

WebMD[®]

LIVING WITH

PRIMARY BILIARY CHOLANGITIS

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SUMMER 2026



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SCAN ME

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to activate the
QR code.

Dear Reader,

WebMD's mission is to provide trusted, educational, and accurate health information. Our medical experts focus on topics that empower consumers to be active participants not only in their own health care, but also in the lifestyle and health decisions of their family and friends.

We create and distribute condition guides for doctors' offices to help you prepare for your visit, to have a productive dialogue with your physician, and as a take-home companion.

This guide's topic is **Primary Biliary Cholangitis** with content including:

- How to live well with PBC
- Ways to incorporate a healthy lifestyle
- Questions to ask your doctor

This resource can be a powerful tool to help you be your own best health advocate.

We hope that you will find this condition guide to be informative and useful. Please share your thoughts in a short survey accessed through the QR code below.

Thank you.



Sincerely,

Laura J. Downey
Editorial Director
LDowney@webmd.net

To the Office Manager: For any additional copies or needs, email Vanessa Cognard, publisher, WebMD Point of Care, at vcognard@webmd.net.



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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
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For adults with primary biliary cholangitis (PBC)

Let **LIVDELZI**
take on your PBC
while you take in the moment

#1 PRESCRIBED
PBC TREATMENT
for people adding
a second therapy

Source: IQVIA® LAAD, 10/2024 through 09/2025.*

What is LIVDELZI?

LIVDELZI is a prescription medicine used to treat primary biliary cholangitis (PBC) in combination with ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA) in adults who have not responded well to UDCA, or used alone in patients unable to tolerate UDCA.

LIVDELZI is not recommended for use in people who have advanced liver disease (decompensated cirrhosis). Symptoms of advanced liver disease may include confusion; having fluid in the stomach area (abdomen); black, tarry, or bloody stools; coughing up or vomiting blood; or having vomit that looks like "coffee grounds."

It is not known if taking LIVDELZI will improve your chance of survival or prevent liver decompensation.

It is not known if LIVDELZI is safe and effective in children.

Jennifer
Real LIVDELZI patient

People featured are
compensated by Gilead.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

What are the possible side effects of LIVDELZI?

LIVDELZI can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Bone fractures.** Taking LIVDELZI may increase your risk of bone fractures. Tell your healthcare provider about any bone fractures, or if you develop pain, or have changes in your ability to move around.

Please see Important Safety Information continued on the next page and Important Facts about LIVDELZI on the back page of this insert.

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Ask your healthcare provider if LIVDELZI is right for you.



FOR ADULTS WITH PRIMARY BILIARY CHOLANGITIS (PBC)

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\$0
CO-PAY*

You could pay as low as a
\$0 co-pay*
with the **LIVDELZI**
Co-pay Savings Program



If you have commercial insurance, the LIVDELZI Co-pay Savings Program* may help you save on your prescribed Gilead medication.

If you are not eligible for the LIVDELZI Co-pay Savings Program, you can call Support Path® at the number below to learn about other financial support resources and information.

For more information, or to ask about the **LIVDELZI Co-pay Savings Program**, you can connect live with a Support Path program specialist at **1-855-7-MYPATH** (1-855-769-7284) Monday through Friday, 9AM to 8PM ET.



Explore the Co-pay Savings Program

*Co-pay Savings Program is available for commercially insured eligible patients only. Additional restrictions apply. Subject to change; for full terms and conditions, visit www.mysupportpath.com/co-pay. This is not health insurance. Only accepted at participating pharmacies.

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (continued)

What are the possible side effects of LIVDELZI? (continued)

LIVDELZI can cause serious side effects, including: (continued)

- **Changes in liver tests.** Increased liver enzymes in the blood have happened when taking more LIVDELZI than prescribed. Your healthcare provider will do tests to check your liver before you start and during treatment with LIVDELZI.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms of worsening liver problems during treatment with LIVDELZI:

- swelling of your stomach area (abdomen) from a build-up of fluid
- yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes
- pain on the right side of your stomach (abdomen)
- black, tarry, or bloody stools
- coughing up or vomiting blood, or your vomit looks like "coffee grounds"
- mental changes such as confusion, being sleepier than usual or harder to wake up, slurred speech, mood swings, or changes in personality

The most common side effects of LIVDELZI include headache, stomach (abdominal) pain, nausea, abdominal swelling (distension), and dizziness.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of LIVDELZI.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking LIVDELZI?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have advanced liver disease.
- think you may have a blockage of the bile ducts in your liver (biliary obstruction).
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if LIVDELZI will harm your unborn baby.

