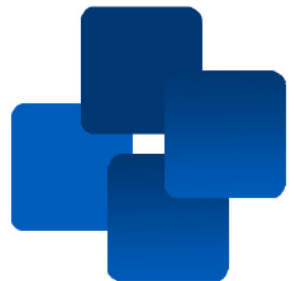
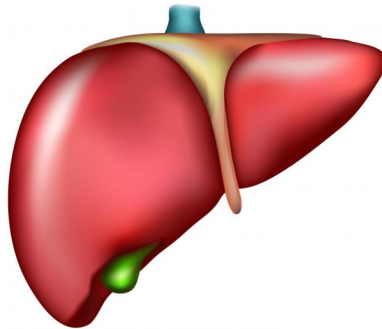


## Patient Information

# Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)



## **What is 'fatty liver'?**

Fatty liver describes the build-up of fat in your liver. This is often detected by an ultrasound scan, or after a blood test called a 'liver function test' (LFT) where your doctor has found the results to be abnormal, or you may have had a scan for some other reason.

## **What causes fatty liver?**

There are two common causes of fatty liver:

1. Excess alcohol consumption.
2. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

If you have been found to have a fatty liver, it is important to know how much alcohol you regularly consume. If you drink moderate amounts of alcohol, above the recommended limits of 14 units per week, the first intervention is to decrease your alcohol consumption over a 3 month period to less than 14 units per week with several drink free days and ask your doctor to reassess.

## **Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)**

NAFLD describes the situation when there is detectable fat in your liver, but you drink within the recommended limits of alcohol. NAFLD is often associated with being overweight and having other health issues, such as high cholesterol, diabetes and high blood pressure.

There are two types of NAFLD:

1. Simple fatty liver (steatosis).
2. Non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), in which the liver is damaged and inflamed.

## **Non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH)**

8 out of 10 people with NAFLD have simple fatty liver and are thought to be much less likely to develop liver problems compared to those with NASH. In 2 out of 10 people, the build-up of fat in the liver can lead to serious liver disease called NASH.

NASH is different from simple fatty liver because the liver is inflamed and this can lead to scarring of the liver. When the scarring becomes extensive, this is called **cirrhosis** and will need treatment under a liver specialist.

People with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease also have an increased risk of developing cardiovascular problems, such as heart attack and stroke.

## **How do I know if I have NASH?**

It is possible to detect liver scarring by performing a blood test called a **fibrosis 4 score**.

The blood test results will allow us to group patients into high risk, indeterminate and low risk of scarring. Those that are in the indeterminate or high risk categories will be referred to a hepatologist for a simple ultrasound called a **fibroscan**.

## **What is the treatment for NAFLD?**

If you are obese or overweight, the main treatment advised for non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, including NASH, is weight loss and regular exercise. This not only helps with non-alcoholic fatty liver disease but will help reduce your risk of developing cardiovascular problems.

Treatment of linked conditions and risk factors, such as high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure is also important. These will reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke as well as help the liver. For example, not smoking, keeping a healthy weight, taking regular exercise and eating a healthy balanced diet.

Specific diabetic treatments that may improve liver fat may be needed and can be discussed with your specialist during clinics.

## Useful telephone numbers

Diabetes Specialist Nurse,

Lister and New QEII

☎ 01438 288301

Contact Centre (Appointments)

☎ 01438 284444

## Useful websites

- **Diabetes UK** - [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)
- **NHS website** - [www.nhs.uk/conditions/non-alcoholic-fatty-liver-disease/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/non-alcoholic-fatty-liver-disease/)

**We very much hope we can support you going forward!**



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