



How a Japanese Diet May Slow Fatty Liver Disease Progression

Seafood, seaweed and soy products were among the foods that helped slow the progression of liver fibrosis.

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A Japanese-style diet may help slow the progression of [non-alcoholic fatty liver disease \(NAFLD\)](#), according to a new study published in [MDPI](#).

Arising from the accumulation of fat in the liver, NAFLD and its more advanced form, non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH), are responsible for a growing proportion of serious liver disease worldwide. As a result of inflammation, NAFLD can lead to [liver fibrosis](#), [cirrhosis](#) and even [liver cancer](#). Fatty liver disease is often linked to obesity and diabetes. With no proven medical treatments, management relies on lifestyle changes such as [weight loss](#) and [exercise](#).

For the study, researchers tracked the [diet](#) and progression of NAFLD in 136 people in [Japan](#), according to a [Medical News Today article](#). Using the 12-component Japanese Diet Index, or mJDI12, researchers scored each individual's diet and tracked its effect on muscle mass.

The mJDI12 consists of rice, miso soup, pickles, soy products, green and yellow vegetables, fruits, seafood, beef and pork, mushrooms, seaweed, green tea and coffee.

Researchers found that high mJDI12 scores were linked to slower progression of liver fibrosis and that those who ate more soy, seafood and seaweed, which are all low in fat, most significantly slowed liver fibrosis progression.

"Soybeans, for instance, are rich in fiber plant proteins that are low in saturated fat," Muhammad Nadeem Aslam, MBBS, an assistant research scientist at the University of Michigan, told Medical News Today. "Seafood (mainly fish) is rich in omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins such as D and B2 (riboflavin). Fish is also rich in calcium and phosphorus and is a great source of minerals, such as iron, zinc, iodine, magnesium and potassium."

Aslam emphasized that many Americans' diets do not meet recommended dietary guidelines and as a result can lead to diet-related chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and [fatty liver disease](#).

“Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, seafood, eggs, beans, peas, and lentils, unsalted nuts and seeds, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and lean meats and poultry—when prepared with no or little added sugars, saturated fat and sodium—are nutrient-dense foods,” Aslam said.

To read more about how the food we eat impacts our health, click [#Diet](#). There, you’ll find headlines such as “[Alternating Fast and Feast Days Linked to Lower Liver Fat](#),” “[Fast Food Consumption Linked to Fatty Liver Disease](#)” and “[How Timing of Eating Affects Metabolism and Weight Gain](#).”

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