

Fatty Liver Disease

- The liver is the main organ in your body that breaks down fat into usable parts. When you eat more fat than your body can break down, it gets stored as fat in the liver.
- Fatty liver disease happens when there is a buildup of extra fat cells in the liver. A liver is fatty when fat makes up 5 to 10% of the liver.
- As fat builds up in the liver, scarring and swelling are likely to happen. Scarring and swelling can lead to cirrhosis (permanent scarring) and liver cancer.

How is fatty liver disease diagnosed?

- The early stages of fatty liver disease have few symptoms and often go unnoticed. Some people have pain in the abdomen (stomach area), unusual tiredness, and/or an overall feeling of being unwell.
- Most often, fatty liver disease is diagnosed when tests are done for a different medical problem.
- This disease is found in people of all ages (including children).
- People who have a healthy body weight can be diagnosed with fatty liver disease. But, if you are middle aged and/or overweight, you are at a higher risk.

If you are diagnosed with fatty liver disease, it is very important that you:

- › Do not drink alcohol.
- › Follow a healthy lifestyle that includes regular exercise and eating well.

If you have diabetes or high cholesterol, pay close attention to your blood sugar and triglyceride levels. This means limiting sweets, and watching how many calories you eat and drink at each meal.

Your health care provider will talk about this with you.

For more information, visit:

Canadian Liver Foundation

- › www.liver.ca
- › www.liver.ca/patients-caregivers/liver-diseases/fatty-liver-disease/