



It's time to Love Your Liver

The liver is one of the largest organs in the body and performs many functions, such as:

- ▶ Processing digested food from the intestine
- ▶ Controlling levels of fats, amino acids and glucose in the blood
- ▶ Combating infections
- ▶ Neutralising and destroying all drugs and toxins
- ▶ Breaking down food and turning it into energy
- ▶ Making enzymes and proteins which are responsible for most chemical reactions in the body, for example those involved in blood clotting and repair of damaged tissues

There are many causes of liver disease but there are three main threats to protect your liver against: alcohol, obesity and viral hepatitis. Liver disease is largely preventable. With care and respect, there are many steps you can take to look after it.

- ▶ You may have read about liver cleansing drinks or 'de-toxify your body' diets. If you are needing to de-toxify then your liver isn't working. Avoid these extreme diets and pills that claim to help improve your liver function. Your liver should work fine on its own.
- ▶ Watch your alcohol intake. Try to keep under the recommended 14 units intake per week, add in alcohol free days and try to avoid binge drinking.
- ▶ Watch your weight. Around a third of the population suffers from non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) – a build-up of liver fat that's normally associated with being overweight or obese. If you can try to maintain a healthy weight, take regular exercise and eat a healthy, varied diet, it dramatically reduces your risk of a fatty liver.
- ▶ Down the cigarettes for good. Smoking raises the levels of fat in our blood, which the liver has to work very hard to process.

Know your units

1.6 units



1 bottle (330ml) of premium beer
based on 5% ABV

2.3 units



1 pint of beer
based on 4% ABV

2.6 units



1 pint of cider
based on 4.5% ABV

1 unit



1 glass of 25ml measures spirits
based on 40% ABV

1.1 units



1 bottle (275ml) of alcopops
based on 4% ABV

2.3 units



1 medium (175ml) glass of wine
based on 13% ABV

SAVE THE DATE: 10th - 16th June Cervical Screening Awareness Week.

British Nutrition Foundation's Healthy Eating Week

10th-14th June is a dedicated week to encourage organisations across the UK to focus on healthy eating and drinking.

This year the week will be focusing on 5 key areas:

- ▶ Encouraging good breakfast habits
- ▶ Eating 5 A DAY, fruit and vegetables
- ▶ Drinking plenty of water
- ▶ Getting active
- ▶ Sleeping well

Have breakfast

Many of us regard breakfast as the start of our day, but there's a high percentage of us who skip breakfast due to time constraints, or they may simply not be able to stomach food that early in the morning. It's an individual thing, but we really can benefit from having a wholesome breakfast to start our day. This will help replenish your energy levels having fasted overnight, and will set you up for a successful, productive day, especially if it contains slow release carbohydrates, protein and fats.

5 A DAY top tips

- ▶ Include them in every meal
- ▶ Have healthy snacks of vegetable and/or fruit sticks
- ▶ Fill sandwiches with salad
- ▶ Use leftovers for lunch
- ▶ Make sure you have a variety over the week

Drink plenty of water

Drink plenty of fluids - aim for 6 to 8 glasses a day. Water is best, however lower fat milk, sugar free drinks, tea and coffee all count. A word of caution: Limit fruit juice and smoothies to 150ml per day.



Get active

Exercise is also a great way to help keep your energy levels consistent throughout the day. As much as it uses energy, the endorphin boost we experience can help improve our mood, and will overall help you remain productive as you burn calories throughout the day. Move a little more every day.

Sleep well

Sleep is important to ensure adequate repair of our muscles and blood vessels. It helps us maintain a healthy weight and a hormone balance, as well as controlling sugar levels. A good night's sleep rejuvenates the brain and helps to suppress stress related hormones.

Stick to the same sleep schedule every day, including weekends. This will help to regulate your body clock.

Balanced food plan example

Breakfast	Porridge, banana, walnuts	Complex carbs, fruit, healthy oils, dairy
Lunch	Wholemeal pasta, tuna, 4 items salad	Complex carbs, oily fish, 4 vegetables
Dinner	Grilled chicken, brown rice, 4 vegetables	Proteins, complex carbs, vegetables



Tip of the month

Drink plenty of water to help your liver flush the toxins out of your system. Aim for a minimum of 2L of water a day to ensure your blood isn't too thick and is easy to filter.

Quote of the month

“ What could be more important than a little something to eat. ”
Winnie the Pooh