



LIVER EDUCATION ADVOCATES

Low Impact Movement for Improving Liver Health

Low-impact movement is especially helpful for people living with liver disease because it supports circulation, reduces liver fat, protects muscle, and boosts energy without stressing joints or overtaxing the body. These options span chair-based, water-based, tai chi, and simple at-home exercises so people can choose what feels safe and doable. ***As always, it's important to check with a healthcare professional before starting a new exercise routine, especially with chronic liver conditions.***

1. Chair-Based Exercises

Gentle, joint-friendly movements that build strength and improve circulation while seated.

- Seated Marching — Lift one knee at a time as if marching. This raises heart rate gently and supports hip mobility.
- Chair Leg Extensions — Extend one leg forward, pause, and lower. Helps maintain quadriceps strength, which is essential for balance and daily activities.
- Seated Arm Raises — Lift arms overhead or out to the sides with or without light weights. Strengthens shoulders and upper-body muscles that often weaken with inactivity.
- Seated Torso Twists — Rotate gently side to side to improve core mobility and support spinal health.

- Seated Heel/Toe Taps — Tap heels and toes alternately to improve ankle mobility and circulation.

2. Water-Based Exercises

Water reduces joint load and fatigue while providing natural resistance for strength and endurance.

- Water Walking — Walk forward and backward in waist- to chest-deep water. Supports cardiovascular health and reduces liver fat through steady aerobic movement.
- Aqua Aerobics — Gentle routines using water resistance to strengthen muscles without impact.
- Leg Lifts at the Pool Wall — Hold the wall and lift legs to the side or back. Builds hip strength and stability.
- Water Cycling — Pedal legs in a cycling motion while holding the pool edge or using a flotation belt. Improves circulation and core engagement.
- Arm Sweeps Underwater — Push and pull water with arms to strengthen shoulders, chest, and back.

3. Tai Chi

A slow, flowing practice that supports balance, coordination, and stress reduction—key for liver health.

- Basic Weight Shifts — Gently shift weight from one foot to the other to improve stability and lower-body strength.
- Cloud Hands — Slow, circular arm movements paired with controlled breathing to reduce stress and support mind-body connection.
- Parting the Wild Horse's Mane — A foundational movement that coordinates arms and legs, improving balance and gentle strength.
- Wave Hands Like Clouds — Smooth side-to-side stepping that enhances coordination and joint mobility.
- Standing Meditation — Stillness with soft knees and relaxed breathing to calm the nervous system and support emotional resilience.

4. Home-Friendly Low-Impact Exercises

Simple movements that require no equipment and can be done in small spaces.

- Walking Indoors or Outdoors — One of the most effective ways to reduce liver fat and improve energy. Even 5–10 minutes at a time helps.
- Wall Push-Ups — A gentle strength exercise that builds upper-body and core strength without floor work.
- Mini Squats or Sit-to-Stands — Strengthens legs and glutes, which are essential for metabolic health and mobility.
- Step Touches — Side-to-side steps that raise heart rate gently and improve coordination.
- Gentle Stretching — Improves flexibility, reduces stiffness, and supports circulation.
- Light Resistance Band Work — Bicep curls, rows, and lateral raises with bands help maintain muscle mass, which is especially important in liver disease.