

FOOD & MOOD

COACHING

LOVE YOUR LIVER

FOR HEALTH & WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Our liver is the most active and one of most hard-working organs in our body. It is part of our digestive system that is responsible for many functions, including:

- + Metabolising (breaking down and synthesising) carbohydrates and fats
- + Manufactures non-essential amino acids when needed
- + Makes blood plasma proteins
- + Processes, filters and cleans the blood
- + Produces bile so we can digest fats and eliminate waste
- + Produces cholesterol, needed to produce stress and sex hormones
- + Storage of vitamins and minerals
- + Metabolic clearing 'detoxification' of alcohol, caffeine, medication, metabolic by-products, hormones, pollutants, food additives and many other potentially harmful substances

As you can see, the liver is a very busy organ and has an influence on many aspects of health and metabolism. Placing it as one of the most influential organs for boosting health and influencing weight management.

One of the highlighted functions of the liver is the cleansing and detoxification process which is often linked with weight loss or weight management. We usually read or hear that for the liver to function properly, one must do a 'cleanse' or 'detox' to eliminate harmful substances we might consume such as pesticides, or alcohol, breathe in such as air pollutants, or produce within the body such as metabolic waste products.

The liver is cleansing everyday whether we are 'on a cleanse' or not. Metabolic clearing is the technical term for liver detoxification, and it takes place in two phases that each require specific nutrients to complete each phase to safely and fully eliminate harmful toxins and waste.

It is important to support the liver through eating liver-loving foods that specifically support it to do its many jobs properly – not limited to detoxification. Check out some recommended liver loving foods in the table below.

There are several factors that can overload or damage the liver and hinder its ability to carry out its many jobs efficiently. Common culprits include excess alcohol and sugar consumption. Genetic factors can also play a role in how we each metabolise various substances like caffeine and certain medications.

There are some certain steps that you can take to further prevent damage and promote repair and regeneration of liver tissue:

- + **Eating a well-balanced diet** and staying active can lower the risk of obesity and excess fat development in the liver.
- + **Consume natural, nutrient dense wholefoods (like those on the F&M program).** Always choose whole foods like vegetables, fruits, wholegrains, legumes, nuts, seeds and lean protein sources.
- + **Avoid highly processed foods that are rich in refined sugars, unhealthy fats and salt.** Excess intake of these type of foods can promote fat build up in the liver and impair its function.



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- + **Regulate medication intake.** Some medicines may put some stress on your liver and should only be taken with proper guidance from a physician.
- + **Observe food safety and proper hygiene to prevent liver related infections.**

Here is a table of liver-loving foods:

Vegetables	Broccoli, beets, carrots, cauliflower, cabbage, dark leafy vegetables like kale, lettuce, watercress, rocket, spinach, bok choy and silverbeet, garlic, onions, artichokes, Brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes
Legumes and beans	Lentils, green beans, red beans
Fruits	Apples, avocados, bananas, berries, grapes, grapefruit, pears, figs, lemons, watermelons
Nuts	Almonds, pine nuts, hazelnuts, walnuts
Dairy	Greek yoghurt, eggs
Wholegrains	Oatmeal, brown rice
Meats	Fatty fish like salmon and mackerel and chicken, turkey and beef
Others	Coffee, green tea, olive oil, cinnamon, oregano, turmeric

Avoid or modulate alcohol consumption

Alcohol is a leading cause for liver damage. When alcohol enters the body, it becomes the priority or has special privileges, so it is quickly absorbed and metabolised. It interferes with a multitude of bodily processes.

During its metabolism, liver function is disrupted. It shifts the body's acid-base balance into acid, it slows down fat metabolism thus promotes fatty acid synthesis and storage in the liver (fatty liver disease), which can impair the production and release of bile.

Its metabolites can also impair absorption of amino acids, vitamins and minerals and may lead to malnutrition. Alcohol is a concentrated source of energy, which means excessive intake may contribute to central obesity and cirrhosis.

In summary

Our liver is one of the most important organs in our body that has a lot of functions. Taking care of it requires good nutrition, regular physical activity and lifestyle modification to prevent severe liver damage.

