

Primary biliary  
cholangitis

# explained

(PBC for short)

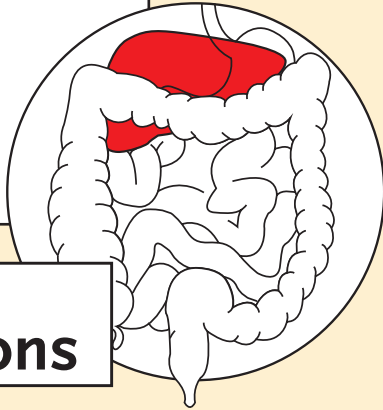


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# Primary biliary cholangitis (PBC for short)

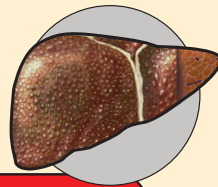
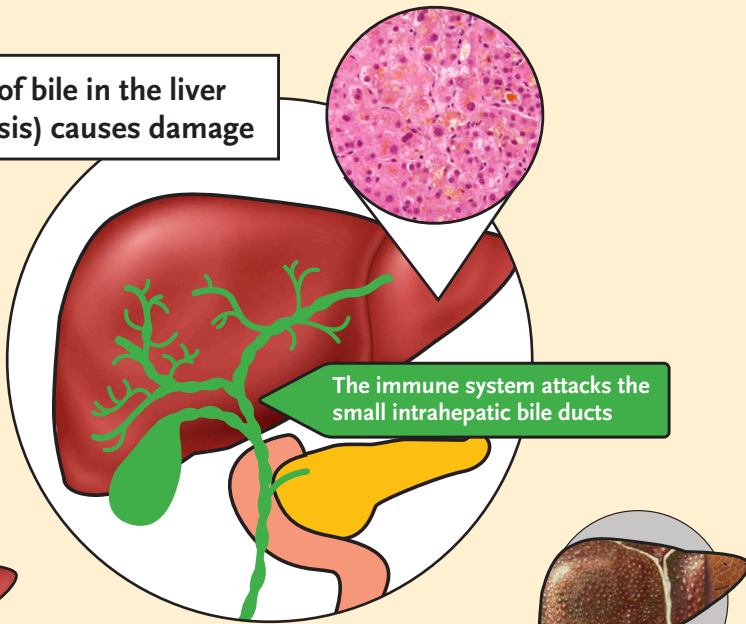
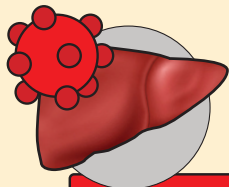
An autoimmune condition that affects the liver



The liver has over **500 functions**

Build-up of bile in the liver (cholestasis) causes damage

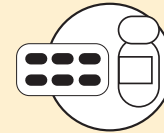
The immune system attacks the small intrahepatic bile ducts



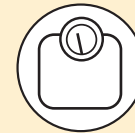
Your treatment has two main goals:

