Timing of Meals Linked to Risk of Fatty Liver

Those who ate more meals per day and did not skip breakfast or lunch were less likely to develop nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.

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The pacing of food intake affects the risk of developing non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), MedPage Today reports.

According to a recent analysis of National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) data, eating more meals per day and not skipping breakfast or lunch were each associated with a lower risk of developing NAFLD.

Researchers looked at data from NHANES on 9,015 people, excluding those with hepatitis B or C viruses (HBV/HCV), who reported significant alcohol use and who took medications that have liver toxicities. The survey included questions about the timing of meals.

Findings were presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) in Boston.

After adjusting the data for age, sex, ethnicity, smoking, alcohol use and the total number of calories consumed per day, the researchers found that skipping breakfast and lunch were linked with a respective 20 percent and 73 percent increased risk in developing NAFLD. Eating a greater proportion of each day's calories in the morning was linked with a 14 percent to 21 percent reduced risk of the liver condition. Eating meals between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. was associated with a 61 percent increase in the likelihood of developing significant fibrosis (scarring) of the liver.

To read the MedPage Today article, click here.

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