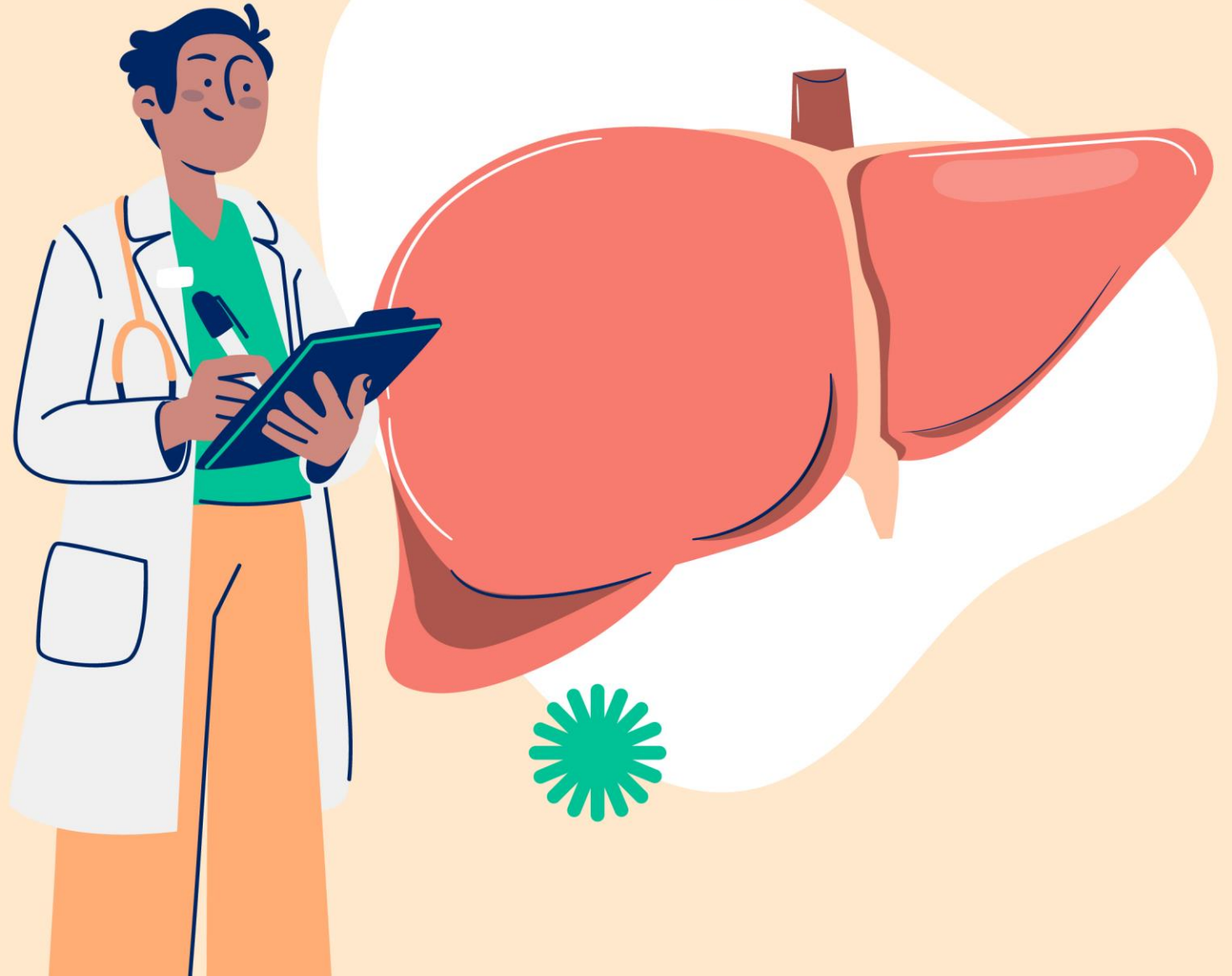


Understanding Liver Health



Today we will talk about...