1

Treating your condition



Take UDCA everyday



Know how much you weigh



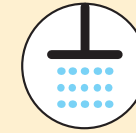
Know your LFT results



Use the PBC Foundation app

2

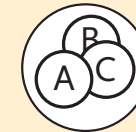
Managing your symptoms



Follow advice to relieve itching



Keep active



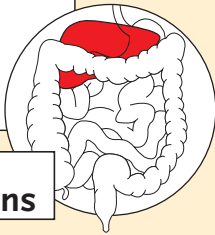
Take vitamins



Talk things through

## Primary biliary cholangitis (PBC for short)

An autoimmune condition that affects the liver

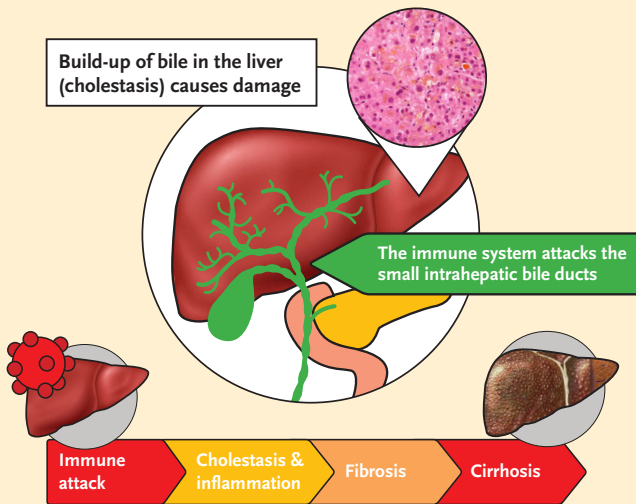


The liver has over **500 functions**

- The liver is one of the largest organs in the body, located just under your rib cage on the right-hand side<sup>1</sup>
- Like a chemical processing factory, the liver performs over 500 functions including making proteins, removing toxins from your blood and secreting bile<sup>1,2</sup>

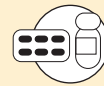
Build-up of bile in the liver (cholestasis) causes damage

The immune system attacks the small intrahepatic bile ducts



- Bile is a digestive juice that flows from your liver and gallbladder into your gut to help you digest fats<sup>3</sup>
- In PBC, the immune system attacks the bile ducts inside the liver, causing inflammation called cholangitis<sup>4</sup>
- Damage to these bile ducts stops bile from flowing normally out of the liver (cholestasis)<sup>4,5</sup>
- Over time, the build-up of bile in the liver can lead to fibrosis, then cirrhosis<sup>4,5</sup>

## Your treatment has two main goals:



Take UDCA everyday



Know how much you weigh



Know your LFT results



Use the PBC Foundation app



Follow advice to relieve itching



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Take vitamins



Talk things through

1

### Treating your condition

- Ursodeoxycholic acid (or UDCA) is the first-line treatment to help slow liver damage<sup>5</sup>
- Most people with PBC take UDCA for life – we'll assess how well you respond to it after you've taken it for a full year<sup>5</sup>
- Your dose of UDCA is personalised to your weight (13-15 mg per kilo), so keeping track of your weight helps make sure you're on the dose that's right for you<sup>4,6</sup>
- Regular blood tests called liver function tests (or LFTs) can tell us useful information about how you're doing<sup>7</sup>
- You can use the PBC Foundation app to keep track of your test results over time

2

### Managing your symptoms

- If you experience itchiness (pruritus), targeted medicines, cool showers and moisturisers can provide some relief<sup>5,8</sup>
- Weight-bearing exercise like walking can help keep your bones strong and prevent osteoporosis<sup>4</sup>
- People with PBC may have trouble absorbing fats, so taking supplements can help make sure you don't miss out on fat-soluble vitamins<sup>4,5</sup>
- If you find yourself struggling with fatigue, you're not alone – try connecting with other people with PBC through an organisation like the PBC Foundation<sup>5</sup>

## References

### Primary biliary cholangitis (PBC)

1. Baggaley A (ed.) Human body. London: Dorling Kindersley Limited; 2001.
2. Johns Hopkins Medicines. Liver: Anatomy and Functions. Johns Hopkins University.
3. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Your Digestive System & How it Works, 2017. Available at: <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/>
4. Hirschfield GM *et al.* Gut 2018; 67(9): 1568-94.
5. EASL. J Hepatol 2017; 67(1): 145-72.
6. Carey EJ *et al.* Lancet 2015; 386(10003): 1565-75.
7. Caldwell H. Br J Primary Care Nurs 2012; 9 (Suppl.): 26-9.
8. Carrion AF *et al.* Clin Liver Dis 2018; 22(3): 517-32.

## Abbreviations

**LFT:** liver function test

**PBC:** primary biliary cholangitis

**UDCA:** ursodeoxycholic acid

## Useful links:

[www.drpharma.co.uk](http://www.drpharma.co.uk)

[www.pbcfoundation.org.uk](http://www.pbcfoundation.org.uk)

Adverse events should be reported. Reporting forms and information in Ireland can be found at [www.hpra.ie](http://www.hpra.ie) and in the UK at [www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard](http://www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard) or search for MHRA Yellow Card in the Google Play or Apple App Store. Adverse events should also be reported to Dr Falk Pharma UK Ltd. at [PV@drpharma.co.uk](mailto:PV@drpharma.co.uk)

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