

# Non Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)

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## What are the symptoms of NAFLD?

NAFLD is usually a silent liver disease. However, it can present as pain in the right upper abdomen or fatigue.

## What is NAFLD?

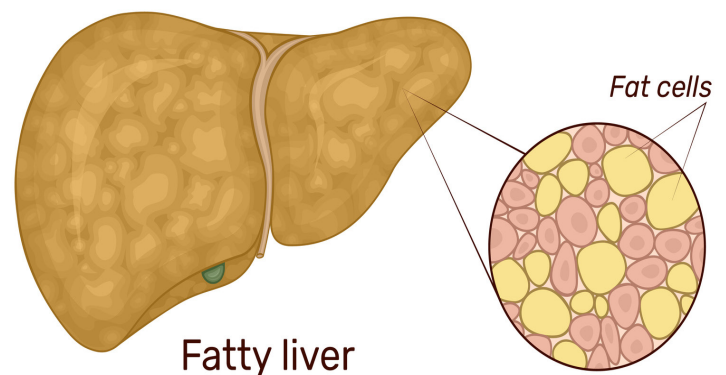
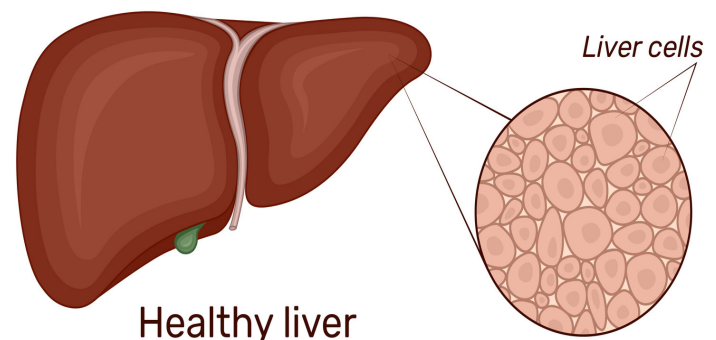
NAFLD is a disease condition in which there is an abnormal high accumulation of fat in the liver in people who have little or no alcohol use.

NAFLD can make it harder for the liver to work the way that it should. NAFLD is now the most common cause of chronic liver disease.

NAFLD can worsen and progress to nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), which is a more aggressive type of fatty liver disease.

NASH occurs when the fat build-up in the liver causes inflammation and scarring.

## *Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease*



## What causes Non Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease?

NAFLD has been strongly associated with the presence of a condition called metabolic syndrome, which is a presence of some or all the following:

- High blood sugar or diabetes
- High blood levels of cholesterol or triglycerides
- Overweight or obesity especially abdominal obesity
- High blood pressure, or hypertension

## How do I know if I have NAFLD?

If you have the above risk factors, talk to your doctor. Your doctor will do some blood tests, including:

- Complete blood count
- Liver enzymes

Your doctor will determine if you need imaging studies such as abdominal or liver ultrasound, transient elastography (fibrosan), CT scan or MRI.

## **Lifestyle Management**

Weight loss with regular exercise and healthy diet is very effective but can be difficult to achieve and sustain.

Following a healthy diet can help to keep NAFLD under control or reverse it. It can also help to prevent or improve conditions that are associated with NAFLD, such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol levels.

## **Medications**

Medications like Semaglutide and Liraglutide can help with weight loss and liver fat.

Pioglitazone can also help reduce liver fat and associated inflammation. This can reduce triglyceride accumulation in the liver.

## **Other Treatments**

If you have diabetes, keep your blood sugar in your target range.

Abstain from alcohol, as there is no safe alcohol use when the liver is already damaged.

It is important to get all recommended vaccines, especially the hepatitis B and hepatitis A vaccines.

Liver transplantation may be needed if advanced cirrhosis is present.

## How do I prevent getting NAFLD in the first place?

The mainstay of prevention is weight loss through lifestyle modifications (diet and exercise).

Get at least 30 minutes of exercise, e.g., walking, on most days of the week.

Following a healthy diet can help to protect against NAFLD.

Optimal weight and a healthy diet can also help to prevent or improve conditions that are associated with NAFLD, such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and abnormal cholesterol levels.

## NAFLD Diet

What do I need to know about this diet?



You may use the glycemic index (GI) to plan your meals. This index gives you information on how quickly a food will raise your blood sugar.

Choose low-GI foods (GI less than 55). These foods take a longer time to raise blood sugar.

Keep track of how many calories you take in. Eating the right amount of calories will help you to achieve a healthy weight.

You may want to follow a diet rich in vegetables, lean meats or fish, whole grains, fruits, and healthy oils and fats.

You may talk to a dietitian for more help on food options and calorie information.

## **What foods should I limit or avoid?**

The items listed below may not be a complete list of foods and beverages you should avoid. Contact a dietitian for more information.

**Limit red meat to 1-2 times a week.**

**Full-fat dairy.**

**Processed foods. Foods that contain a lot of salt or sodium.**

**Sweets that contain sugar.**

**Sweetened drinks, such as sweet tea, milkshakes, iced sweet drinks, and sodas. Alcohol.**