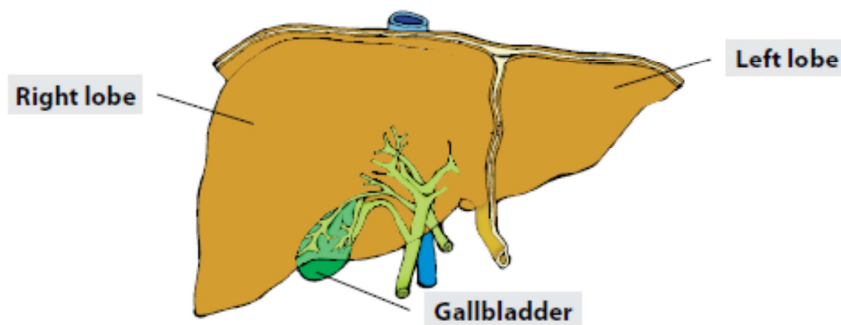


# Liver



The liver is the largest solid organ in your body. It is situated inside your abdomen under the ribcage. Your liver has many important jobs to do in your body.

One of the main jobs that your liver does is take out any toxins in your blood and clean it. It also produces bile - a digestive liquid that absorbs fat. It is a thick, yellow-green substance which is stored in the gall bladder until your body needs it to digest fats.

Your liver also helps the body use carbohydrates. The body breaks down carbohydrates into a sugar called glucose. We use this glucose for energy. The liver releases this glucose into our bloodstream.

Your liver helps to produce cholesterol. Although we may think cholesterol is bad for us, we do need some of it as it helps to thicken our blood which stops us bleeding when we cut ourselves. Your liver also helps break down medicines like painkillers and allows them to work quickly.

Amazingly your liver consists of about 96% of water, it can also rebuild itself to its full size as long as 25% or more of it is healthy.

To look after your liver you should eat a healthy diet, exercise, drink plenty of water and keep away from poisons and harmful stuff. Drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes can cause serious damage to the liver.

People that suffer from liver problems can sometimes have yellow-ish skin. Their eyes can also turn a shade of yellow. People who are looking 'yellow' should see a doctor straight away as they can help. Our liver is very important to us so we should stay healthy to protect it.