THE LIVER AND WEIGHT LOSS

Five vital points for the weight conscious!

1) The liver is the major fat burning organ in the body and regulates fat metabolism by a complicated set of biochemical pathways. The liver can also pump excessive fat out of the body through the bile into the small intestines. If the diet is high in fibre, this unwanted fat will be carried out of the body via the bowel actions.

2) If the diet is low in fibre, some of the fats (especially cholesterol) and toxins that have been pumped by the liver into the gut through the bile will re-circulate back to the liver. If this re-circulated fluid is high in fat and/or toxins, this will contribute to excessive weight. A high-fibre diet will reduce the recirculation of fat and toxins from the gut back to the liver. This is vitally important for those with excessive weight, toxicity problems and high cholesterol. The inclusion of plenty of raw fruits and vegetables as well as ground-up raw seeds will increase both soluble and insoluble fibre in the gut, and reduce recirculation of unwanted fat and toxins.
3) If the liver filter is healthy, it allows dietary cholesterol to be shunted into the liver for metabolism or excretion through the bile. A healthy liver filter is essential to properly regulate blood cholesterol levels. Poor liver function may increase your chances of cardiovascular diseases such as atherosclerosis, high blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes. If the liver does not regulate fat metabolism efficiently, weight gain tends to occur around the abdominal area and a protuberant abdomen (pot belly) will develop. This is not good for the waistline! Another sign can be a roll of fat around the upper abdomen. This is often a sign of a fatty liver. It can be almost impossible to lose this abdominal fat until the liver function is improved. Once this is done the liver will start burning fat efficiently again and the weight comes off gradually and without too much effort from you.
4) Many middle-aged people with excess fat in the abdominal area have a "fatty liver". In this condition the liver has stopped burning fat and has turned into a fat storing organ. It becomes enlarged and swollen with greasy deposits of fatty tissue. Those with a fatty liver will not be able to lose weight unless they first improve liver function, with a Liver Cleansing Diet and a good liver tonic. If you have a fatty liver it is vital to be patient, as it can take between 3 and 12 months, depending upon the amount of fat deposited in the liver, to remove the excess fat from the liver. After this accumulated liver fat has been removed, weight loss will occur easily. If you have a very severe case of fatty liver it can take several years to lose all of the excessive weight. However, this is very successful in the long term and provides the best chance of restoring your figure and your health.
5) If you overload the liver with the wrong type of hormone replacement therapy, drugs or toxins, the liver's biochemical pathways will have less energy reserves left over to perform their function of fat metabolism. Thus these things can lead to weight gain. For menopausal women with a weight problem, the best type of hormone replacement therapy is that which bypasses the liver, namely hormone patches, creams or buccal lozenges (troches).

Helpful Foods or Food Components for the Liver

The best vegetables for the liver are carrots and beetroots because they contain antioxidants including beta carotene, other carotenoids and healing flavanoids, which give colour to vegetables. These vegetable antioxidants have a healing and cleansing effect on the liver.

The following foods are also good sources of dietary fibre…

- Wholemeal, granary and softgrain varieties of bread
- Jacket potatoes, new potatoes in their skins and baked potato skins
- Wholegrain breakfast cereals, eg. Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, unsweetened muesli, and porridge oats
- Wholemeal pasta and brown rice
- Beans, lentils and peas
- Fresh and dried fruits – particularly if the skins are eaten
- Vegetables – particularly if the skins are eaten
- Nuts and seeds
- Wholemeal flour