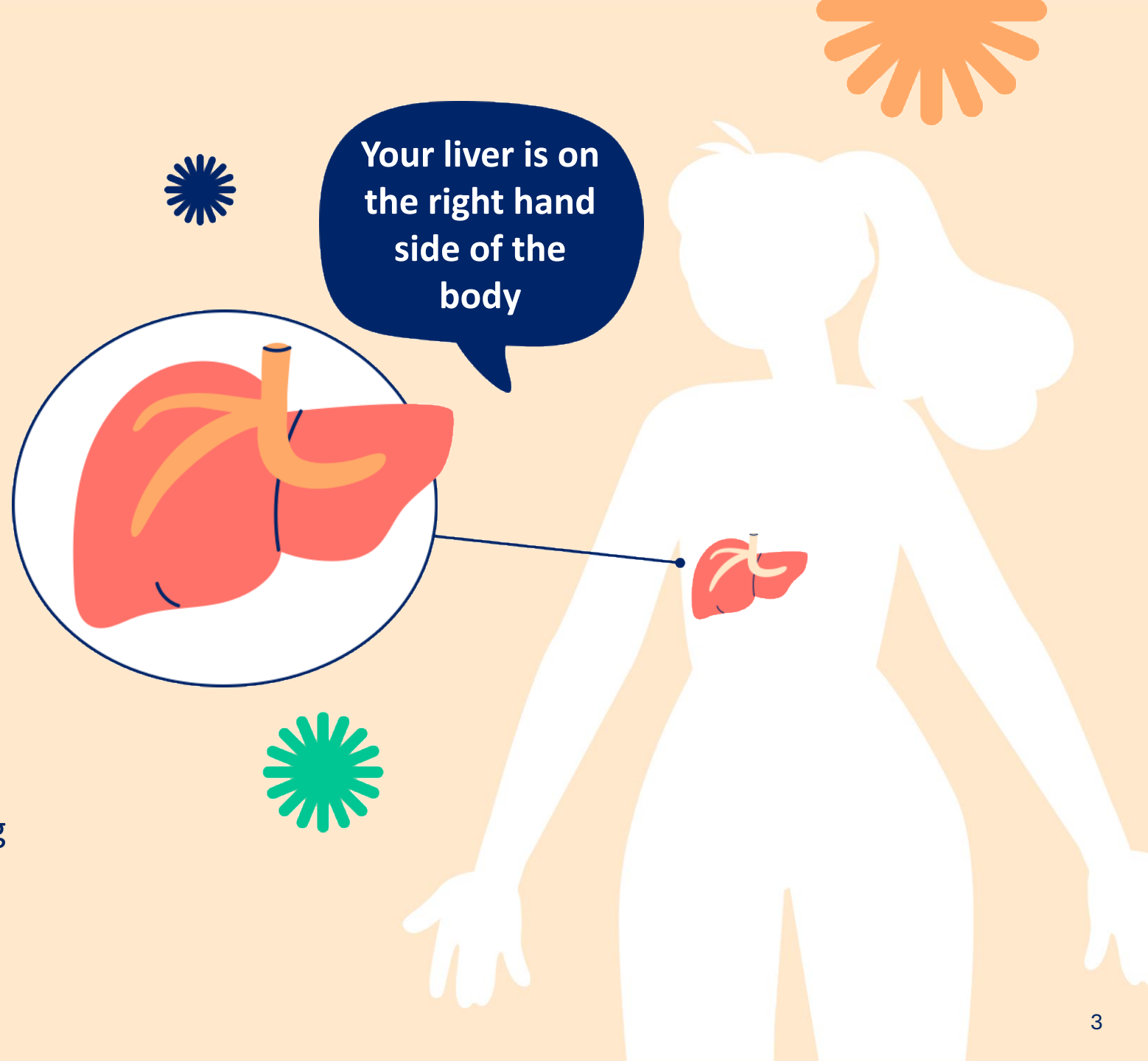
- ✓ Why the liver is an important part of your body
- ✓ What you need to know about liver disease
- ✓ Who can get liver disease and the common signs
- ✓ Testing the health of your liver
- ✓ How to keep your liver healthy
- ✓ Finding help and support



Facts about your liver

It's a large organ with over 500 jobs to do, and it:

- ✓ Breaks down food
- ✓ Cleans your blood
- ✓ Fights infections
- ✓ Helps gives you energy
- ✓ Helps digestion
- ✓ Can repair itself and regrow after being damaged (if not severe)



What does a healthy liver do?



