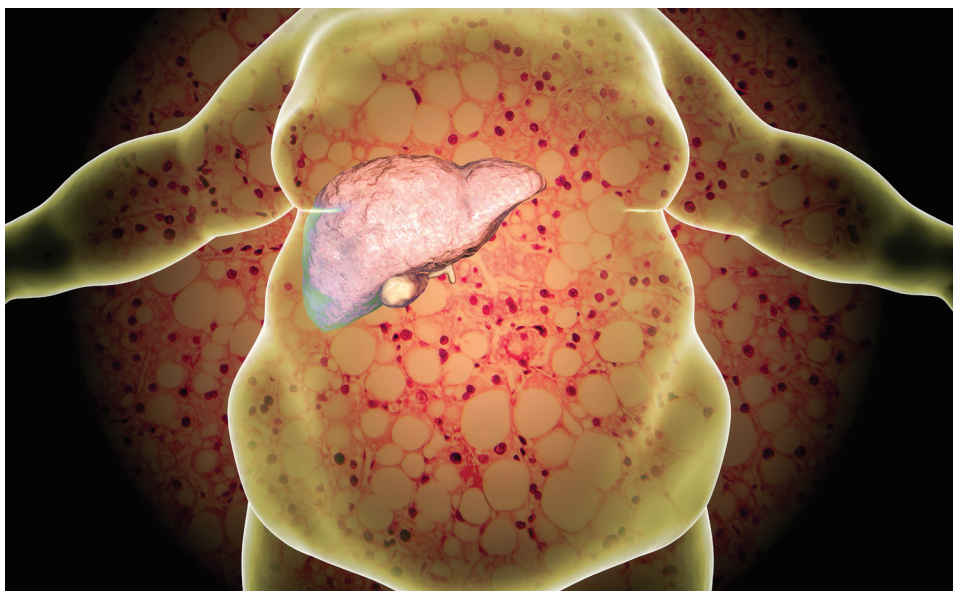
FATTY LIVER DISEASE

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Digital Version



WHY IS LIVER IMPORTANT?

The largest internal organ in the body, the liver is absolutely vital for survival. It has a lot of vital functions:

- Produces bile, a mixture of chemicals, which aids digestion.
- Helps break down food to turn it into energy.
- Removes harmful substances from the blood, helping fight infection.
- Makes chemicals that are important for blood clotting.
- Stores iron, vitamins and other essential substances.

WHAT IS FATTY LIVER DISEASE?

Fatty Liver Disease is the accumulation of extra fat in liver. Excess alcohol intake is a common cause of fatty liver. However, fatty liver also occurs in patients who are tee totalers, or drink very little alcohol. This form of fatty liver disease is known as Non-alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD).

WHO IS LIKELY TO HAVE FATTY LIVER?

Fatty liver usually develops in people who are over weight, have diabetes, high cholesterol or high triglycerides. Poor eating habits with a diet rich in fats and sugars also causes fatty liver. Some people develop fatty liver even if they do not have any risk factors. It affects nearly 10 percent of population.

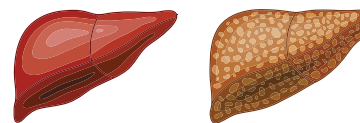
WHAT ARE THE RISKS LINKED TO FATTY LIVER?

Fatty liver may cause liver inflammation or swelling. This may progress to cirrhosis (scarring of the liver)over several years and may even lead to liver cancer or liver failure. Most people with fatty liver and inflammation are between the ages of 40 and 60years. One may not have any direct symptoms of fatty liver and hence it may not be detected. Since people are getting overweight, diabetes is on the rise and oily food is being consumed more commonly, fatty liver disease has become a common cause of cirrhosis andliver failure.

WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS OF FATTY LIVER?

In its early stages, fatty liver often has no symptoms. It is usually detected on an ultrasound scan. The patient may just feel some heaviness or discomfort in the right upper abdomen. Symptoms usually occur when patient develops cirrhosis and liver failure. These symptoms include fatigue, weakness, weight loss, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal pain, yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice), itching, swelling of the legs (edema) and abdomen (ascites),and mental confusion.

HOW IS FATTY LIVER DIAGNOSED?



HEALTHY LIVER

FATTY LIVER

It is important to diagnose the disease early when there are no symptoms. A blood test (liver function test) usually shows elevation of liver enzymes. An ultrasound scan can reveal fat in the liver. Elastography can detect the severity of the disease. Occasionally, a liver biopsy may be required to diagnose and assess the severity of the disease.

WHAT ARE THE ASSOCIATIONS OF FATTY LIVER DISEASE?

People with Fatty Liver Disease are at higher risk of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and triglyceride levels. They are also a higher risk of developing heart disease. It is important for these individuals to visit their doctor regularly so that appropriate tests can be done for early detection and treatment for these associated problems.

HOW IS FATTY LIVER TREATED?

- Exercise regularly to reduce weight is most important
- Eat a healthy diet (low fat and sugar diet)
- Maintain good control of diabetes
- Maintain good control of blood pressure
- Reduce high cholesterol levels
- Avoid alcohol use

IS THERE A SPECIFIC MEDICINE FOR FATTY LIVER?

Unfortunately, there is no specific medicine that can reduce the amount of fat in the liver. Although some doctors prescribe vitamins and other liver protective medicines, in scientific studies no particular drug has been found to be effective. If one's doctor suspects that there may be too much inflammation in the liver, he may suggest a liver biopsy and then prescribe medicines.

I WAS DIAGNOSED TO HAVE FATTY LIVER AND REASSURED. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I SEE A LIVER DOCTOR?

You must see a liver doctor at least once a year and perform blood tests. During these visits you should ensure that you have been checked for diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. You must also ask your doctor whether you need to check your heart. It is also advisable to do a Fibroscan to assess the progression of liver disease.



PLEASE SCAN FOR
THE LOCATION

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Mankhool, Kuwait Road, Al Mankhool - Dubai

📞 04 440 0500 🌐 asterhospitals.com 📱 📺 📷 📹 [asterhospital](#)

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