

The Liver

Body & health

The organ with the most jobs, and what each one means for the rest of the body.

Over 500 known functions; these are the ones with visible consequences.

Processing

Detoxifies drugs and alcohol

Breaks down old red blood cells

Converts ammonia to urea

Metabolises fats, proteins and carbohydrates

Producing

Bile, for digesting fats

Albumin, which holds fluid in vessels

Clotting factors

Cholesterol and some hormones

Storing

Glycogen — fast-release glucose

Vitamins A, D, B12, K

Iron and copper

Tests

ALT and AST — cell damage

Bilirubin — bile handling

Albumin — synthetic function

It is the only internal organ that can regenerate substantially: as little as 25% can regrow to full size.