

## In What Shape Is YOUR Liver?

As many of you who have embraced a natural lifestyle already know, one of the most important things you can do for your health is to keep the detoxification organs working at peak efficiency. By that, I mean the colon, skin, lungs and liver. The proper operation of each of these is critical to continuing good health, but the one which has the most profound and wide ranging effect on the body is the liver.

Simply speaking, ANYTHING that the body ingests, absorbs, breathes, or has injected into it will eventually find its way into the liver. That is because the liver is literally the body's chemical plant, processing a wide range of chemical substances to either return them to the body in usable form or eliminate them through the lower digestive tract. Two equally important functions of the liver are to break down both toxic substances to which the body may be exposed, and the various hormones which the body uses for organ system regulation, after they have performed their functions.

The latter is an especially important function of the liver for adult males and females. In the natural hormone-balancing portion of our practice, I see many adults with hormonal imbalances whose root problem has been a poorly functioning liver. Over time, continued exposure to toxic environmental substances (e.g., industrial chemicals, cigarette smoke, household chemicals, etc.), poor dietary choices, and prescription or over-the-counter drugs can both clog the liver and compromise its detoxification efficiency.

This is an important distinction. Many of you already understand the importance of periodic liver cleanses. However, if your body has been exposed to any of the above toxic influences, cleansing alone may not be enough to restore your liver to peak operating efficiency. The liver not only has to be free from waste material, but its detoxification pathways must also be restored. Usually, a cleanse will not perform the latter function.

Why? Because liver cleanses are just that: protocols which clean the debris out of the liver. However, if toxic damage has occurred, all you may have left is a very clean but poorly functioning liver. In order to function properly, two very important enzyme pathways must be working. The first, known in scientific literature as the P450 cytochrome pathway, breaks fat soluble toxic substances down into a water soluble form so the second pathway can break them down into simple substances and eliminate them from the body.

Obviously, if one or the other of these pathways is not operating properly, toxic substances can be reintroduced into the bloodstream to wreak further damage. In the case of hormones, poorly functioning enzyme pathways can permit hormones slated for elimination to be reconjugated into usable form, contributing to hormonal imbalance.

How do we address this two-pronged problem? Fortunately, natural health professionals have some powerful and effective tools at their disposal to identify a poorly functioning liver and take positive, effective steps to correct the situation.

Several informative assessment techniques can pinpoint a liver in need of help. Applied kinesiology, computerized bioenergetic assessment and hormone saliva assessment are three of the most commonly used and effective tools which point naturopaths in the right direction. Once the assessment has identified the problem, a variety of herbal and nutritional remedies can be applied, based on the client's specific

needs, to expeditiously correct the situation. My experience has been that, provided there has not been extensive chronic damage, a client with a compromised liver will experience a dramatic positive effect in a relatively short time when effective remedies are applied to both clean out and restore the liver. Clients report increased energy, ability to function in ways they have not in many years, and increased immunity to minor illnesses which regularly afflicted them before.

These are but a few of the many benefits which an optimally functioning liver confers on a person's state of health. Is YOUR liver in good shape? If it's not in the shape you'd like it to be, come see us and let us help you get it there.

*Dr. Peter McCarthy, N.D., holds a Doctor of Naturopathy degree from Trinity School of Natural Health in Warsaw, IN. He and his wife, Nancy, a Certified Natural Health Professional and Reiki Master/Teacher, are co-owners of the Isis Life Energy Health Center in Helotes. They specialize in helping people with overlooked and difficult health challenges. They offer a variety of alternative health modalities to include Computerized Bioenergetic Assessment, Natural Hormone Balancing and Support, Massage Therapy (by appointment), Reiki Energy Work/Training, and Jeunique/Pennyrich precision fitted bras for women. They also offer personal health coaching, systemic/digestive enzyme therapy, allergy intervention, stress relief strategies, footbath detoxification, far infrared sauna therapy, and essential oils therapies. New office hours are Tuesday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M., and Saturday from 9 A.M. to 2 P.M. Walk-ins are welcome. They may be reached by phone at (210) 372-0002, and by e-mail at [isislifeenergy@earthlink.net](mailto:isislifeenergy@earthlink.net).*

(Reprinted by permission, Enjoy Whole Health Magazine, 2004)