

Cirrhosis

Cirrhosis Cirrhosis refers to advanced hardening and scarring of the liver that usually happens as a result of a long-term (chronic) liver disease.

What Causes Cirrhosis? Some common causes of cirrhosis include chronic hepatitis C, excessive use of alcohol, and Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH, a complication of fatty liver). Other causes can include chronic hepatitis B, Primary Biliary Cholangitis, Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis, Autoimmune Hepatitis, Wilson's Disease, and others.

Symptoms People may not look or feel ill when they have cirrhosis. Early symptoms can include feeling very tired, loss of appetite/weight, discomfort in the upper right part of the abdomen, and fever. Later symptoms can include jaundice, fluid buildup in the abdomen, mental confusion, internal bleeding, and more.

How is Cirrhosis Diagnosed? Cirrhosis is diagnosed through physical exams, blood tests, medical history, scans (ultrasound, MRI, CT), and sometimes liver biopsy.

How is Cirrhosis Treated? Treatment for cirrhosis depends on the cause and level of liver damage. Oral medications can reduce symptoms. Surgical treatments can address complications such as internal bleeding. Transplant may be an option for some people.

Managing Cirrhosis People can manage cirrhosis by eating a healthy diet, reducing salt intake, avoiding alcohol, and only taking medicines or supplements as approved by their doctors. People with cirrhosis should speak to their doctors about getting important vaccines, such as those to guard against hepatitis A and B, and any others that are medically recommended.

Cirrhosis and Liver Cancer People with cirrhosis are at risk for developing liver cancer and should speak with their doctors about liver cancer surveillance.

To learn more about cirrhosis simply scan this QR code or view all of our free resources available in our Resource Center: liverfoundation.org/resource-center.

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For questions about liver wellness and disease, or for emotional support to patients at the point of crisis and information on local resources including physician referrals, please contact our Helpline at 1-800-465-4837.

