

Healthy Liver, Healthy Life

Healthy Liver Tips



#1. Some dietary supplements can harm your liver.

Check with your provider before taking herbal or dietary supplements, such as weight loss supplements and protein powder, especially if you have liver damage.

#2. Sleep is important for a healthy liver.

Sleep helps keep the immune system strong. There's nothing worse than trying to sleep and not being able to. Have trouble sleeping? For better rest::

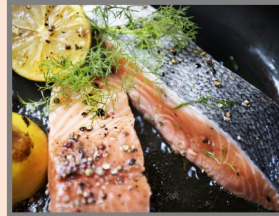
- ◆ Give your electronic devices their own bed time, a couple hours before yours.
- ◆ Try reading before bed.
- ◆ Create a cool, dark and comfortable sleeping space.
- ◆ Get exercise during the day, but not too close to bed time.
- ◆ Set a sleep schedule and stick to it. Wake up and go to bed at the same time every day.



#3. What you eat (and don't eat) can help your liver recover.

Is there *one* ultimate diet for weight loss? The surprising answer is **NO**. You don't have to stick to one strict diet to be healthy.

Traditional foods are great for the liver!



Try adding more of the following foods to improve liver health:

- ◆ Non-starchy vegetables. Beach asparagus, fiddlehead ferns or Quagciq (Sourdock), asparagus, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage.
 - ◆ Whole foods. Fish, berries, potatoes, beans, oatmeal and nuts.
- Reduce added sugar intake. Instead of snacking on a candy bar, choose a naturally sweet snack like blueberries or salmonberries.

#4. Exercise doesn't mean you *have* to join a gym or sign up for a marathon! *What do you enjoy?*

- ◆ **Dancing?** There are many fun dancing workout videos on YouTube, or have a dance party with your kids or grandkids.
- ◆ **Going for walks with your dog?** Walking is a great way to exercise, and easier on the joints than running.
- ◆ **Cleaning the house?** Sweeping, vacuuming and boxing up old items to donate are both productive and they get you moving.
- ◆ **Exercising with others?** Check your local community center, swimming pool, health clinic or gym for group classes or join a virtual group.
- ◆ **Harvesting** traditional food and plants can be a great form of exercise!

#5. Avoid Alcohol. It can worsen liver disease.



Liver Disease & Hepatitis Program

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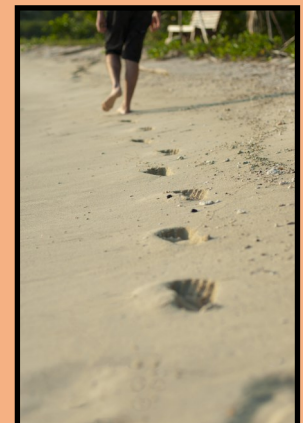
Tel: 907-729-1560

www.anthc.org/hep



Track your steps!

There are many step counting phone apps to keep you motivated! On day 1, track how many steps you walk. On day 2, try adding 1000 more, and on day 3 add another 1000. Start off slowly, and see how far you can go!



RECENT RESEARCH FINDINGS

AN/AI HEPATITIS C TREATMENT EXPERIENCE

Hepatitis C can lead to cirrhosis (a lot of scarring) and liver cancer. Newer drugs, including sofosbuvir-based treatments, are now available to treat hepatitis C. We evaluated these drugs in 501 patients treated in the Alaska Tribal Health System between 2014 and 2019. We found that the treatment is safe, effective, and well tolerated in AN/AI patients. Over 95% of patients were cured, meaning they were free of the virus 12 weeks after finishing treatment. No one experienced serious side effects from these drugs.

THE ALASKA HEPATITIS B STUDY

Hepatitis B virus (HBV) is classified according to eight genotypes (A-H). Genotypes D, F, A and C are the most common. We wanted to find out if people with different HBV genotypes have higher or lower risk of developing liver cancer. We followed 1,185 Alaska Native people at high risk for liver cancer for about 35 years each. We found that AN people with HBV genotype F or C have much higher risk for liver cancer than AN people with other HBV genotypes. Getting an ultrasound and AFP blood test every 6 months is important for people at higher risk of liver cancer. Detecting cancer in the early stages allows for more treatment options.

MAFLD — Metabolic associated fatty liver disease (MAFLD) is a build up of fat in the liver in someone who drinks little to no alcohol and for whom no other cause for liver disease can be found. It is also known as nonalcoholic fatty liver disease or NAFLD. About 1 of every 5 to 10 persons with MAFLD can develop metabolic associated steatohepatitis (MASH), which is inflammation and damage to the cells of the liver that can lead to cirrhosis (significant scarring in the liver). In cirrhosis, a person can develop liver failure, liver cancer and even die from liver-related illness.

Cause of fatty liver disease

We don't know what causes fatty liver disease, but research shows that it occurs more often in people who have:

- Obesity, especially fat around the waist (Women with waist circumference > 35 inches or men > 40 inches)
- High triglycerides > 150 or low HDL < 40
- High blood pressure > 130/85
- Diabetes or pre-diabetes

Fatty Liver Treatment

- Limit your alcohol. Not drinking will help you lose weight and protect your liver.
- Lose weight if you are overweight. Gradual weight loss is recommended; no more than 1 pound per week.
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes per day, for a total of at least 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) per week. Call the Wellness Center at 729-8690 to get started on an exercise program.
- Eat a Mediterranean diet for weight loss.
- High cholesterol - Lower it through diet, exercise and medication if needed.

Be sure to see your Primary Care provider for regular check-ups and blood tests to monitor your liver health.

If you have additional questions or concerns about your liver health, call the Liver Disease & Hepatitis Program at 729-1560.



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