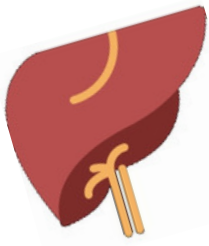


ABOUT CHILDHOOD LIVER DISEASE



THE LIVER IS ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST COMPLEX ORGANS IN THE HUMAN BODY

It has many important functions, including:

- Filtering bacteria to fight infection.
- Producing bile to help break down and absorb fat and vitamins from food.
- Breaking down sugars from food for our body to use as energy.
- Making proteins that keep our body working properly.
- Breaking down and getting rid of toxins such as drugs.
- Storing vitamins and minerals needed for good health.

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO SURVIVE WITHOUT A FUNCTIONING LIVER



LIVER DISEASE IN CHILDREN

There are many diseases that can affect a child's liver. Some are genetic and others have no known cause. Most are not related to lifestyle factors. Liver disease in babies is often mistaken for standard neonatal jaundice so is not diagnosed nor treated early enough. Many children born with a liver disease need a liver transplant at a very young age.



SOME SYMPTOMS AND IMPACTS OF LIVER FAILURE

Jaundice

- Yellow skin and whites of eyes. Occurs when bile cannot leave the liver.

Itching

- Due to the build up of bile salts under the skin. Causes children to be irritable and sleep deprived.

Poor Growth, Minimal Weight Gain and Muscle Wasting

- As the liver cannot absorb nutrients nor make protein.

Vitamin Deficiencies

- As bile is not helping to absorb all necessary vitamins.

Bleeding

- From gums, nose or internally causing children to vomit blood.



TRANSPLANT IS A TREATMENT, NOT A CURE

Children who have had a liver transplant require lifelong monitoring and medical care as well as daily medication to prevent rejection of the new liver. They are more prone to common infections and need to take extra care with their overall health.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.LIVERKIDS.ORG.AU

This information is general and not to be taken as clinical advice. If you have any concerns about your child's liver health, please consult your medical practitioner.