

Cirrhosis is a late stage of scarring (fibrosis) of the liver caused by many forms of liver diseases and conditions, such as hepatitis and chronic alcoholism. The liver damage done by cirrhosis generally can't be undone. But if liver cirrhosis is diagnosed early and the cause is treated, further damage can be limited and, rarely, reversed.

Symptoms

The liver is your largest internal organ. About the size of a football, it's located mainly in the upper right portion of your abdomen, beneath the diaphragm and above your stomach.

Cirrhosis often has no signs or symptoms until liver damage is extensive. When signs and symptoms do occur, they may include:

- Fatigue
- Easily bleeding or bruising
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Swelling in your legs, feet or ankles (edema)
- Weight loss
- Itchy skin
- Yellow discoloration in the skin and eyes (jaundice)
- Fluid accumulation in your abdomen (ascites)
- Spiderlike blood vessels on your skin
- Redness in the palms of the hands
- For women, absent or loss of periods not related to menopause
- For men, loss of sex drive, breast enlargement (gynecomastia) or testicular atrophy
- Confusion, drowsiness and slurred speech (hepatic encephalopathy)

Complications

Complications of cirrhosis can include:

- High blood pressure in the veins that supply the liver (portal hypertension)
- Swelling in the legs and abdomen
- Enlargement of the spleen (splenomegaly)
- Bleeding
- Infections
- Malnutrition
- Buildup of toxins in the brain (hepatic encephalopathy)
- Jaundice
- Bone disease
- Increased risk of liver cancer
- Acute-on-chronic cirrhosis

