

Global Fatty Liver Day Promotes Liver Disease Screening [VIDEO]

This year's theme, "Act Now, Screen Today," urges people to screen for MASLD, which often shows no symptoms.

June 17, 2024 By Laura Schmidt

June 13 marked Global Fatty Liver Day (formerly International NASH Day). The national public awareness day emphasized the importance of screening for [metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease](#) (MASLD, formerly known as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease). This year's theme, "Act Now, Screen Today," aimed to improve MASLD screening rates.

To mark the awareness day, the Global Liver Institute interviewed Arun Sanyal, MD, of the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Stravitz-Sanyal Institute for Liver Disease and Metabolic Health, [according to VCU](#).

Often referred to as "[silent diseases](#)," MASLD and metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH, formerly known as non-alcoholic steatohepatitis, or NASH) are responsible for a growing proportion of advanced [liver disease](#), mirroring a global rise in [obesity](#).

Although MASLD affects about one in four people worldwide, most individuals are unaware they have the condition because there are often no symptoms. If left untreated, MASLD can lead to liver fibrosis, cirrhosis and even [liver cancer](#).

"The majority of people who visit a physician for the first time regarding their liver—that is also the first day that their liver disease is diagnosed," Sanyal said in the interview. "[Cirrhosis](#) doesn't happen overnight, so that means this condition has gone undetected for decades, likely before it got to this point."

Lifestyle factors often play a role in the development of MASLD. In many cases, the buildup of liver fat is associated with type 2 diabetes and obesity, especially abdominal or visceral fat accumulation, indicated by a large waist circumference. However, lean people can also develop MASLD.

Sanyal advises people with overweight or obesity or who have type 2 diabetes or high blood pressure to discuss their liver disease risk—as well as interventions to lower that risk—with their doctor. With no effective approved medical therapies, management depends on lifestyle changes such as weight loss and exercise.

“We need to find people early in the disease, before it has done serious damage to the liver, so we can stop the ship and turn it around before it’s too late,” Sanyal said.

To read more, click [#MASLD](#). There, you’ll find headlines such as “[UT Health Awarded Grants for MASLD Research](#),” “[Liver Cancer Screening Improves Survival but Is Underused](#)” and “[Liver Fibrosis Diagnosis Promotes Lifestyle Changes](#).”

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