- ✓ Makes and stores sugar and fat for your body's energy
- ✓ It processes what you eat, drink and the medicines you take
- ✓ It helps clean your blood of toxins that are harmful to your body
- ✓ It fights infections and helps digest food
- ✓ Able to repair itself and regrow after being damaged (if not severe)

What is liver disease?



Liver disease damages the liver and stops it from working properly:

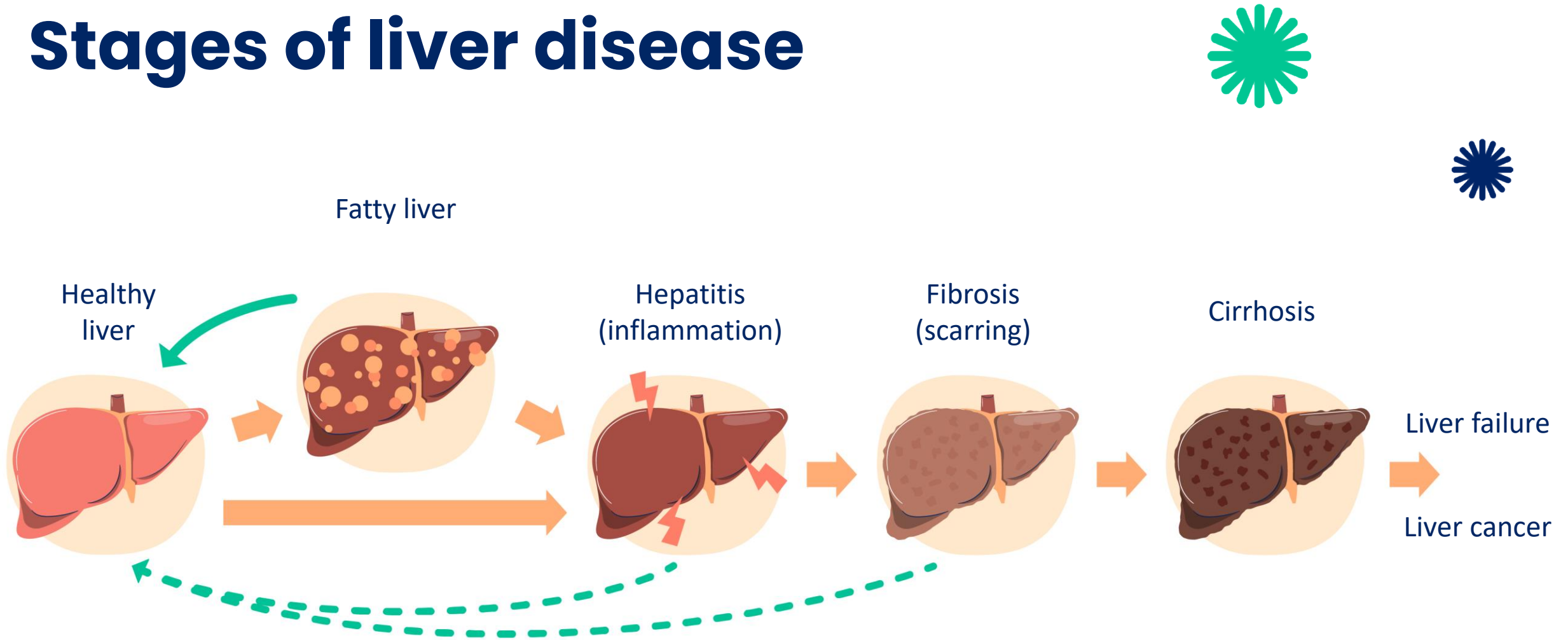
Many conditions can affect the liver:

- ✓ Viral hepatitis
- ✓ Fatty liver
- ✓ Alcoholic liver disease
- ✓ Genetic condition
- ✓ Liver cancer

Most people with liver disease do not feel sick or have symptoms.

