

Abnormal Liver Function Studies

A patient-friendly guide to
Understanding Abnormal Liver Function



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A patient Guide to Understanding
Abnormal Liver Function

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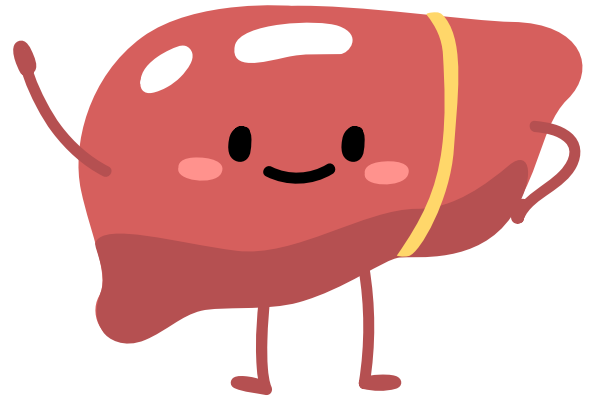


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Abnormal Liver Function

Abnormal liver function studies (LFTs) mean that one or more blood test results show changes in how your liver is working. LFTs measure enzymes, proteins, and substances like bilirubin to assess liver health.

Abnormal results can signal inflammation, damage, infection, or other liver-related issues. Doctors often order LFTs when you have symptoms like fatigue, jaundice, abdominal pain, or after exposure to certain medications, alcohol, or infections. These findings help guide further testing and treatment to protect your liver function.



Key Takeaways

- LFTs measure liver enzymes, proteins, and bilirubin levels in the blood.
- Abnormal results may indicate inflammation, infection, fatty liver, hepatitis, or alcohol-related damage.
- Common symptoms prompting LFTs include jaundice, fatigue, and abdominal discomfort.
- Additional tests are often needed to confirm the cause.



What Causes Abnormal Liver Function?

Known Causes:

Abnormal LFTs can result from various conditions affecting the liver. Common causes include viral hepatitis (A, B, C), alcohol-related liver disease, fatty liver disease, drug-induced liver injury, and autoimmune hepatitis. Other possible causes include gallbladder or bile duct issues, metabolic disorders, and liver tumors.

Even temporary changes may occur after strenuous exercise, certain medications, or short-term infections. Identifying the cause is essential for choosing the right treatment and preventing long-term damage.



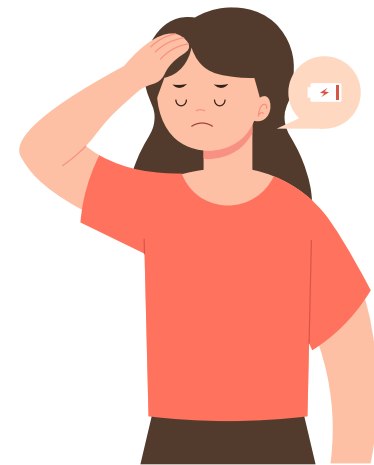
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Common Signs & Symptoms

Common signs and symptoms leading to abnormal LFTs include fatigue, yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice), abdominal pain or swelling, dark urine, pale stools, nausea, and unexplained weight loss.

Core Symptoms Include:

- Fatigue or weakness
- Jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)
- Abdominal discomfort or swelling
- Dark-colored urine
- Pale or clay-colored stools
- Nausea or loss of appetite



Severe cases can also cause:



- Significant abdominal swelling (ascites)
- Confusion or difficulty thinking (hepatic encephalopathy)
- Internal bleeding from enlarged veins (varices)
- Severe jaundice
- Liver failure
- Multi-organ complications



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Diagnosis & Medical Testing

Diagnosis involves reviewing symptoms, medical history, and confirming abnormal LFT results with repeat testing. Additional tests such as imaging, viral panels, or liver biopsy may identify the exact cause.

Diagnostic Tools:

- **Liver Function Blood Tests** – Measure enzyme and protein levels
- **Ultrasound** – Detects fatty liver, gallstones, or tumors
- **CT or MRI scans** – Provide detailed images of the liver
- **FibroScan** – Measures liver stiffness for fibrosis or cirrhosis
- **Viral Hepatitis Panels** – Identify hepatitis infections
- **Autoimmune and metabolic tests** – Screen for rare liver conditions
- **Liver Biopsy** – Confirms diagnosis and assesses damage



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A liver-friendly diet includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains while avoiding alcohol, excessive fats, processed foods, and added sugars to support liver repair and function.