– **Pregnancy safety study.** If you become pregnant while taking LIVDELZI, tell your healthcare provider right away. There is a pregnancy safety study for women who take LIVDELZI during pregnancy. Talk to your healthcare provider about providing information to the LIVDELZI pregnancy safety study. The purpose of this pregnancy safety study is to capture information about your health and your baby's health. You or your healthcare provider can report your pregnancy by calling 1-800-445-3235.

- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if LIVDELZI passes into your breast milk. Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby if you take LIVDELZI.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Certain other medicines may affect the way LIVDELZI works.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Important Facts about LIVDELZI on next page.



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ABOUT LIVDELZI

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It is not known if LIVDELZI is safe and effective in children.

BEFORE TAKING LIVDELZI

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Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Certain other medicines may affect the way LIVDELZI works.

IMPORTANT FACTS

This is only a brief summary of important information about LIVDELZI and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and your treatment.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LIVDELZI

LIVDELZI can cause serious side effects, including:

- Bone fractures. Taking LIVDELZI may increase your risk of bone fractures. Tell your healthcare provider about any bone fractures, or if you develop pain, or have changes in your ability to move around.
- Changes in liver tests. Increased liver enzymes in the blood have happened when taking more LIVDELZI than prescribed. Your healthcare provider will do tests to check your liver before you start and during treatment with LIVDELZI.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms of worsening liver problems during treatment with LIVDELZI:

- swelling of your stomach area (abdomen) from a build-up of fluid
- yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes
- pain on the right side of your stomach (abdomen)
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The most common side effects of LIVDELZI include: headache, stomach (abdominal) pain, nausea, abdominal swelling (distension), and dizziness.

Tell your healthcare provider if you have any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of LIVDELZI.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

HOW TO TAKE LIVDELZI

Take LIVDELZI by mouth 1 time each day with or without food.

GET MORE INFORMATION

- This is only a brief summary of important information about LIVDELZI. Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist to learn more.
- Go to LIVDELZI.com, or call 1-800-GILEAD-5.



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PBC AND YOUR BODY

This autoimmune condition may start its course through your liver long before you see the signs. Learn what happens.

By Sonya Collins

Reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD,
WebMD Chief Physician Editor, Medical Affairs

P primary biliary cholangitis (PBC) can work quietly for years, damaging the delicate network of bile ducts inside the liver long before you notice that anything is wrong.

“Before you show symptoms, the body’s own immune system is attacking the bile ducts,” says David W. Victor III, MD, a hepatologist at Houston Methodist in Texas.

As those ducts become inflamed, bile—fluid the liver makes to help digest fats and carry away toxins—begins to back up, setting off a cascade of injuries that may eventually harden the liver.

PBC AT A GLANCE

What: An autoimmune disease that damages liver bile ducts

Who: Mostly women, ages 30 to 60, but no one is immune

Symptoms: Fatigue, itching, dry eyes, dry mouth

Prognosis: Good, with treatment

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM ATTACKS

In a healthy liver, bile ducts serve as passageways for bile to travel from the liver to the digestive system. With PBC, the immune system mistakes these ducts for an outsider—a germ or other illness—to be fought off. It then creates antibodies that it hurls at these ducts, causing inflammation.

“The ducts get blocked and eventually destroyed, and bile gets trapped in the liver,” says Nancy Yang, MD, a gastroenterologist and hepatologist at Duke Health in Durham, NC.

With an immune system that’s always in overdrive, you feel worn out. That’s one of PBC’s key symptoms: profound fatigue.

