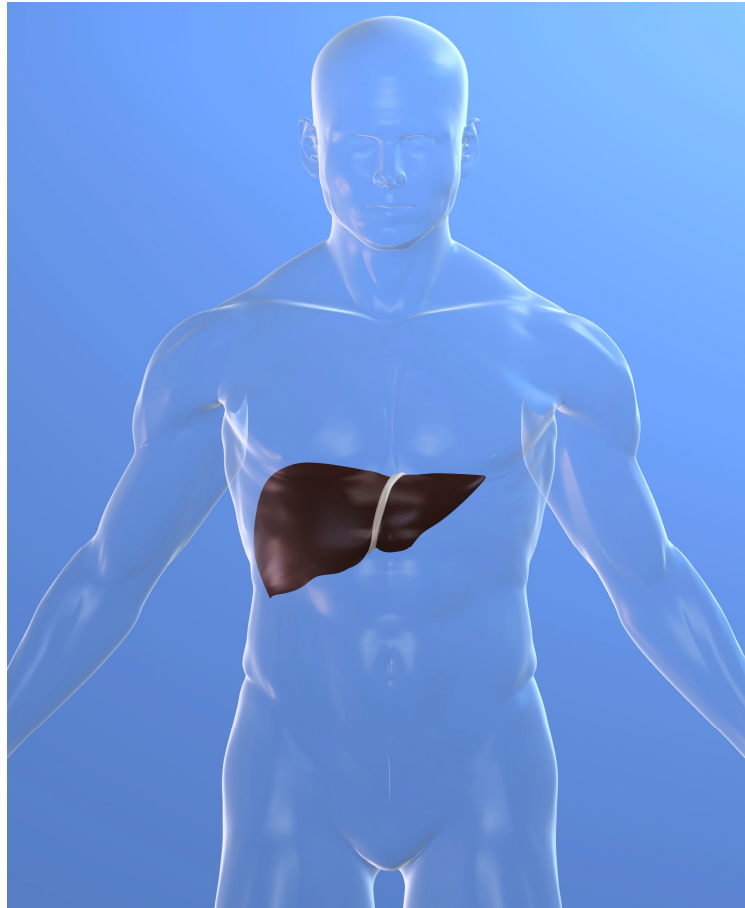


*A quick reference guide to...*



# Fatty Liver

**ACT Hepatitis Resource Centre**

Suite 8, 18 Corinna Street, Woden ACT

Phone: 6282 2611

[www.hepatitisresourcecentre.com.au](http://www.hepatitisresourcecentre.com.au)



