

Function of the liver and liver failure essay

[Experience](#), [Failure](#)



Liver is a dark reddish-brown organ, which is located in the abdominal cavity. Liver performs very important functions in human organism. To better understand them it is worth noting that liver gets blood from two sources: blood flows from the hepatic artery and from the hepatic portal vein. It consists of two lobes each of which is divided into 8 segments. These segments, in their turn, are also divided into a thousand of lobules. They are connected and form the common hepatic duct. It transports the liver's excretion called bile to the gallbladder and the first part of the small intestine.

One of the most fundamental functions of liver is serving as natural filter which literally cleans the blood from harmful things and toxins. It also regulates chemical levels in the blood. Thanks to its excretion, bile, liver takes part into breaking down fats and preparing them for further digestion and absorption. The blood that leaves the stomach and intestines goes through the liver. This blood is being processed by the liver and it breaks down, balances, and creates nutrients for the body. The liver metabolizes drugs for the body to use them easily. Other vital functions performed by the liver are the following:

Producing of specific kinds of proteins which are needed by the blood plasma;

Producing of specific kinds of proteins and cholesterol to make possible transportation of fats through the body;

Glucose keeping and releasing if needed;

Storing of iron (the liver gets it from the processing of hemoglobin which has iron content);

Regulating blood clotting;

Participation in immune system processes through removing bacteria and thus resisting infections;

Clearance of bilirubin (“Anatomy and Function of the Liver,” n. d.).

When liver failure becomes obvious, a body suffers from harmful substances and lack of bile to clear the blood. It occurs when the majority of the liver cells are damaged and cannot repair, thus leading to inability to perform their functions. Actually, liver failure is life-threatening disease, and the urgent medical help is needed in this case. This phenomenon occurs gradually during long period of time. People often neglect the first symptoms what makes the condition worse and worse. However, sometimes failure may occur in very short period of time and this case is more dangerous.

There are a number of diseases that target liver and cause chronic liver failure. Hepatitis B and C, Cirrhosis, Hemochromatosis, long term alcohol consumption and malnutrition are among them. Ingestion of poisonous wild mushrooms and reactions to herbal medications or some prescriptions can lead to severe damage of the liver that can result in its failure. They often have such first symptoms as nausea, fatigue, diarrhea and loss of appetite. If the liver failure continue to progress and has not received proper treatment, the consequences may be dramatic. The symptoms become more severe: jaundice, mental disorientation, confusion, sleepiness, swollen abdomen, bleeding easily or even coma. It is obvious that such condition requires proper and prompt treatment.

If detected early, the liver failure can be treated and its effects reversed completely. If it is caused by the virus, the treatment will represent

supportive care in order to treat the symptoms and wait till the virus ends its course. Then there is a chance that liver will recover on its own or with special medication. In some other cases liver can be unable to recover with or without medication, which means that liver transplant is required. Now it is quite a common procedure and often successful. Liver failure can be prevented by special vaccination, healthy nutrition, proper hygiene and any possible protection of blood contacts (sex, piercing, manicure etc.) Little attention to details and viruses will have no chance to get into the organism (Johnson, 2012).

References

“Anatomy and Function of the Liver.” (n. d.). Stanford Children’s Health. Retrieved from <http://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=anatomy-and-function-of-the-liver-90-P03069>

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