



# Concerns: Fatty Liver

Some HIV meds have been linked to fatty liver disease and weight gain.

November 13, 2023 By [Liz Highleyman](#)

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Fatty liver disease is common among people with HIV, and it is associated with increased risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD). Researchers analyzed hepatic steatosis, or liver fat buildup, in the large REPRIEVE trial, which tested a statin drug for HIV-positive people with low to moderate cardiovascular risk. A subset of 687 participants underwent CT scans to assess liver fat. About one in five had hepatic steatosis, and a similar proportion had non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). These conditions were linked to obesity, insulin resistance, abnormal blood fat levels, inflammatory biomarkers and higher CVD risk scores. There was no observed association with viral load, CD4 count or type of antiretroviral treatment, which is reassuring because some HIV meds have been linked to fatty liver disease and weight gain. Another study found that HIV-positive people with NAFLD are more likely to experience cardiovascular events, including heart attacks and strokes. There are currently no approved medications for NAFLD, so management relies on lifestyle changes such as exercise and weight loss.

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