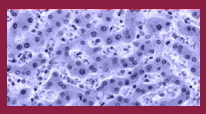


NOVEMBER 2026

MOUNT CARMEL
A Member of Trinity Health

DIABETES ONE DAY AT A TIME

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

p2 
The Connection Between Diabetes and Your Liver (Cont.)

p3 
To brush or not to brush; does it really matter?

p4 
How to Support Friends and Family with Diabetes

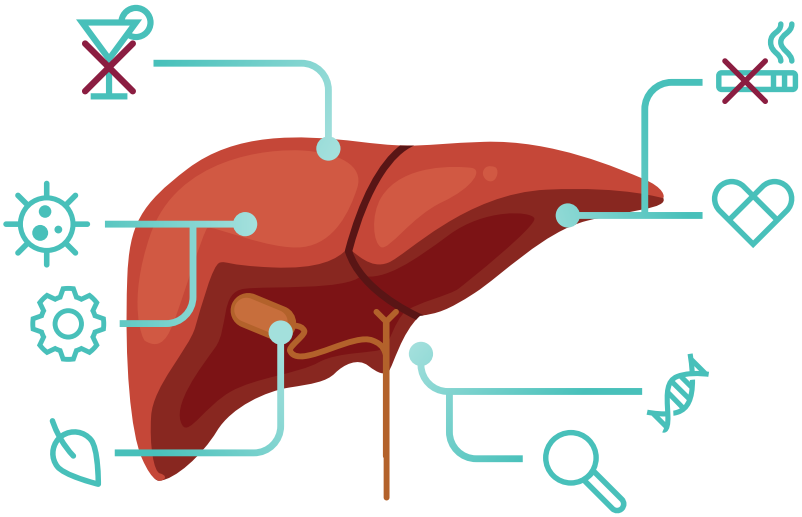
p5 
Cider Glazed Pork Tenderloin

The Connection Between Diabetes and Your Liver

Submitted By: Kara McGill-Meeks MS, RD, LD, CDCES

Your liver is the largest organ in your body. You need it remove waste, digest fat, break down substances, and balance your blood sugar. Liver disease is on the rise. Diabetes and liver disease are often linked. Each increases the risk for the other.

Metabolism is how your body turns food and drink into energy to keep you alive and working. Metabolic dysfunction occurs when this process fails. It causes the body to be out of balance. For example, it can cause blood sugar to be too high. When blood sugar levels are high over a long time, this can damage internal organs. This includes your liver. At the same time, a buildup of fat and damage in the liver worsen resistance to insulin and result in higher blood sugar levels. This increases the risk of developing diabetes.



The Connection Between Diabetes and Your Liver *cont.*

What are the types of liver disease?

Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD)

This early-stage disease occurs when excess fat builds up in your liver.

Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH)

A more severe form of MASLD where inflammation results in development of scar tissue.

Cirrhosis

This late-stage disease involves scarring and permanent damage to your liver.

Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC)

Most common type of liver cancer.

Acute liver failure

Liver is no longer functional.

People whose blood glucose levels are often elevated are at the greatest risk for the progression of liver disease.

Liver disease and diabetes share many of the same risk factors. These include:

- Age
- Obesity
- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol

Are there symptoms?

MASLD and MASH usually do not have any signs or symptoms. They can take many years to develop. Once liver disease progresses, symptoms may include:

- Loss of appetite
- Tiredness
- Yellowing of skin or eyes
- Right-sided belly pain
- Weight loss (without trying)

People with diabetes should talk with their healthcare provider about screening for liver disease. The Fibrosis-4 (FIB-4) Index is calculated using simple lab tests and your age. With higher FIB-4 scores, your provider may order more tests like ultrasound, CT scans, MRI or even liver biopsy.

Preventing and Treating Liver Disease

Many of the same lifestyle changes that help manage diabetes also help with both preventing and treating liver disease.

Losing weight

5-10% weight loss can help reduce fat in your liver and improve blood sugar

Healthy diet

Extra carbohydrates lead to higher blood sugar levels, and they are stored in the liver. So, limiting sweets and balancing carbohydrates is important. Limiting saturated fat is also helpful.

Physical activity

Moderate physical activity (like walking) can improve the way your body uses blood sugar. It can also reduce the fat stored in the liver. A common goal is to be active for about 30 minutes, 5 days per week.

Limiting alcohol

This can reduce stress on the liver and slow the damage.

In addition to lifestyle changes, other treatments for liver disease can include:

- Improving A1C levels with diabetes medications
- Two medications that can slow progression of MASH:
  - Actos (pioglitazone)
  - Rezdiffra (resmetirom)
- Weight loss medications
- Bariatric surgery

Questions?

Talk with your healthcare provider about your risk of developing liver disease.

To brush or not to brush; does it really matter?



Submitted by: Valerie Blair RDN, LD, CNSC

Healthy teeth and gums are important for everyone, but they are especially important for people with diabetes.

Did you know that diabetes can increase harmful bacteria, result in less saliva production, and cause the development of both cavities and gum disease? This can lead to the loss of teeth. Of course, this is more common when blood sugar levels are often high.

At the same time, having gum disease can make it harder to manage diabetes. The inflammation in your gums can cause blood sugar levels to rise. Poor oral health is also linked to increased risk for cardiovascular disease and worsening kidney disease.

