What is Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)?

A condition in which fatty deposits develop on your liver, found by an imaging study (e.g., ultrasound or CT scan) or a liver biopsy.

To be classified as NAFLD, you must drink less than 21 drinks of alcohol per week if you’re a man, and less than 14 if you’re a woman. This is to confirm that alcohol consumption is not likely the cause of the fatty deposits.

NAFLD is an increasingly common problem, estimated to affect 20% of people worldwide.

The most common risk factors are:
- obesity
- type 2 diabetes
- high blood lipids.

Making the right dietary choices in combination with weight loss can help reverse NAFLD.

What is the best diet for NAFLD?

Many diets have been studied, but the Mediterranean diet, which consists of the foods and cooking styles commonly eaten in the countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea, has the most evidence of working.

This diet mainly consists of:
- Monounsaturated fats (good fats) like olive or canola oil instead of saturated fats (bad fats) found in butter and lard;
- Fish and poultry, limiting processed meat and red meat consumption;
- Plant-based foods including fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes (beans, peas, lentils and peanuts), and nuts;
- Red wine in moderation (one glass per day.) Dietary guidelines caution against beginning to drink or drinking more often on the basis of potential health benefits.

If you have NAFLD, losing 10% of your total body weight has been shown to drastically decrease the amount of fat on your liver.

Finding the right dietary plan can be tricky and needs to be individualized for each person. That’s why we recommend contacting a dietitian or nutritionist to help you and your doctor determine your personalized plan.