**Diet Plan for Hepatitis Patients:**

**Nutrition**

The liver metabolizes everything you eat, so a healthy diet is especially important for those living with a liver disease such as hepititis. Furthermore, since many people with the disease suffer from low energy or fatigue, a fuel-rich diet is a key way to give your body as much vigor as possible. You should drink plenty of water and observe a good balance between all of the basic food groups, including whole grains, proteins, dairy, fruits, vegetables and fats—making sure to keep the saturated fats in your diet to a minimum. Here are some other nutrition tips:

People with [hepatitis](https://www.everydayhealth.com/sexual-health/hepatitis.aspx) need to follow a healthy lifestyle to minimize damage to the liver.

"A person with hepatitis just needs to follow a healthy, well-balanced diet."

That [diet](https://www.everydayhealth.com/hepatitis/cooking-for-someone-with-hepatitis.aspx) should include:

* Plenty of fruits and vegetables
* Whole grains such as oats, brown rice, barley, and quinoa
* Lean protein such as fish, skinless chicken, egg whites, and beans
* Low-fat or non-fat dairy products
* Healthy fats like those in nuts, avocados, and olive oil
* Consumption of caffeinated coffee on a regular basis has been associated with reduced formation of liver fibrosis, slower disease progression, and decreased risk of cirrhosis and liver cancer. Decaf coffee and green tea have not been shown to benefit or harm the liver.

**What Not to Eat or Drink**

Keep in mind that an unhealthy diet can contribute to [liver damage](https://www.everydayhealth.com/hepatitis/managing-hepatitis-liver-damage.aspx). If you eat too much high-calorie greasy, fatty, or sugary food, you'll gain weight and fat will begin to build up in your liver. A "fatty liver" can contribute to developing cirrhosis, or scarring, of the liver. Fat in your liver can also interfere with the effectiveness of drugs that target the hepatitis virus.

Avoid the following:

* Saturated fats found in butter, sour cream, and other high-fat dairy foods, fatty cuts of meat, and fried foods
* Sugary treats like cookies, cake, soda, and packaged baked goods
* Foods heavily laced with salt
* Alcohol

Many experts recommend that hepatitis patients also avoid raw or undercooked shellfish, which can harbor viruses and bacteria. You may consider limiting your consumption of processed foods as well, since they can contain chemical additives and high levels of salt.

Fatty fried foods are very hard for the liver to digest, they frequently cause pain to longer term patients, creating fatty liver so should be taken rarely.

The liver plays an important role in the metabolism of iron since it is the primary organ in the body that stores this metal. The average diet contains about 10- 20 mg of iron. Only about 10% of this iron is eliminated from the body. Patients with Hepatitis B & C cirrhosis sometimes have difficulty excreting iron from the body. This can overload of iron in the liver, blood, and other organs. Excess iron can be very damaging to the liver. Patients with Hepatitis B & C whose serum iron level is elevated, or who have cirrhosis, should avoid taking iron supplements and restrict the iron rich foods in their diet, such as red meats, liver, and cereals fortified with iron.

Adequate protein intake is important to build and maintain muscle mass and to assist in healing and repair. Protein intake should be between about 45 – 120 grams a day in patients with hepatitis, unless Encephalopathy occurs. Encephalopathy is an altered mental status. It has been shown that restriction of the diet of animal protein and maintaining a total vegetarian diet, helps reverse this condition and improve mental capacity. Advanced scarring of the liver or cirrhosis can lead to fluid in the abdomen referred to as ascites.

Patients with hepatitis who have ascites must be on salt restricted diets. Every gram of sodium consumed results in the accumulation of 200 ml of fluid. The lower the salt, the better this fluid accumulation is controlled. Sodium intake should be restricted to 1000mg each day, and preferably to 500 mg per day.