



[Home](#) → [Medical Encyclopedia](#) → Gilbert syndrome

URL of this page: [//medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000301.htm](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000301.htm)

Gilbert syndrome

Gilbert syndrome is a common disorder passed down through families. It affects the way bilirubin is processed by the liver, and may cause the skin to take on a yellow color (jaundice) at times.

Causes

Gilbert syndrome affects 1 in 10 people in some white groups. This condition occurs due to an abnormal gene, which is passed from parents to their children.

Symptoms

Symptoms may include:

- Fatigue
- Yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes (mild jaundice)

In people with Gilbert syndrome, jaundice most often appears during times of exertion, stress, and infection, or when they do not eat.

Exams and Tests

A blood test for bilirubin shows changes that occur with Gilbert syndrome. The total bilirubin level is mildly elevated, with most being unconjugated bilirubin. Most often the total level is less than 2 mg/dL, and the conjugated bilirubin level is normal.

Gilbert syndrome is due to a genetic change, but genetic testing is not needed.

Treatment

No treatment is necessary for Gilbert syndrome.

Outlook (Prognosis)

Jaundice may come and go throughout life. It is more likely to appear during illnesses such as colds. It does not cause health problems. However, it can confuse the results of tests for jaundice.

Possible Complications

There are no known complications.

When to Contact a Medical Professional

Contact your health care provider if you have jaundice or pain in the abdomen that does not go away.

Prevention

There is no proven prevention.

Alternative Names

Icterus intermittens juvenilis; Low-grade chronic hyperbilirubinemia; Familial non-hemolytic-non-obstructive jaundice; Constitutional liver dysfunction; Unconjugated benign bilirubinemia; Gilbert disease; Gilbert's syndrome

References

Korenblat KM, Berk PD. Approach to the patient with jaundice or abnormal liver test results. In: Goldman L, Schafer AI, eds. *Goldman-Cecil Medicine*. 26th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2020:chap 138.

Lidofsky SD. Jaundice. In: Feldman M, Friedman LS, Brandt LJ, eds. *Sleisenger and Fordtran's Gastrointestinal and Liver Disease*. 11th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2021:chap 21.

Quaglia A, Roberts EA, Torbenson M. Developmental and inherited liver disease. In: Burt AD, ed. *MacSween's Pathology of the Liver*. 8th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier; 2024:chap 3.

Review Date 5/2/2023

Updated by: Michael M. Phillips, MD, Emeritus Professor of Medicine, The George Washington University School of Medicine, Washington, DC. Also reviewed by David C. Dugdale, MD, Medical Director, Brenda Conaway, Editorial Director, and the A.D.A.M. Editorial team.

[Learn how to cite this page](#)



Health Content
Provider
06/01/2028

A.D.A.M., Inc. is accredited by [URAC](#), for Health Content Provider ([www.urac.org](#)). URAC's [accreditation program](#) is an independent audit to verify that A.D.A.M. follows rigorous standards of quality and accountability. A.D.A.M. is among the first to achieve this important distinction for online health information and services. Learn more about A.D.A.M.'s [editorial policy](#), [editorial process](#), and [privacy policy](#).

The information provided herein should not be used during any medical emergency or for the diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. A licensed medical professional should be consulted for diagnosis and treatment of any and all medical conditions. Links to other sites are provided for information only – they do not constitute endorsements of those other sites. No warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, is made as to the accuracy, reliability, timeliness, or correctness of any translations made by a third-party service of the information provided herein into any other language. © 1997-2025 A.D.A.M., a business unit of Ebix, Inc. Any duplication or distribution of the information contained herein is strictly prohibited.