“Any autoimmune process can be energy draining,” Yang says. The fact that this process is an offensive on the liver makes it worse. “The liver is an energy source,” Yang explains. The more damage this organ incurs, the more lethargic you feel.





BILE BUILDS UP

As bile builds up in your liver and your bloodstream, PBC's hallmark itching begins. "Chemicals in the bile enter the bloodstream, get into the skin, and make the nerves more sensitive," Yang says. This, she explains, leads to the itching.

Because bile helps the body process fat, cholesterol, and nutrients, when its flow is impaired, cholesterol starts to rise, and certain vitamins and nutrients aren't absorbed. "We start to see thin bones and vitamin D deficiency," Victor says.

ONGOING LIVER DAMAGE

As the immune system continues its assault on the liver, the liver lays down tough scar tissue to protect itself, a process called fibrosis. Without treatment, as thick scar tissue overtakes soft healthy tissue, the liver stiffens over time, a condition called cirrhosis.

WHAT DOES BILE DO?

When bile acid can't flow through the liver, it can't do these important jobs.

- + Break down fats in the food you eat
- + Help your body absorb nutrients for energy and ongoing health
- + Flush waste products out of the body

"Patients who develop cirrhosis from PBC have a risk of liver and bile duct cancers," Victor says. "We recommend screening for these once they reach cirrhosis, but we hope to meet them before that happens."

Once the liver has reached cirrhosis, it can no longer perform its essential tasks that are necessary to keep the body running. At this point, transplant may be the only option.

Fortunately, Yang says, "The progress of PBC is on the slower side and we can slow it further with various medications."

LIVING WELL WITH PBC

Here's what helps when itching and fatigue persist

By Sonya Collins

Reviewed by Neha Pathak, MD, WebMD Chief Physician Editor

Getting a diagnosis of primary biliary cholangitis (PBC) can feel overwhelming. Medications can slow the disease and help protect your liver. But even when they work, some symptoms may persist.

“Most of the time patients have profound fatigue and itching,” says Pratima Sharma, MBBS, a transplant hepatologist and gastroenterologist at Michigan Medicine in Ann Arbor. “Itching may abate with treatment. But fatigue sometimes remains despite being on therapy.”

Understanding why these symptoms happen—and how doctors manage them—can help you feel more prepared to handle them.

SCRATCHING THAT ITCH

The itching that comes along with PBC is different from the kind caused by dry skin or allergies. When bile isn't flowing properly through the liver, substances that build up in the body can trigger itching.

Newer targeted medications for PBC may help. For people who don't get relief from these medications, or for people not on these particular treatments, doctors will take other steps to get the itching under control.

First, the doctor may check your thyroid. About 1 in 4 people with PBC also have hypothyroidism. “Patients with hypothyroidism have very dry skin, which can make itching worse,” Sharma says.

Next, they might try you on medications called bile acid binders. There are also medications for other conditions, such as certain antibiotics, antihistamines, antidepressants, and a drug used for substance use disorder, that can have the collateral benefit of relieving PBC-related itching.

DIY strategies may help, too, like moisturizing lotions and avoiding very hot showers.





WHEN TO TELL YOUR DOCTOR

Talk to the doc if you have ...

- 🌀 Itching that keeps you awake
- 🌀 Fatigue that interferes with daily life
- 🌀 New symptoms such as severe dryness of the eyes or mouth
- 🌀 Symptoms of thyroid problems (cold intolerance, hair loss, weight changes)

STAYING AHEAD OF FATIGUE

Fatigue is often the most frustrating symptom of PBC—and the hardest to treat. It's not completely understood why PBC can cause debilitating fatigue, but fatigue is a common symptom of many autoimmune conditions. Unfortunately, medications that help with fatigue from other causes don't seem to help people with PBC.

If you have severe fatigue, "It's important to make sure we're not missing something else that may be causing it," says Allyce N. Caines, MD, a gastroenterologist who treats patients with liver disease at Henry Ford Health in Detroit. Your doctor might check for anemia, thyroid disease, sleep apnea, and depression.

"Once those are all controlled or excluded, we help them with coping strategies," Caines says.

