



Cirrhosis

Making a diagnosis of Cirrhosis

Are there clinical clues to suggest cirrhosis?

What to look for on History and Physical exam

Predisposing etiological factors:

- Chronic viral hepatitis
- Excessive alcohol use
- Obesity with metabolic syndrome over many years

Clinical complications

- Variceal bleeding, ascites, hepatic encephalopathy, etc

Physical exam findings

- Hepatomegaly or enlargement of left lobe
- Stigmata of chronic liver disease

[Physical exam findings](#)

What to look for on Labs, including fibrosis testing

Standard Laboratory findings

- Thrombocytopenia
- Abnormal liver function tests (bilirubin, INR, albumin)

[Link to AHS Fatty Liver Pathway.](#)

Fib-4 cut-off ≥ 1.30 = Indeterminate/High Risk. As per the Alberta pathway, refer to a liver specialist.

Point of care fibrosis testing

Simple and available. Well validated in chronic viral hepatitis and NAFLD

[FIB-4 Calculator](#)

Fib-4 (Fibrosis 4 score)

[APRI Calculator](#)

APRI (AST to Platelet Ratio Index)

[NAFLD Calculator](#)

NAFLD (Non alcoholic fatty liver disease) fibrosis score

Ultrasound findings

- Coarse echotexture; left lobe hypertrophy; caudate lobe hypertrophy; nodular contour; features of portal hypertension

[Ultrasound findings](#)

Elastography findings (if available): Choice of test as per local availability

- Vibration controlled transient elastography (VCTE) - i.e. FibroScan
- Shearwave elastography (SWE)
- Acoustic radiation force impulse of the liver elastography (ARFI)
- Magnetic resonance elastography

[See FibroScan quality and fibrosis staging cut-offs](#)

YES

NO

Next steps if the clinical picture IS compatible with cirrhosis

Work up the potential cirrhosis etiology
[See the Work up the etiology page](#)

Assess disease severity
[See the Assess disease severity page](#)

Assess for clinically significant portal hypertension and initiate routine screening to reduce complications
[See the screen for complications page](#)
[Link to Baveno Guidelines](#)

Manage clinical complications
[See the relevant clinical complication pages](#)

Next steps if the clinical picture is NOT obvious for cirrhosis

Perform Non-invasive testing (fibrosis, labs, elastography) if not already completed

Clinical picture compatible with cirrhosis

Clinical picture remains unclear for a diagnosis of cirrhosis

Invasive testing such as a liver biopsy may be needed. Discuss case with liver specialist if they are not already involved.
[Liver Biopsy findings](#)