

Abdominal Diseases

Symptoms, Causes and Treatment.

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the recommended initial imaging studies; these tests should be viewed as complementary rather than competing in the evaluation of patients with dysphagia. (See Workup.)

Treatment begins with hemodynamic stabilization and pain management. Subsequent therapy depends on the cause of the esophagitis and on any complications present. Surgery (fundoplication) is sometimes indicated in patients with severe pain who fail to respond to medical management. (See Treatment and Medication.)

Source-medscape.

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PEPTIC ULCER DISEASE

Key points

that occurs as a secondary result of medications, drugs, toxins, and alcohol. Autoimmune hepatitis is a disease that occurs when your body makes antibodies against your liver tissue.

Your liver is located in the right upper area of your abdomen. It performs many critical functions that affect metabolism throughout your body, including:

- bile production, which is essential to digestion
- filtering of toxins from your body
- excretion of bilirubin (a product of broken-down red blood cells), cholesterol, hormones, and drugs
- breakdown of carbohydrates fats, and proteins
- activation of enzymes, which are specialized proteins essential to body functions
- storage of glycogen (a form of sugar), minerals, and vitamins (A, D, E, and K)
- synthesis of blood proteins, such as albumin
- synthesis of clotting factors

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) approximately 4.4 million Americans are currently living with chronic hepatitis B and C. Many more people don't even know that they have hepatitis.

Treatment options vary depending on which type of hepatitis you have. You can prevent some forms of hepatitis through immunizations and lifestyle precautions.

5 types of viral hepatitis

Viral infections of the liver that are classified as hepatitis include hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E. A different virus is responsible for each type of virally transmitted hepatitis.

Autoimmune system response

In some cases, the immune system mistakes the liver as a harmful object and begins to attack it. It causes ongoing inflammation that can range from mild to severe, often hindering liver function. It's three times more common in women than in men.

Common symptoms of hepatitis

If you have infectious forms of hepatitis that are chronic, like hepatitis B and C, you may not have symptoms in the beginning. Symptoms may not occur until the damage affects liver function.

Signs and symptoms of acute hepatitis appear quickly. They include:

- fatigue
- flu-like symptoms
- dark urine
- pale stool
- abdominal pain
- loss of appetite
- unexplained weight loss
- yellow skin and eyes, which may be signs of jaundice

Chronic hepatitis develops slowly, so these signs and symptoms may be too subtle to notice.

How hepatitis is diagnosed

History and physical exam

To diagnose hepatitis, first your doctor will take your history to determine any risk factors you may have for infectious or noninfectious hepatitis.

Protect yourself from hepatitis

Hepatitis B and C are infections you can get by having unprotected sex or sharing needles to inject drugs.

Using a condom during sex and not injecting drugs will reduce your risk of getting hepatitis B and C.

A vaccine for hepatitis B is available, but there's currently no vaccine for hepatitis C.

Aim for a healthy weight

To reduce your risk of developing non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, which can lead to cirrhosis, try to maintain a healthy weight by having a healthy, balanced diet and exercising regularly.

The liver

The liver is an important organ that carries out hundreds of jobs vital for sustaining life.

For example, it:

- stores glycogen, a carbohydrate that produces short-term energy
- makes bile, which helps digest fats
- makes substances that clot the blood
- processes and removes alcohol, toxins or drugs

Your liver is very tough. It'll keep working even if badly damaged, and can continue to repair itself until it's severely damaged.

LIVER CANCER

Primary liver cancer is an uncommon but serious type of cancer that begins in the liver.

This is a separate condition from secondary liver cancer, where the cancer developed in another part of the body and spread to the liver.

Read about secondary liver cancer on Macmillan Cancer Support.

This topic covers:

Symptoms

Causes

Diagnosis

Treatment

Symptoms of liver cancer

Symptoms of liver cancer are often vague and don't appear until the cancer is at an advanced stage. They can include:

- unintentional weight loss
- loss of appetite
- feeling very full after eating, even if the meal was small
- feeling sick and vomiting
- pain or swelling in your abdomen (tummy)
- jaundice (yellowing of your skin and the whites of your eyes)
- itchy skin
- feeling very tired and weak

Visit your GP if you notice any of the symptoms listed above. They're more likely to be the result of a more common condition, such as an infection, but it's best to have them checked.

You should also contact your GP if you've previously been diagnosed with a condition known to affect the liver, such as cirrhosis or a hepatitis C infection, and your health suddenly deteriorates.

Over the past few decades, rates of liver cancer in the UK have risen considerably, possibly as a result of increased levels of



alcohol consumption and obesity.

Diagnosing liver cancer

Liver cancer is usually diagnosed after a consultation with a GP and a referral to a hospital specialist for further tests, such as scans of your liver.

However, regular check-ups for liver cancer (known as surveillance) are often recommended for people known to have a high risk of developing the condition, such as those with cirrhosis.

Having regular check-ups helps ensure the condition is diagnosed early. The earlier liver cancer is diagnosed, the more effective treatment is likely to be. Read about diagnosing liver cancer.

Treating liver cancer

Treatment for liver cancer depends on the stage the condition is at. If diagnosed early, it may be possible to remove the cancer completely.

Treatment options in the early stages of liver cancer include:

- surgical resection – surgery to remove a section of liver
- liver transplant – where the liver is replaced with a donor liver
- microwave or radiofrequency ablation – where microwaves or radio waves are used to destroy the cancerous cells

However, only a small proportion of liver cancers are diagnosed at a stage where these treatments are suitable. Most people are diagnosed when the cancer has spread too far to be removed or completely destroyed.