These might include:

- Regular exercise
- Mindfulness and yoga
- Planning activities and breaks around your energy levels

These strategies won't eliminate fatigue, but they can make it easier to live well with it.

FIND STRENGTH IN SUPPORT

You don't have to power through these symptoms alone. Work closely with your doctor, speak up about symptoms, and connect with support groups if you find them helpful.

"Your symptoms are valid, so voice them to your doctor," Caines says. "Don't just suffer. Your doctor wants to work with you."

With the right care—and the right support—you can continue to lead a full, active life.

KATHRIN ZIEGLER/VIA GETTY IMAGES

LIFESTYLE CHANGES THAT CAN HELP

Decisions you make each day make a difference

By Kendall K. Morgan

Reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD, WebMD Chief Physician Editor, Medical Affairs

When you have primary biliary cholangitis (PBC), treatment can help protect your liver. But many other decisions you make each day also can slow progressive damage to your liver over time and make a real difference for your health.

“A healthy lifestyle, including a balanced diet and regular exercise, is crucial to the comprehensive care of PBC,” says Dian Chiang, MD, a hepatologist at Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

VITAMIN WATCH

Your PBC comes with more risk for fat-soluble vitamin deficiencies. Ask your doctor if you should get tested to see if you have one. Common deficiencies include:

- + Vitamin A
- + Vitamin D
- + Vitamin E
- + Vitamin K

Your PBC also comes with a high risk for osteoporosis or weakening bones. Ask about a bone scan and lifestyle changes to keep your bones strong.



WHOLESOME DIET

While a healthy diet is good for anyone, it's especially important when you have liver disease. Your liver makes bile to break down fats. By limiting high-fat foods, you can ease the demands on your liver. While you'll have many dietary options, a Mediterranean-inspired diet including plenty of plant-based foods works well for many people, Chiang says.

It's best to avoid saturated fats, which are solid at room temperature. Limit salty and heavily or

TOM WERNER/VIA GETTY IMAGES



YOUR PBC GROCERY LIST

Experts recommend a Mediterranean diet when you have PBC. Along with plenty of fruits and veggies, your shopping list may include:

- + Beans and lentils
- + Nuts
- + Whole-wheat bread
- + Whole grains, such as brown rice
- + Fish
- + Lean meats
- + Olive oil

ultra-processed foods with lots of unfamiliar ingredients in favor of whole foods. Ultra-processed foods include sodas, packaged snacks, candy, hot dogs, and instant soups. Fructose, often found in high-fructose corn syrup, is also best avoided, says Meena B. Bansal, MD, a gastroenterologist at Mount Sinai's Institute for Liver Medicine in New York City. Chiang further recommends avoiding alcohol and quitting smoking.

MOVE MORE

Bansal says a healthy lifestyle including plenty of exercise is “foundational to your [PBC] treatment regimen.” Aim for 150 minutes per week of moderate- to high-intensity aerobic exercise and strength or resistance training two to three times per week in sessions of about 20 to 30 minutes each.

“The strength/resistance training is particularly helpful as we age and lose muscle mass,” Bansal says. “Low muscle mass is associated with poor liver

outcomes in those with advanced fibrosis/cirrhosis.”

ASK FOR GUIDANCE

Remember that you don't have to do this alone. If you're struggling to get started or unsure whether you're meeting your nutritional needs, talk to your care team about it. It's never a good idea to make big changes to your habits or to eliminate entire food groups from your diet without a doctor's advice. When in doubt, ask for a referral to a registered dietitian, physical therapist, or other professionals who have experience with chronic liver diseases. It's OK to start smaller and work your way up. Healthy foods and exercise will have benefits even if you can't see them at first. Don't let yourself get discouraged and give up.

“Keep moving!” Bansal says. “Steps matter. Even in the absence of weight loss, being active is associated with improved outcomes.”

BE YOUR BEST ADVOCATE

Get informed and share your story so others will understand

By Kendall K. Morgan

Reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD,
WebMD Chief Physician Editor, Medical Affairs

Advocating for yourself is an important way to get your health care needs met. It means giving voice to your needs, wishes, questions, and concerns, enabling you to serve as an active member of your care team. While self-advocacy is always key, it can be especially critical when you have a condition such as primary biliary cholangitis (PBC). You'll need to advocate for yourself not only with your liver care team but with all your care providers.

