



Autoimmune Hepatitis Association

What is autoimmune hepatitis?

You have many important organs in your body. Your heart pumps blood so your organs can work. Your lungs help you breathe. Did you know you have other important organs? Your liver is another important organ that helps your body in many ways. First, let's find where your liver is in your body. Put a hand at the bottom of your ribs on your right side. Your liver is there under your ribs. Your ribs, those bones you feel, help protect your liver like a helmet or goggles.

Your liver is busy and important because it has a lot of jobs. It makes the juice that helps your stomach digest your food. It is called bile. Your liver also helps your body make muscle; it helps keep your blood free of germs; it helps you stop bleeding if you get a cut; and it helps your body use medicine if you have taken some to feel better.

A healthy liver helps your body fight germs from viruses and bacteria with your immune system. When someone has autoimmune hepatitis, their immune system attacks the liver by mistake. It accidentally thinks the liver is a germ. OOPS! It doesn't mean to do it, it just happens. It is no one's fault. No one can help it. Some people call autoimmune hepatitis "AIH" because it is shorter and easier to say.

Whether you have AIH or not, it is important to keep your liver healthy. You can help keep your liver healthy by eating fruits and vegetables and moving your body for fun. Some examples of being active are riding your bike, swimming, or playing tag. Once your doctor says that your body has AIH, you have it for your whole life. That's why it is important to keep your liver and all of your important organs healthy.

This social story was produced by the Autoimmune Hepatitis Association. For more information about AIH, visit www.aihep.org.



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