# What is Fatty Liver?

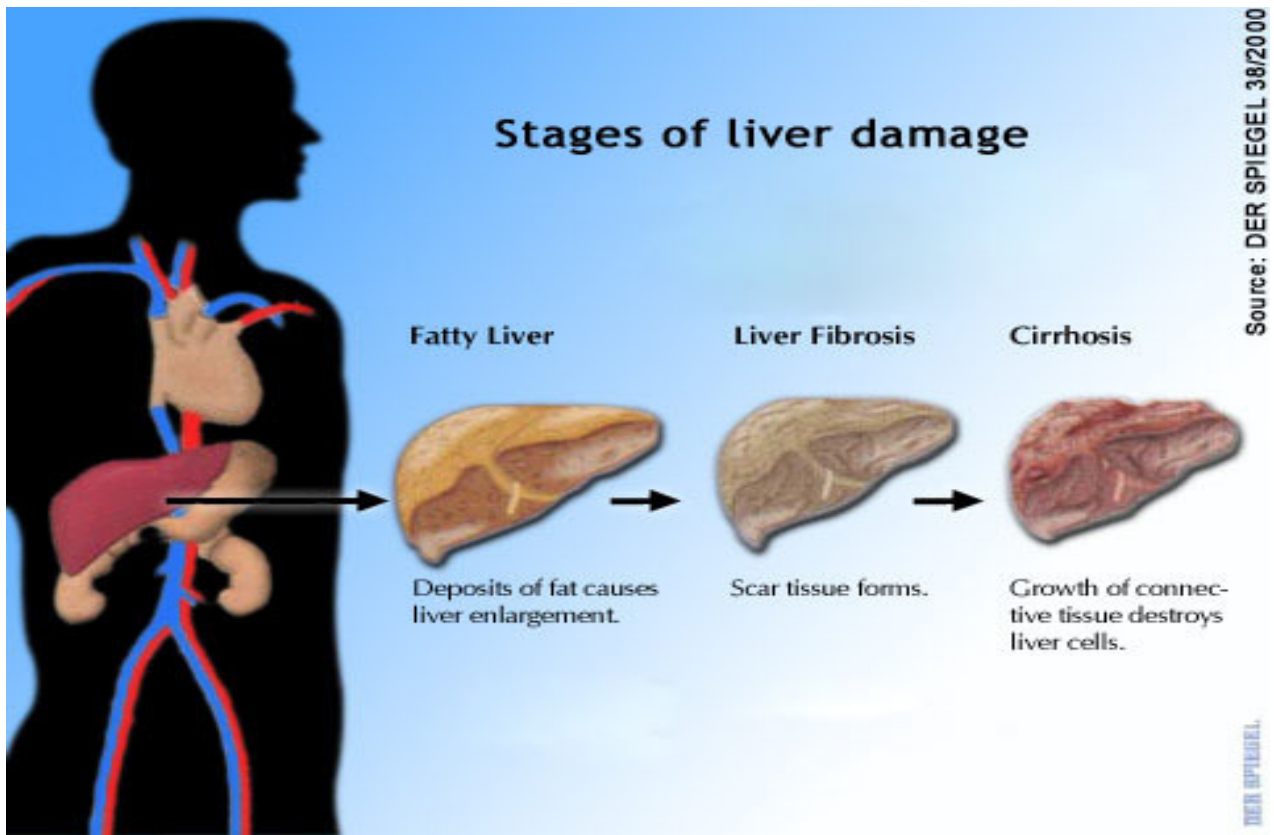


Fatty liver is the build up of fat in the cells of the liver. It is often caused by excessive alcohol intake, but, increasingly, it is being found in people who have an accumulation of fat around the bodies mid section, are obese or have diabetes.

About one in 5 overweight adults or children with or without diabetes have fatty liver disease. Non-alcohol related fatty liver disease is more frequent in women than men.

The major factor in the development of non-alcohol-related fatty liver disease is insulin resistance, a condition generally associated with obesity, where the body is unable to respond normally to insulin. It is not necessarily caused by eating too much fat.

# Diagnosis

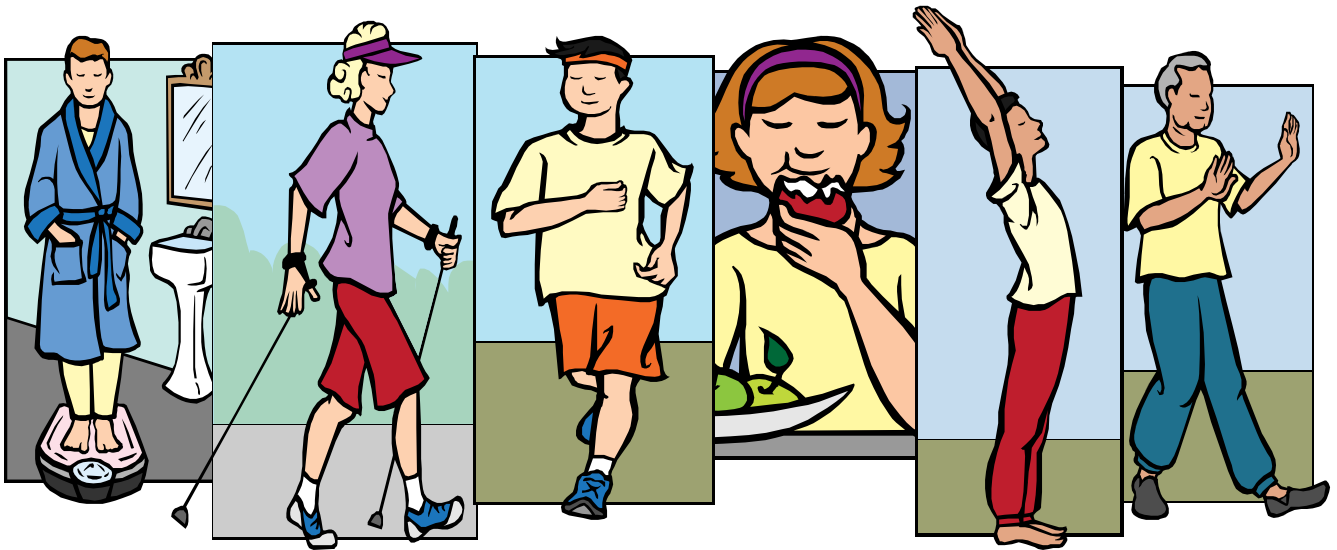


Fatty liver disease usually does not cause any symptoms. Occasionally, people with the condition will complain of tiredness or feeling generally unwell, but this varies from person to person, and often the symptoms do not equal the severity of the disease.

Fatty liver is often diagnosed after finding an abnormality in a person's blood test or on an abdominal ultrasound. Alternatively, a doctor may notice an enlarged liver while examining your abdomen.

A liver biopsy is the only test that can best identify fatty liver disease, but this is not always recommended, as other tests can be sufficient to warrant treatment.

# Treatment



There is no proven treatment for fatty liver disease, however making lifestyle changes can significantly improve the condition.

Changes to your lifestyle can include:

- Avoiding alcohol and drugs that may have an effect on your liver, i.e. steroids.
- Losing weight. Gradual weight loss is the solution, as quick weight loss can actually worsen the condition.
- Exercising. Even if this does not result in weight loss, it is advisable as it can reduce the fat around your abdominal organs.
- Controlling your blood sugar levels if you have diabetes.
- Treating high cholesterol.

There are various medications that have been suggested for the treatment of fatty liver disease, although research into these is continuing. In particular cases a doctor may prescribe these medications.