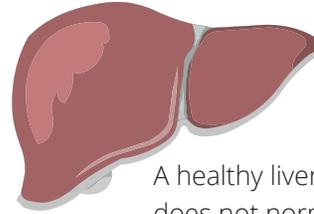
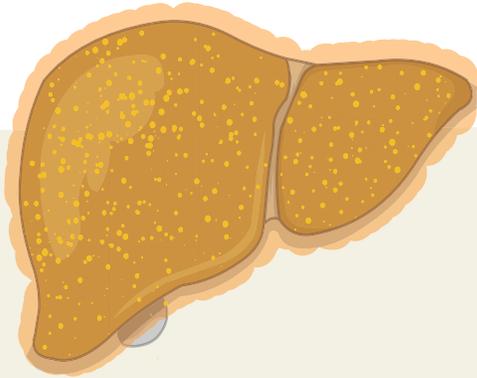


# Managing weight loss and cirrhosis at the same time

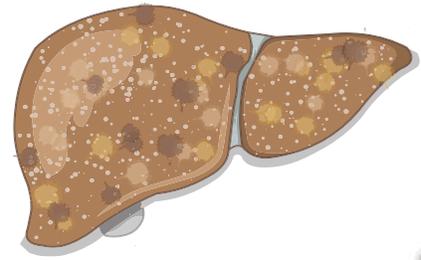
Yes, it is possible!



A healthy liver does not normally contain a lot of fat.

However, liver fat can accumulate in overweight or obese people or those who have diabetes or high blood pressure. This condition is called **non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD)** and affects approximately 25% of adult North Americans.

In some patients with NAFLD, the liver fat is dangerous and causes inflammation and accumulation of scar tissues. This is called **non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH)**. With the build-up of more and more scar tissues, NASH can progress to cirrhosis.



To effectively treat NAFLD and NASH, it is necessary to lose weight by adjusting eating habits and increasing physical exercise.

Losing just 5-10% of current measured weight reduces the symptoms and severity of NASH and NAFLD, and improves liver health!



### Tip

When losing weight, make small changes that can be easily maintained over a long time.



### Tip

Losing weight too quickly can be bad for the liver. Aim to lose approximately 1 lb per week.



### Tip

Ask your healthcare practitioner or dietitian what your weight loss target is and how many calories per day you should be eating. If your weight has been stable to start with, a useful target is to decrease your caloric intake by ~ 500 calories per day.



Has my healthcare practitioner advised me to lose weight?

- Yes       No

How much weight have I been advised to lose?

How much do I weigh now?

My Weight:

Date:



\*\* Remember, there are online applications to track calories you eat in a day. See chapter 2 for more details.

**Regardless of body size, you must continue eating well to prevent muscle loss and malnutrition in cirrhosis.**



To maintain muscle strength and assist the liver, **protein intake must be maintained** even when intentionally losing weight.

It **is** possible to meet protein goals while trying to lose weight by choosing high protein foods that are low in fat:

- Lean cuts of meat, or extra lean ground meats
- Skinless poultry
- Low fat or skim dairy products
- Beans, peas, and lentils
- Fish – baked or grilled
- Tofu
- Eggs – poached and boiled
- Protein powder

Make sure to review Chapter 2 to determine your daily protein requirement using your ideal body weight.



# What other things can I do to help my liver and lose weight?

## 1) Reduce the amount of saturated fats

Saturated fats can increase the amount of fat in the liver and make diabetes control worse.

### CHOOSE

#### Lean meats

Make sure to trim all visible fat before cooking!

Skinless poultry

Skim and low-fat dairy products, such as 1% milk, 0% fat yogurt, reduced-fat cheeses

Cooking methods: baking, boiling, or grilling

Cooking oils: olive oil, canola oil, soybean oil, peanut oil, or soft margarine made from the above oils

Fresh fruits and vegetables for snacks

### AVOID/LIMIT

Ribs, bacon, store bought hamburger patties, and other fatty cuts of meat

Poultry with skin on

High fat dairy products like cream cheese, regular sour cream, ice cream, creams, and butter.

Frying, deep frying, and any fried foods

Cooking with lard, butter, palm and coconut oil, baking margarine

Baked goods, including pastries, cakes, cookies, doughnuts, and muffins

## 2) Limit indulging in sugary foods and drinks

- Excess sugar is converted into fat worsening fatty liver disease and causing weight gain
- Added sugar should be less than 5-10% of the total energy per day
- As part of a 2,000 calorie per day diet, sugar intake should be no more than 25-50 g
- Check the Nutrition Fact Table on the food labels to learn the total sugar content per serving



## 3) Keep moving! Keep active!

In cirrhosis, it is important to participate in regular exercise to prevent muscle loss. When trying to lose weight, exercise helps to burn calories and build muscles.

Set a realistic goal for exercise and stick to it!

"I will walk for 30 minutes per day, for 5 days of the week."

My exercise goal is to: