Tests and Treatment for Non-alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease

February 14, 2018 By Connie M. Welch

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease is often referred as the silent killer like Hepatitis C due to the condition generally causes no symptoms until later stages of liver damage have occurred. Early diagnosis helps save lives. Tests are necessary in diagnosis and determining the stage of NAFLD.

What Tests are Done

Blood tests include:

- Complete Blood count
- Liver enzyme panel and liver function tests
- Tests for chronic viral hepatitis like Hep A, Hep C and others
- Celiac disease screening test
- Fasting blood sugar
- Hemoglobin A1C, which shows how stable your blood sugar is
- Lipid profile, which measures blood fats, such as cholesterol and triglycerides

Imaging tests include:

- Standard ultrasound, which is often the initial test when liver disease is suspected
- Computerized tomography (CT) scanning or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the abdomen.
- Transient Elastography like a Fibroscan test that measures the stiffness of your liver which can indicate fibrosis or scarring.
- Magnetic resonance elastography combined with an MRI the test uses sound waves that bounce off the liver to create a visual map showing stiffness throughout the liver to determine if there is fibrosis or scarring and in what degree.

A liver biopsy may be needed if the other tests are inconclusive.

What Treatment is needed for NAFLD

*Weight loss in combination with a healthy diet and exercise is recommended in order to help improve the condition of your liver.

*Vaccinations to help protect your liver from damage such as Hepatitis A, and Hepatitis B. There is no vaccine for Hepatitis C.

*Depending on severity of the NAFLD, if cirrhosis is present liver transplantation may be needed, your physician will advise depending on your condition.

*At this present time there is no FDA approved treatment medication for NAFLD.

What Patients Can Do

With your physician's guidance you can help control your NAFLD and greatly improve your liver condition by:

*Losing Weight: If you're overweight or obese, reduce your calorie intake you eat daily and increase your physical activity. Small changes done consistently make big differences. These steps are an excellent start toward turning your condition around.

A recommendation is to use a daily food tracker which keeps up with the amount of food eaten, calories and can compute daily exercise and water. This mindfulness tool makes a huge difference in weight loss.

Ask your physician or a registered dietitian for advice on what a healthy weight is for you. Keep focused on losing 5 pounds at a time. This is very attainable and gives you simple target goals to focus on. 5 pounds + 5 pounds and so on, adds up quickly.

*Choose a healthy diet: If you have been diagnosed with diabetes or cirrhosis check with your physician or a registered dietitian for a healthy diet recommended for your condition. A standard healthy diet is eating fresh or frozen vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and balanced protein is best. Avoid sugar and all processed foods.

*Exercise and be physically active: A good start is get up and do something active everyday. Walking or riding a bicycle is great exercise majority of people can do. Begin with 15 minutes per day and build up to 30 minutes most days of the week and continue to add time each week. Before long you will be amazed how your stamina has increased. This helps keep your metabolism up which helps burn off calories and fat. There are even walk at home programs you can find on DVD or on the internet. Keep moving and see what a difference this makes.

*Control your diabetes: Take your medications from your physician and closely monitor your blood sugar.

*Lower your cholesterol: Eating a healthy plant based diet along with daily physical activity will

help greatly reduce your cholesterol.

*Protect your liver: Don’t drink alcohol of any type. Follow instructions on all medications and over the counter drugs. Talk to your physician about all medications, including over the counter, vitamins and supplements you take.

Warning: No Alternative medicine treatments or supplements are proved to cure NAFLD. Some herbal and supplements have been known to harm the liver. Consult with your physician before taking anything.

This entry was originally published on Life Beyond Hepatitis C, and is reprinted with permission.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/tests-treatment-nonalcoholic-fatty-liver-disease