**Liver disease can cause
liver failure and liver cancer!**

Stages of liver disease



Who is at risk of liver disease?



Liver disease can affect anyone but those at risk of liver damage are people who:

- ✓ Have a fatty liver
- ✓ Drink too much alcohol
- ✓ Have hepatitis B or hepatitis C
- ✓ Have issues that affect their immune system
- ✓ Are born with liver disease

What is viral hepatitis?

Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver.

In Australia the most common viruses that cause hepatitis are the hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C viruses.

	How is it passed on?	Can it become chronic? (long term)	Is there a treatment?	Is there a cure?	Is there a vaccine?
Hepatitis A	Contaminated food and water	No	Not specific	Immune system	Yes
Hepatitis B	Mother to baby, blood to blood, sexual contact	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Hepatitis C	Blood to blood contact	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

What are the common symptoms of liver disease?

Symptoms include:

- ✓ Feeling sick
- ✓ Loss of appetite or weight loss
- ✓ Yellowing of the eyes or skin (jaundice)
- ✓ Swelling in the stomach and ankles

There are usually no symptoms until the liver is badly damaged



Testing for liver disease

Blood tests –
check your liver function

Scans –
ultrasound, CT or MRI to see the liver and check for inflammation, swelling or scarring

Liver biopsy –
taking a small sample of your liver tissue to understand how your liver is functioning

**Talk to your doctor
or GP if you are worried or
have questions about your
liver health.**



Testing for hepatitis B and hepatitis C

There are different types of blood tests for hepatitis B and C. They are easy and confidential.

Hepatitis B test results will tell you if you:

- ✓ Have chronic (long term) hepatitis B infection, and need care and treatment
- ✓ Have developed protection against hepatitis B, and cannot get it again
- ✓ Don't have protection against hepatitis B, and need a hepatitis B vaccination

Hepatitis C test results will tell you if you:

- ✓ Have ever had hepatitis C but do not have it now
- ✓ Have hepatitis C now and can get cured



Treating liver disease



- ✓ Treatment may be an option – your doctor will advise you if you need treatment.
- ✓ With medications (provided by your GP), diet and exercise and managing a healthy lifestyle.
- ✓ Once your liver is badly damaged (cirrhosis), it cannot be reversed.

Treating hepatitis B and hepatitis C

Hepatitis B

- ✓ Chronic hepatitis B - see your doctor regularly (every 6-12 months) to check the health of your liver.
- ✓ Treatment can reduce damage to the liver and reduce the risk of liver cancer.
- ✓ Your doctor will advise you if you need to take medication.

Hepatitis C

Hepatitis C is treated with medications called Direct Acting Anti-virals (DAAs). They are pills or tablets that:

- ✓ Clear the virus from your body
- ✓ Have few or no side-effects
- ✓ Lower the risk of liver damage and getting liver cancer
- ✓ Cure 95% of people living with hepatitis C.



How to protect yourself from hepatitis B and C?

Hepatitis C:

- ✓ Don't share personal items like toothbrushes or razors
- ✓ Only get tattoos or body piercings from licensed professionals with sterile (clean) equipment
- ✓ Only get medical and dental procedures by licensed professionals
- ✓ Use condoms and lubricant during sex
- ✓ Be careful about getting medical and dental procedures when travelling overseas
- ✓ Wear gloves when cleaning up blood
- ✓ Never share drug injecting equipment.



