



## The liver function tests

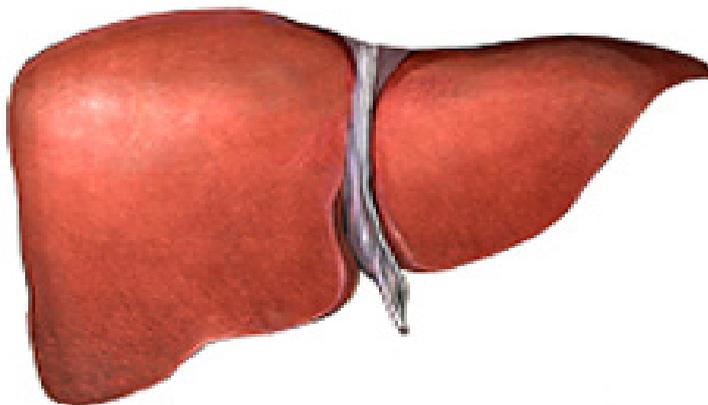
Liver function tests (LFTs) provide information about the condition of a person's liver. They measure chemicals in the blood that are made by the liver. Medical problems affecting the liver can change the level of these chemicals. Abnormal results may show there is a problem.

LFTs are used to:

- Screen for any potential liver disease
- Help diagnose liver disorders
- Monitor the activity and severity of liver disorders

The tests often measure:

- **Alanine transaminase (ALT):** The level of ALT increases when the liver is injured or inflamed.
- **Aspartate aminotransferase (AST):** The level of AST increases when the liver is injured or inflamed. AST can also be released from heart or other muscle damage.
- **Gamma-glutamyl transferase (GGT or gamma GT):** A raised level of this enzyme can be from fat in the liver or alcohol use. This enzyme is needed in the process of clearing alcohol from the body.
- **Alkaline phosphatase (ALP):** High levels of ALP can occur with other liver diseases (not viral hepatitis). It can also be elevated if there are bone problems.
- **Albumin:** Albumin is an important protein made by the liver. Albumin production can fall when the liver is damaged and not working very well.
- **Bilirubin:** A high blood level of bilirubin can occur with various liver and bile duct conditions. It can be high when the flow of bile is blocked or if the liver is damaged and not working very well. A high level of bilirubin can cause jaundice (yellow skin and eyes).
- **Alpha Fetoprotein (AFP):** This test is a marker for liver cancer. It can also be slightly raised due to active hepatitis B and C. AFP is normally elevated in pregnant women.



Normal values and ranges for liver tests are often different for women and men. Consult a doctor or other health care professional for diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions.