



## October is National Liver Awareness Month

### Liver cancer

Liver cancer is cancer that begins in the cells of your liver. Your liver is a football-sized organ that sits in the upper right portion of your abdomen, beneath your diaphragm and above your stomach.

The most common form of liver cancer is hepatocellular carcinoma, which begins in the main type of liver cell (hepatocyte).

### Causes:

In most cases, the cause of liver cancer is scarring of the liver (cirrhosis). Cirrhosis may be caused by:

- 🦋 Alcohol abuse.
- 🦋 Autoimmune diseases of the liver.
- 🦋 Hepatitis B or C virus infection.
- 🦋 Inflammation of the liver that is long-term (chronic).
- 🦋 Iron overload in the body (hemochromatosis).
- 🦋 Patients with hepatitis B or C are at high risk of liver cancer, even if they do not develop cirrhosis.

### Symptoms:

- 🦋 Abdominal pain or tenderness, especially in the upper-right part.
- 🦋 Easy bruising or bleeding.
- 🦋 Yellow skin or eyes (jaundice).
- 🦋 Losing weight without trying.
- 🦋 Loss of appetite.
- 🦋 Nausea and vomiting.
- 🦋 General weakness and fatigue.
- 🦋 Abdominal swelling.
- 🦋 White, chalky stools.

### Risk factors:

Factors that may increase your risk of liver disease include:

- 🦋 Heavy alcohol use.
- 🦋 Injecting drugs using shared needles.
- 🦋 Tattoos or body piercings.
- 🦋 Blood transfusion before 1992.
- 🦋 Exposure to other people's blood and body fluids.
- 🦋 Unprotected sex.
- 🦋 Exposure to certain chemicals or toxins.
- 🦋 Diabetes.
- 🦋 Obesity.

- 🦋 High levels of triglycerides in your blood.

### Coping and support:

- 🦋 Learn enough about liver cancer to make decisions about your care.
- 🦋 Keep friends and family close.
- 🦋 Find someone to talk with.
- 🦋 Make plans for the unknown.

### Prevention:

- 🦋 Preventing and treating viral hepatitis may help reduce your risk.
- 🦋 Childhood vaccination against hepatitis B may reduce the risk of liver cancer in the future.
- 🦋 Do not drink excessive amounts of alcohol.
- 🦋 Persons with certain types of hemochromatosis may need to be screened for liver cancer.
- 🦋 Persons who have hepatitis B or C or cirrhosis may be recommended for liver cancer screening.
- 🦋 Maintain a healthy weight.
- 🦋 Use caution with chemicals.
- 🦋 Know the health status of any sexual partner. Don't engage in unprotected sex unless you're certain your partner isn't infected with HBV, HCV or any other sexually transmitted infection.
- 🦋 Don't use intravenous (IV) drugs, but if you do, use a clean needle.
- 🦋 Seek safe, clean shops when getting a piercing or tattoo.
- 🦋 Ask your doctor about liver cancer screening.

### Reference Links:

- 🦋 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0001325/>
- 🦋 <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/liver-cancer/basics/prevention/con-20025222>
- 🦋 [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_awareness\\_ribbons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_awareness_ribbons)
- 🦋 [www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/liver-problems/.../con-2002530..](http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/liver-problems/.../con-2002530..)

**For any enquiry or assistance please contact:** [wellness@medicaretpa.co.in](mailto:wellness@medicaretpa.co.in)

**Disclaimer:** No information contained here should be relied on in making health decisions. Always check with your doctor or other health care provider.