Key Insights:

- **Eat fresh fruits and vegetables daily**
- **Choose lean proteins like fish, poultry, and legumes**



- **Avoid alcohol completely**
- **Limit fried, fatty, and processed foods**



- **Reduce added sugars and salt**
- **Stay hydrated with water and herbal teas**



Medications & Treatment Options

Treatment depends on the cause and may include antiviral drugs, lifestyle changes, stopping harmful medications, managing alcohol use, and in severe cases, advanced therapies or surgery.

Treatment Options

- **Antiviral medications** – For hepatitis B or C
- **Corticosteroids** – For autoimmune hepatitis
- **Stopping or changing medications** – If drug-induced
- **Nutritional support** – To promote liver healing
- **Lifestyle changes** – Weight loss, exercise, alcohol cessation
- **Surgical or transplant options** – For advanced liver disease



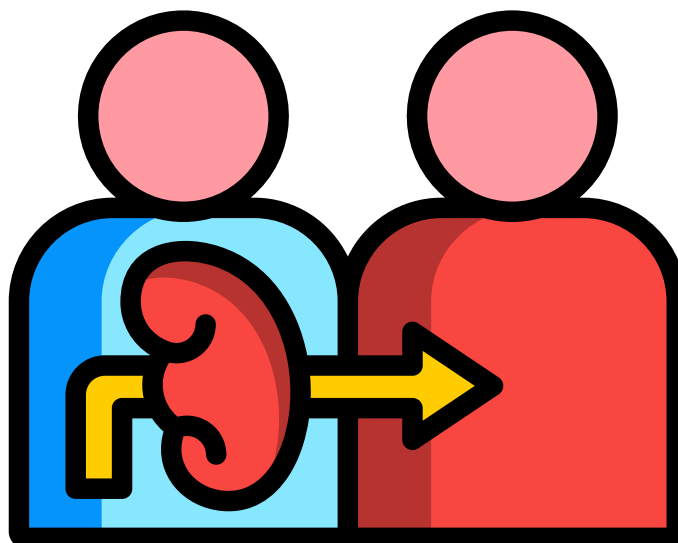
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Advanced Therapies & Procedures

Advanced therapies for severe liver disease may include liver transplantation, targeted cancer treatments, endoscopic procedures, or interventional radiology to manage complications like blocked bile ducts or bleeding.

Therapy Options:

- **Liver transplant**
- **Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP)**
- **Transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt (TIPS)**
- **Targeted cancer therapy**
- **Interventional drainage procedures**



Coping With Abnormal Liver Function

Coping involves following medical advice, making healthy lifestyle changes, avoiding alcohol, managing stress, and seeking emotional support through counseling or liver disease support groups.

Practical Strategies

- **Understand your test results and diagnosis**
- **Follow your treatment plan consistently**
- **Avoid alcohol and harmful substances**
- **Eat a liver-friendly diet**
- **Stay physically active as tolerated**
- **Manage stress through relaxation techniques**
- **Join a liver disease support group**





Q1: What do abnormal LFTs mean?

A: They indicate your liver may be inflamed, damaged, or not working properly, requiring further evaluation to find the cause.

Q2: Can LFTs be temporarily abnormal?

A: Yes, results can be temporarily elevated due to medications, infections, or physical activity, but persistent changes require follow-up.

Q3: Will I need more tests after abnormal LFTs?

A: Often, yes. Additional blood work, imaging, or a biopsy may be needed to confirm the cause and guide treatment.

Q4: Can I improve my LFTs naturally?

A: In many cases, yes—by avoiding alcohol, eating a balanced diet, staying active, and following your doctor's guidance.



Take Action

If you suspect you have gastroparesis or need help managing it, schedule a consultation with **GastroDoxs**. Our specialists offer tailored treatment plans to improve your digestive health.

Take control of your health— one step at a time.



SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

For more resources, visit GastroDoxs.com.



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