"Anyone who has a rare disease like PBC needs to learn to advocate for themselves because every health care provider they encounter will not know about PBC or be updated on the latest treatments available," says Carol Roberts, president of the Rochester, New York-based PBCers Organization, an online and in-person support group for people with PBC. "It is important that they all be aware of your diagnosis so when you are being treated for any other health issues your liver disease is considered, and nothing is done contrary to your liver. As an educated patient you should speak up and ask questions, be a part of your own care plan."

GET INFORMED

Roberts says the first step to becoming your own best advocate is educating yourself on your disease. She advises learning all you can about symptoms and changes you should watch out for. Consider joining a support group to learn from others who've been there. Read up or watch webinars that explain PBC and its treatment in detail.



"Being well informed allows you to understand and discuss your treatment plan with your treating physician," Roberts says.

MANAGING YOUR SYMPTOMS

Monika Sarkar, MD, a liver specialist at UCSF Health in San Francisco, notes the importance of pushing for treatment options that can help not only with your liver but also with the "extrahepatic manifestations of PBC." About 3 in 4 people with PBC will have autoimmune-related problems and symptoms outside the liver. Symptoms of PBC include fatigue, itchy skin, dry eyes, joint pain, and more.

"Sometimes people may be given lifestyle recommendations like lowering the temperature



of the shower or using creams not lotions without providers offering more aggressive treatment to deal with itching,” Sarkar says. “It can be debilitating.”

She says it’s important to ask about all your treatment options and how they can help with itching or any other troubling symptoms you have, to ensure you’ll have the best quality of life possible despite your PBC diagnosis.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Your role as a self-advocate need not be limited to health care settings, according to Roberts.

“Many patients have said they don’t feel people understand how their PBC affects them,” Roberts says. “Advocating for yourself includes making sure you’re sharing your story so others can learn about PBC. Throughout your journey, you will need other’s help and understanding.”

ASK AWAY

When you have PBC, it’s important to ask questions. Here are a few to get you started:

-  How much liver damage do I have?
-  What treatment do you recommend, and will it slow the damage?
-  What else can I do to protect my liver?
-  Can PBC treatment help my symptoms, including the itch?

STATS & FACTS

Reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD,
WebMD Chief Physician Editor,
Medical Affairs

9x

Rate at which women
are more likely to develop
primary biliary cholangitis (PBC)
than men.



58%

Amount of people with PBC
who experience itching.

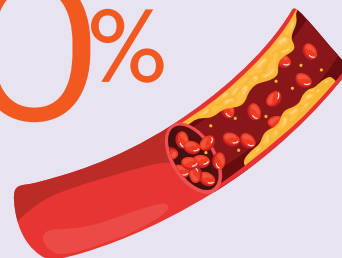
ABOUT 100x

How likely you are to develop PBC when
close family members like parents or siblings
have the disease.



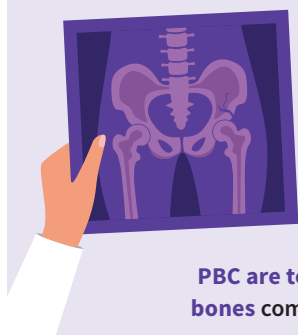
UP TO 80%

Amount of
people with PBC
who have high
cholesterol levels.



1.6x

How much more likely people with
PBC are to have fractures from weak or fragile
bones compared with those without the disease.



15 to 20

Average number of years it takes
for PBC to progress to its advanced
or terminal stage.

ABOUT 54%

Amount of people with PBC who
were treated by a specialist
(such as a gastroenterologist or a
hepatologist), based on a U.S. study
with more than 36,000 adults.



SOURCES: American Liver Foundation, Mayo Clinic, Medscape, *Hepatology Communications*, Cleveland Clinic, PBC Foundation
This content was created using several editorial tools, including AI, as part of the process. Human editors reviewed this content before publication.