

Signs of advanced liver disease

Liver disease, caused by HCV, can cause many symptoms and signs. As the disease evolves, signs appear in many people – but not all, even when cirrhosis is present. Once the disease is well advanced, the features of hepatic decompensation and portal hypertension may appear, including ascites, jaundice, bleeding varices, coagulopathy, encephalopathy and renal failure.

Clinicians need to know what to look for as part of the process for staging liver disease. Cirrhosis severity can be staged by the [Childs-Pugh score](#), and is based on serum bilirubin, serum albumin, INR, presence of ascites and presence of encephalopathy.

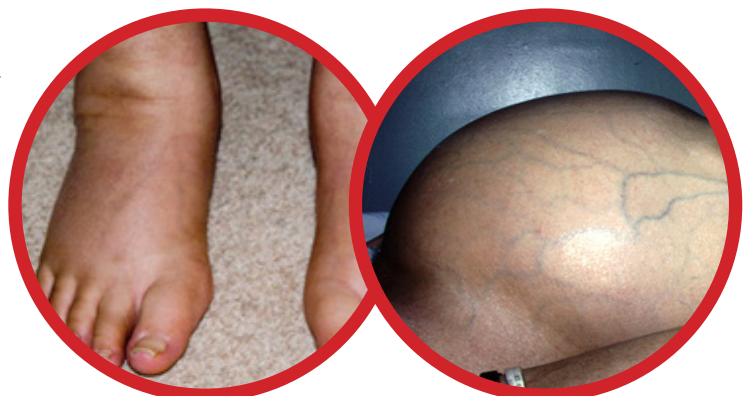
Physical examination findings in chronic liver disease (of any aetiology)

- Palmar erythema
- Spider naevi
- Gynaecomastia
- Leukonychia
- Feminising hair distribution
- Testicular atrophy
- Caput medusa
- Signs of anaemia



Physical examination findings associated with decompensated liver disease

- Signs of hepatic encephalopathy: Drowsiness, asterixis (or 'hepatic flap'), hyperventilation
- Jaundice
- Ascites
- Peripheral oedema
- Bruising



Complications of chronic liver disease and cirrhosis

- Portal hypertension
- Ascites
- Hypersplenism (with or without splenomegaly)
- Oesophageal and rectal varices
- Synthetic dysfunction
- Hypoalbuminaemia
- Coagulopathy
- Hepatic encephalopathy
- Hepatocellular carcinoma
- Hepatopulmonary and hepatorenal syndromes

Some of the most common extra-hepatic manifestations of HCV infection are described here.

| Immune-mediated | Inflammatory-related |
|---|--|
| Haematologic <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mixed cryoglobulinemia (10-25% of HCV people)• Cryoglobulinaemic vasculitis• B-cell non-Hodgkins's lymphoma• Monoclonal gammopathy• Immune-mediated thrombocytopenia Rheumatologic <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sicca syndrome• Arthralgia/myalgia• Autoantibody production (ie, cryoglobulin, rheumatoid factor, ANA, anticardiolipin Ab, antithyroid Abs, anti-SM Ab)• Polyarteritis nodosa• CREST syndrome | Renal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glomerulonephritis• Nephrotic syndrome Endocrine <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Type 2 diabetes mellitus• Insulin resistance• Hypothyroidism Central and peripheral nervous system <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depression• Cognitive impairment• Peripheral neuropathy Systemic <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fatigue Dermatologic <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Porphyria cutanea tarda• Lichen planus• Cutaneous necrotising vasculitis |