What can you do to reduce your risks? The best strategies include managing your blood sugar levels and taking good care of your mouth.

You can start at home by brushing your teeth regularly. The American Dental Association recommends:

- Brush teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste.
- Brush for 2 minutes.
- Get a new toothbrush or brush head every three to four months (or sooner if the bristles are worn out).
- Remove plaque between your teeth by flossing every day.





More tips for protecting oral health:

Eat healthy foods and limit sugary drinks and snacks. Bacteria feed on sugar and this leads to the production of acid which harms the mouth.

If you smoke, consider a "quit plan." Smoking increases your risk of gum disease and can worsen your diabetes, too.

In addition to caring for your teeth at home, do not skip your dental checkups. It is best to see the dentist at least two times per year. According to the newest Standards of Care from the American Diabetes Association, the treatment of dental issues can lower A1C levels by 0.4%!

Be sure to advise your dentist that you have diabetes. Also, if you notice that your gums are red, swollen or bleed easily, it may be time to make an appointment with your dentist.

Improving dental health can improve your A1C levels AND a better A1C level can result in better dental health as well. Let's keep on smiling!

How to Support Friends and Family with Diabetes



Submitted by: Janie Jacoby MS, RDN, LDN, CDCES

It can be hard to know how to help a friend or family member with diabetes. You may not know where to start. At times it can be a source of stress or conflict when you do not see eye-to-eye about what to do. Try out these ideas to help you better support your loved ones.

Learn about diabetes.

Check out reliable sources like the American Diabetes Association to learn more about the disease. There are lots of myths about diabetes – for example, it is a myth that people with diabetes should not eat carbs or sugar. Learn some common myths so that you can avoid them.

Listen.

Ask how things are going with their diabetes and what questions or worries they have. Then, listen to the answer without judgement. It can be helpful just to talk through things and to know that someone understands. In many cases, simply listening is more helpful than giving advice.

Avoid blame and judgement.

There is a lot of blame and shame around diabetes. Keep in mind that it is not anyone's fault that they have diabetes. Many people believe that if someone just ate better or lost weight, they wouldn't have diabetes or blood sugar problems. However, diabetes is a lot more complicated than that. Lots of things affect blood sugar. Diabetes can be hard to manage. Blame and judgement `just make it even harder.

Provide encouragement.

Pay attention to the good things they are doing to manage their diabetes instead of focusing on what they could be doing better. Celebrate the small steps of progress along the way. Managing diabetes is hard work, so let them know that you see it! Each person has strengths and it can be helpful to remind someone of their strengths and how they have overcome challenges in the past.

Avoid giving advice unless asked.

Advice is most helpful when the person asks for it, rather than offering it unsolicited. Ask if they would like your input, or if they just want someone to listen. If they do invite your input, remember that there is not just one way to manage diabetes. For example, you might advise someone to stop drinking all pop. However, some people might prefer to drink zero-sugar pop, or just have a small amount of pop, instead of stopping it completely. Or they might be focused on something else altogether. There are many approaches to help keep blood sugar levels in a safe range.

Offer to help.

Ask if they would like help. If they do, ask what you can do to support them. That could be help with meals, doing physical activity together, help with remembering medications, going along to doctor's appointments, or doing something fun together to have a break.

Know what to do in an emergency.

Learn the symptoms of highs and lows and how to respond to them. Severe low blood sugar is a risk mostly for people who are on certain medications, like insulin. If someone is at risk of having a severe low blood sugar, it is important to know what to do if they become confused or pass out.

Care for yourself as well.

It can be hard to see a loved one struggling with their health. Being in a caregiving role can also be hard. Seeking support and trying to still care for your own physical and mental health is also important.

Diabetes can have lots of ups and downs, and having support can make it easier to get through the challenges. Everyone's diabetes is different, and there is not just one "right" way to manage it. But by listening, encouraging, and helping when asked, you can help support your loved ones as best as possible.



Cider Glazed Pork Tenderloin

Taste of Home Editorial Team
Recipe by: Susan Stetzel

Total Time: 30 minutes

Servings: 4 (3 ounces pork with 1 Tablespoon glaze)

Ingredients

1 pork tenderloin (1 pound)

¼ tsp. salt

½ tsp. pepper

1 Tbsp. olive oil

¾ cup apple cider or apple juice

¼ cup maple syrup

2 Tbsp. cider vinegar

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Cut tenderloin in half to fit skillet; sprinkle with salt and ¼ tsp. pepper. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; brown pork on all sides. Transfer to a 15x10x1-inch pan. Roast until thermometer reads 145°F, 12 to 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, in the same skillet, bring cider, syrup, vinegar, and remaining pepper to a boil, stirring to loosen browned bits from pan. Cook, uncovered, until mixture is reduced to a glaze consistency, about 5 minutes.
3. Remove pork from oven; let stand 5 minutes before slicing. Serve with glaze.

NUTRITION FACTS PER SERVING: 239 calories; 7 g total fat (2 g Saturated fat); 64 mg cholesterol; 200 mg sodium; 19 g total carbohydrates (0 fiber, 17 g sugar); 23 g protein

Source: tasteofhome.com