Hepatitis B
GET VACCINATED



Caring for your liver

There are four main lifestyle factors that are important when caring for your liver



Eating well



Reduce or stop alcohol



Exercise



Caring for yourself

Where to get help



Find a GP

General Practitioner (GP)

www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services

Sexual health clinics - 1800 451 624

www.health.nsw.gov.au/sexualhealth

Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service

www.mhahs.org.au

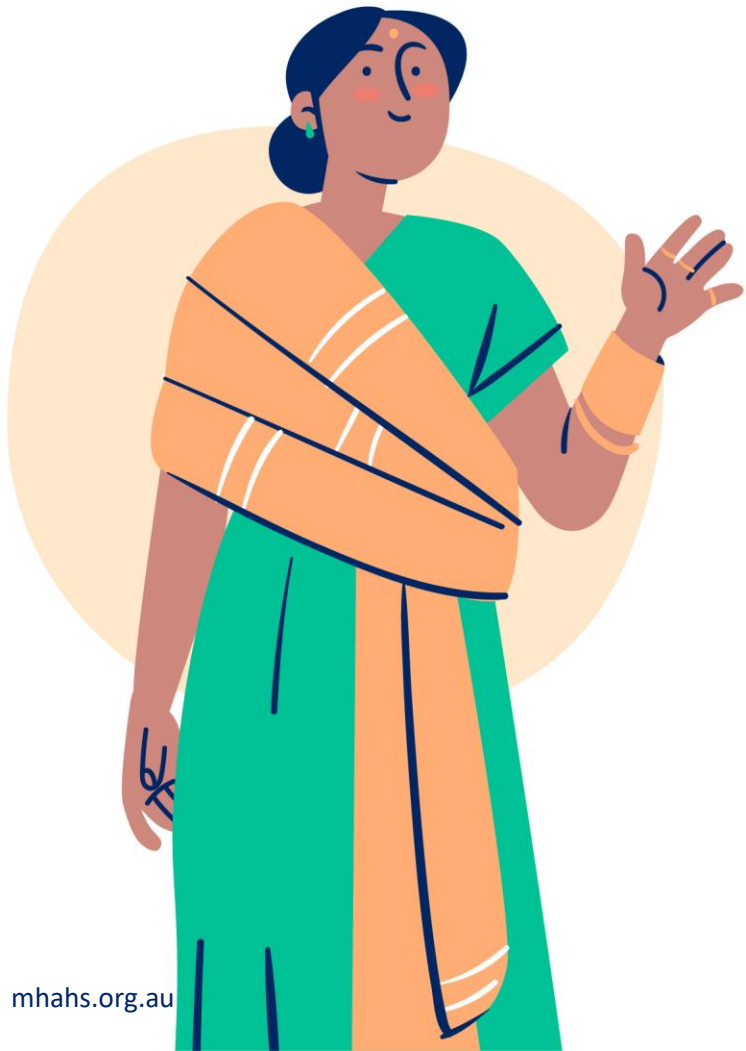
Where to get help in your language

If you need assistance with talking to your doctor or health provider in your language:

- ✓ Call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50
- ✓ The service is free and confidential
- ✓ Ask the receptionist to book a free interpreter for you



What have we learnt today?



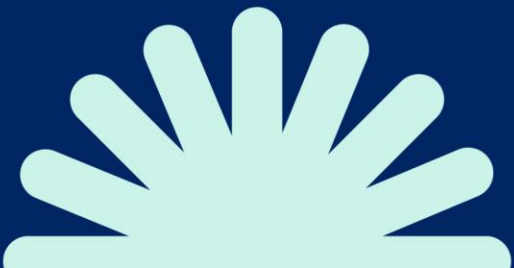
True or False?

1. Your liver processes most things you eat and drink, even chemicals that touch your skin.
2. You know you have liver disease when you start feeling sick.
3. If left untreated, hepatitis B can cause liver disease.
4. The most important thing about liver health is doing lots of exercise.

Important messages to take away

- ✓ Eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly
- ✓ Maintain a healthy body weight
- ✓ Avoid or reduce alcohol intake
- ✓ Monitor the health of your liver with your GP
- ✓ Test for hepatitis B and C (hepatitis B vaccination is available)





Questions?

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