

Role of Alcohol in Liver Damage

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Description

The liver is the body's largest solid organ. The liver is a big, meaty organ located on the right side of the abdominal cavity. The liver is reddish-brown in colour and rubbery to the touch, weighing roughly 3 pounds. The liver is normally protected by the rib cage, so you can't feel it.

The right and left lobes of the liver are two major regions. The gallbladder, as well as sections of the pancreas and intestines, is located beneath the liver. To digest, absorb, and assimilate food, the liver and these organs collaborate.

The liver serves a variety of purposes. It produces many of the chemicals the body requires to function normally, as well as breaking down and detoxifying toxins in the body and acting as a storage unit.

Hepatocytes (hepar=liver+cyte=cell) are responsible for the production of various proteins in the body that are needed for a variety of tasks, including blood clotting factors and albumin, which is needed to keep the circulation system fluid. The liver is also in charge of the production of cholesterol and triglycerides. Carbohydrates are also made in the liver, which is also in charge of converting glucose into glycogen, which can be stored in both the liver and muscle cells. The liver also produces bile, which aids in food digestion.

The effects of alcohol on the liver

The liver breaks down and filters dangerous compounds from the blood, as well as producing the proteins, enzymes, and hormones that the body needs to fight infections. Vitamins, nutrients, and medicines are also converted into compounds that our bodies may utilise. In addition to cleaning our blood, the liver produces bile for digestion and stores glycogen for energy.

Over 90% of alcohol taken is processed by the liver. The rest of the body's waste is expelled by urine, sweat, and breathing.

One alcoholic beverage takes the body around one hour to metabolise. With each drink, the time window lengthens. The longer it takes for someone to digest alcohol, the higher their blood alcohol content is. At any given time, the liver can only metabolize a particular amount of alcohol. When a person consumes too much alcohol, the alcohol that is not metabolized by the liver circulates in the bloodstream. When the alcohol in a person's blood starts to affect their heart and brain, they

become intoxicated. Chronic alcohol abuse causes liver cell death, culminating in cirrhosis, alcoholic hepatitis, and cellular alterations that can lead to liver cancer. Although heavy drinkers may acquire alcoholic cirrhosis without first developing hepatitis, these disorders commonly advance from fatty liver to alcoholic hepatitis to cirrhosis.

According to University Health Network, the amount of alcohol that is considered safe varies on a person's weight, stature, and gender. In comparison to men, women absorb more alcohol from each drink, putting them at increased risk of liver damage. The liver can be harmed by drinking 2 to 3 alcoholic beverages every day. Furthermore, binge drinking (consuming four or five drinks in a succession) might harm the liver.

What are the early indicators of alcohol-induced liver damage?

Alcohol and its metabolites can harm your liver if you consume more than your liver can handle. This manifests itself initially as an increase in fat in your liver, but it can eventually lead to inflammation and scar tissue formation.

Symptoms of alcohol-related liver damage are generally absent in the early stages. As a result, you may be unaware that you've had your liver damaged by alcohol.

If you have symptoms, they could include:

- liver swelling, which can cause discomfort in the upper right side of your belly
- exhaustion
- unexplained weight loss
- nausea and vomiting
- loss of appetite

Alcohol-related liver illness includes:

- fatty liver (steatosis)
- liver inflammation (hepatitis)
- acute alcoholic hepatitis
- liver scarring (cirrhosis)
- liver failure and death

Reducing the risk

By reducing or eliminating alcohol, you can lower your chance of liver disease. Eliminating alcohol improves all liver illnesses.

By abstaining from consuming alcohol, fatty liver can be corrected and future damage averted.

Cirrhosis has no known cure. However, abstaining from alcohol fully increases one's chances of survival. If you quit up alcohol in a timely manner, you can live with cirrhosis for decades.

Maintaining a healthy weight, not smoking, getting frequent, appropriate exercise, eating a balanced diet and avoiding processed foods, drinking coffee, and obtaining sunlight are all things that can help to lessen the impact of liver disease. Vitamin D deficiency is linked to liver damage.