

Bariatric focus

HELPING PATIENTS STAY FOCUSED ON WEIGHT LOSS EVERY DAY

With the obesity epidemic, nearly one in four Americans may now have fatty liver disease

Weight loss surgery offers benefits to you and your liver

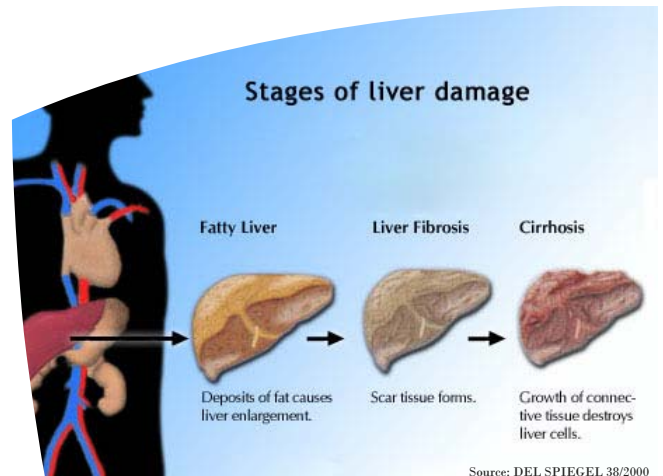
An increasing epidemic of liver disorders is being recognized. Abnormal fat deposition within the cells of the liver can lead to a condition termed “nonalcoholic fatty liver disease” or NAFLD. The incidence of NAFLD is so high that it has become the most common cause of chronic liver disease worldwide. It is estimated that nearly one in four Americans may have the disorder.

The normal liver serves as an energy repository where carbohydrate and fat get stored for later use. When the rate of fat

storage overrides demand, fat deposition occurs in the liver. The liver cell can become swollen, engorged and fail to function well. In early stages of the process, blood tests can be normal. However, as the disease progresses, increased scarring can occur. This stage is termed “steatohepatitis” and causes mild elevation in blood tests.

NAFLD can progress to a chronic form of liver scarring termed Cirrhosis. It is at this stage that a variety of life threatening complications as well as liver cancer can occur. The goal is to make the diagnosis of NAFLD and start treatment long before this final stage is reached.

The diagnosis of NAFLD is made by biopsy definitively, but can be strongly suggested by ultrasound exam, CT scanning, or even MRI. The condition is strongly associated with obesity, though it may occur in non obese patients, says James Mayes, MD, FACS, a liver specialist and a bariatric surgeon with Surgical Associates. NAFLD is also associated with diabetes and conditions of elevated cholesterol and lipids.



Source: DEL SPIEGEL 38/2000

Weight loss, exercise, strict diabetic control and lipid control improve the disease. Other treatments are under intense study.

In patients that chose to undergo weight loss surgery, up to 80% have some form of NAFLD. With successful surgery, close to 100% will show improvement. While weight loss surgery is not the first line of therapy necessarily for NAFLD, the presence of NAFLD is accepted by most insurance companies as a complication of obesity, explains Dr. Mayes, and adds evidence that the operation should be performed. In fact, a liver biopsy might even be performed at the time of surgery.

Are You Ready for Summer?

Fitness classes appropriate for you are held weekly at Virginia Hospital Center. Bariatric Patients who sign up for these classes get a free Body Fat Analysis.

Seated Gentle Workout

Thursdays, 11:00 - 11:45 am

Saturdays, 10:00 - 10:45 am

Strength training and low impact movement appropriate for all ages and levels

Cardio for All Sizes

Thursdays, 7:30 - 8:30 pm

Getting fit with this low-impact class

Body Sculpting

Mondays, 6:00-6:45 pm

Saturdays, 11:00-11:45 am

Strengthen and tone your upper and lower body

Gentle Yoga

Tuesdays, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Thursdays, 9:00 - 10:30 am

Restore flexibility, regain strength and ease tensions

Have Questions?

Please call **Cornelia Simpson** with Health Promotion at 703.717.6740 or email csimpson@virginiahospitalcenter.com



DID YOU KNOW?

Actress Caitlin Van Zandt has decided to have LAP-BAND system surgery. She plays the character Ashlee on the popular Soap Opera, Guiding Light. Caitlin's character is following Caitlin's real-life experience by having “gastric banding”. The surgery episode aired on April 14, and the storyline will continue for several months.

Given the storyline commenced a month ago, you can view past episodes by going to www.cbs.com.