

# Liver dysfunction

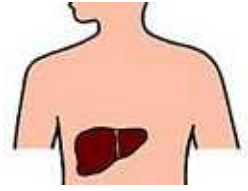
## What is liver dysfunction?

If a blood test indicates that you have liver dysfunction, there could be many different causes, but this means that the function of the liver is impaired in some way. The blood test that is part of the health check-up does not provide enough information to tell if you have a liver disease. In some cases, you may need to get an abdominal ultrasound or another detailed health check-up.

\* Please refer to the document

[Looking at the results of your health check-up:](http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Looking_at_the_results_of_your_health_check-up_E.pdf)

[http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Looking\\_at\\_the\\_results\\_of\\_your\\_health\\_check-up\\_E.pdf](http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Looking_at_the_results_of_your_health_check-up_E.pdf)  
for normal values of GOT, GPT, and  $\gamma$ -GTP.



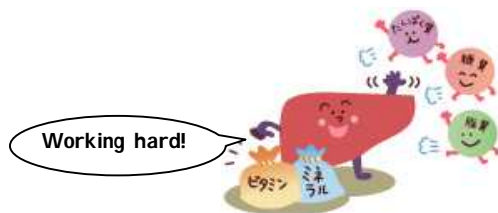
## What kind of organ is the liver?

The liver, like the brain, is among the heaviest internal organs. The liver is about 1/50 of the total weight of the body, and works like an internal chemical factory. The liver is a very hard worker, and has a very important role in the body.

## The main role of the liver

- Produce nutrients (lipids, proteins, fats, vitamins, etc.)
- Storage
- Metabolism
- Break down substances in the blood, like drugs and poisons
- Detoxification
- Detoxification is the process of breaking down harmful substances into substances that are harmless.
- Synthesize proteins that help stop bleeding
- Synthesis of bile acids and the production of bile. Bile is a digestive fluid that is secreted by the gall bladder.
- Fight viruses and bacteria that invade the body

This list is just a few of the many important functions that the liver performs.



## Why does liver dysfunction occur?

Some of the major causes of abnormal results for a liver test are listed below:

### Damage caused by alcohol      Alcoholic liver disease

Alcohol absorbed into the body is collected in and broken down by enzymes in the liver. The ability of the liver to process alcohol varies by individual, including age, gender, and body type; drinking too much alcohol can cause liver dysfunction.

### Overeating and obesity      Fatty liver

This is a state in which fat accumulates in the liver as neutral fat droplets. Excessive intake of calories can cause obesity and fatty liver. Fatty liver can be diagnosed by abdominal ultrasound.

### Viral hepatitis      Caused by hepatitis strains like A, B, or C

The health check-up at enrollment at APU checks for hepatitis B and C. Please see Campusmate for your results.

### Side effects of drugs      Drug-induced liver injury

Some drugs such as certain antibiotics, pain killers, fever reducers, and anti-anxiety drugs can cause liver damage. Additionally, be careful because some herbal medicines or dietary supplements can cause liver problems.

### **What symptoms are there from diseases of the liver?**

The liver is often called the "silent organ"; even if it is sick, symptoms often do not show until the disease is at an advanced stage. Once symptoms show it is often too late, so early detection is important. If the disease has progressed, symptoms such as vomiting, loss of appetite, and fatigue may appear.

### **What you can do to improve liver problems?**

If the results of your health check-up indicate that you have liver dysfunction, pay attention to your everyday life, and things like the following:

#### **Don't drink alcohol.**

If you have been told you have something abnormal with your liver, you should avoid drinking alcohol. If you must consume alcohol, drink in moderation.

Alcohol: [http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Alcohol\\_E.pdf](http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Alcohol_E.pdf)

#### **Eat in moderation**

If you have been told you have a fatty liver, review your diet, and try to eat a well balanced and regular diet. In particular, if it has been pointed out that you are suffering from obesity (a BMI of 25 or greater), a weight loss of 2-3 Kg can improve the health of your liver. If you are thin and have a fatty liver, you do not need to worry about weight loss as much as being careful to eat a healthy, balanced diet and make sure to get sufficient exercise.

Diet and Nutrition: [http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Diet\\_and\\_Nutrition\\_E.pdf](http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Diet_and_Nutrition_E.pdf)

Exercise: [http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Exercise\\_E.pdf](http://sub1.apu.ac.jp/studentsupport/uploads/fckeditor/advisory/healthcare/Exercise_E.pdf)

#### **Refrain from using health foods and supplements**

While it is easy to find health supplements anywhere, these may inadvertently cause liver damage. Be careful to not consume too much or too many supplements. If you are using health foods or supplements and have been told you have liver problems, please consult with your doctor or pharmacist.

If you have any concerns, please feel free to visit the Health Clinic.

APU Health Clinic  
E-mail: [clinic@apu.ac.jp](mailto:clinic@apu.ac.jp)

