

# Fatty Liver: Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease<sup>1,2</sup>



Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) is a build-up of fat in the liver, not caused by alcohol consumption. This initial phase of the disease does not damage the liver. If inflammation eventually develops, it can begin to cause damage and is then diagnosed as nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH). Further progression and scarring of the liver can result in the development of cirrhosis, which is considered end-stage liver disease.

## Symptoms<sup>2,3</sup>

Those with NAFLD generally do not have symptoms.

## Causes<sup>1,2</sup>

While the exact cause is unknown, NAFLD is believed to be associated with excess body fat.

In addition to being overweight, common risk factors for NAFLD include:

- High levels of blood sugar (or Diabetes)
- High blood pressure (or Hypertension)
- High levels of triglycerides

## Treatment<sup>1-3</sup>

- Weight loss of at least 5-10%
- Keep a regular exercise routine
  - At least 30 minutes per day
- Lower triglyceride and cholesterol levels to normal range
- Properly manage diabetes and blood sugar
- Avoid drinking alcohol



## Set Yourself up for Success<sup>1</sup>

- ✓ Be purposeful in planning how to achieve your goal weight
  - Make changes you can stick to for lasting benefits
  - Keep weekly weight loss to no more than 1 to 2 pounds
  - Record your food and exercise daily while trying to lose weight
  - Aim to eat out at restaurants less often
- ✓ Maintain control over your blood sugar
  - Consume a consistent amount of carbohydrates at each meal
- ✓ Eat less added sugars
  - Avoid sugary beverages, desserts, and other processed sweets
- ✓ Eat less added salt
  - Try eliminating saltshaker use
- ✓ Avoid drinking alcohol
  - Can further damage the liver
- ✓ Daily exercise with a combination of cardio and strength training
- ✓ Follow a balanced lower-fat diet

## Mediterranean Diet<sup>1</sup>

Research has shown this diet to be effective in lowering stored fat within the liver for those with NAFLD. Decreasing the amount of fat consumed and eliminating alcohol could further increase the beneficial effects of this diet.



### What does a Mediterranean Diet look like?

- ❖ 3+ servings of vegetables daily
- ❖ 2+ servings of fruit daily
- ❖ Proteins like fish, shellfish, beans, chicken, eggs
- ❖ Daily intake of whole grains
- ❖ Limit dairy to 3 servings per day
- ❖ Choosing healthy fats like olive oil and nuts



*“Providing Tools and Enhancing Skills  
To Improve Your Nutritional Health”*

## References

1. Mayo Clinic. *Diet Guidelines for Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease*. Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research; 2016.
2. Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease. Accessed November 16, 2020. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/nonalcoholic-fatty-liver-disease>
3. Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease. American Liver Foundation. Accessed November 16, 2020. <https://liverfoundation.org/for-patients/about-the-liver/diseases-of-the-liver/non-alcoholic-fatty-liver-disease/>