Liver Failure

Overview The liver is the second largest organ in the body and has several crucial functions:

- 1. Processing and digesting food
- 2. Storing vitamins, minerals, and important chemicals
- 3. Combating infections
- 4. Manufacturing proteins and enzymes essential for body functions
- 5. Clearing harmful toxins from the body

Liver failure occurs when the liver is damaged beyond repair and can no longer function.

Causes Liver failure can develop rapidly (acute) or over a long period (chronic).

Acute (Rapid Damage)

- Medication overdose
- Viral infections (hepatitis A, B, and C)
- Ingestion of poisonous substances

Chronic (Months to Years)

- Infections (hepatitis B and C)
- Alcohol abuse
- Cirrhosis
- Hemochromatosis (iron overload)
- Malnutrition

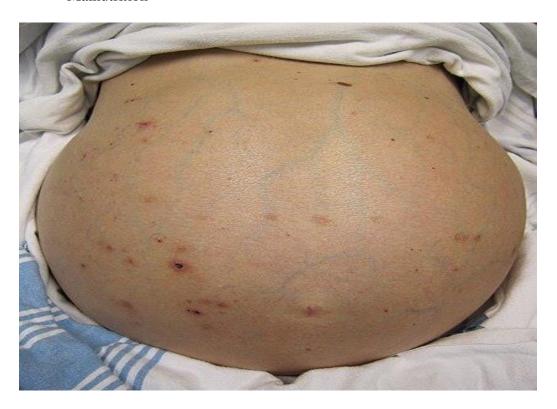


Image via www.wikipedia.org

Symptoms

- Bleeding
- Confusion
- Coma
- Fluid buildup in the body
- Hand tremors
- Increased susceptibility to infections
- Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes)
- Loss of appetite
- Malnutrition
- Nausea and vomiting
- Swollen abdomen (Ascites)

Investigations

- **Blood tests**: To assess liver function and identify underlying causes.
- Ultrasound of the abdomen (USS): Imaging to detect liver abnormalities.
- Liver biopsy: Occasionally required for further diagnosis.

Treatment

- Treat the underlying cause
- Liver transplant in severe cases

For more detailed information and personalized advice, consult your healthcare provider.