

Wilson Disease

URL of this page: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/wilsondisease.html>

Also called: Copper storage disease, Hepatolenticular degeneration

Wilson disease is a rare inherited disorder that prevents your body from getting rid of extra copper. You need a small amount of copper from food to stay healthy. Too much copper is poisonous.

Normally, your liver releases extra copper into bile, a digestive fluid. With Wilson disease, the copper builds up in your liver, and it releases the copper directly into your bloodstream. This can cause damage to your brain, kidneys, and eyes.

Wilson disease is present at birth, but symptoms usually start between ages 5 and 35. It first attacks the liver, the central nervous system or both. The most characteristic sign is a rusty brown ring around the cornea of the eye. A physical exam and laboratory tests can diagnose it.

Treatment is with drugs to remove the extra copper from your body. You need to take medicine and follow a low-copper diet for the rest of your life. Don't eat shellfish or liver, as these foods may contain high levels of copper. At the beginning of treatment, you'll also need to avoid chocolate, mushrooms, and nuts. Have your drinking water checked for copper content and don't take multivitamins that contain copper.

With early detection and proper treatment, you can enjoy good health.

NIH: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Start Here

- Wilson Disease [<http://digestive.niddk.nih.gov/ddiseases/pubs/wilson/>] **NIH** (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases)
- Wilson Disease [<http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/wilsons/wilsons.htm>] **NIH** (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke) - Short Summary

Overviews

- Wilson Disease [<http://patients.gi.org/topics/wilson-disease/>] (American College of Gastroenterology)
- Wilson Disease [<http://www.liverfoundation.org/abouttheliver/info/wilson/>] (American Liver Foundation)
- Wilson's Disease [<http://www.mayoclinic.com/print/wilsons-disease/DS00411/DSECTION=all&METHOD=print>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)

Diagnosis/Symptoms

- Copper Test [<http://labtestsonline.org/understanding/analytes/copper/tab/test>] (American Association for Clinical Chemistry)
- How Is Wilson Disease Diagnosed? [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/wilson-disease/wilsondisease-diagnosis.php>] (Wilson's Disease Association)
- Kayser-Fleischer Rings [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/wilson-disease/kayserfleischerrings.php>] (Wilson's Disease Association)

Nutrition

- Diet and Nutrition [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/wilson-disease/wilsondisease-diet.php>] (Wilson's Disease Association)

Disease Management

- Lab Tracker and Copper Calculator [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/wilson-disease-patients/wilsonsdisease-calculator.php>] (Wilson's Disease Association)

Specific Conditions

- Wilson Disease: Frequently Asked Questions [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/wilson-disease/wilsonsdisease-faqs.php>] (Wilson's Disease Association)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Hepatolenticular Degeneration [<http://clinicaltrials.gov/search/open/condition=%22Hepatolenticular+Degeneration%22>] **NIH** (National Institutes of Health)

Genetics

- Genetics Home Reference: Wilson disease [<http://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/wilson-disease>] **NIH** (National Library of Medicine)
- How Is Wilson Disease Inherited? [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/wilson-disease/wilsonsdisease-inheritance.php>] (Wilson's Disease Association)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: From the archives. Hepato-lenticular degeneration. By Stanley Barnes and E... [<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23745190?tool=MedlinePlus>]
- Article: The treatment of Wilson's disease, a rare genetic disorder of... [<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23738435?tool=MedlinePlus>]
- Article: Clinical problem-solving. The essential element. [<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23550673?tool=MedlinePlus>]
- Wilson Disease -- see more articles [[http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=hepatolenticular+degeneration\[majr\]+AND+english\[la\]+AND+humans\[mh\]+AND+\(review\[pt\]+OR+guideline\[pt\]+OR+clinical+trial\[pt\]+OR+patient+education+handout\[pt\]+OR+jsubsetk\[text\]+OR+jsubsetaim\[text\]+OR+jsubsetn\[text\]\)+NOT+\(letter\[pt\]+OR+editorial\[pt\]\)+AND+%22last+2+Years%22\[edat\]&tool=MedlinePlus](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=hepatolenticular+degeneration[majr]+AND+english[la]+AND+humans[mh]+AND+(review[pt]+OR+guideline[pt]+OR+clinical+trial[pt]+OR+patient+education+handout[pt]+OR+jsubsetk[text]+OR+jsubsetaim[text]+OR+jsubsetn[text])+NOT+(letter[pt]+OR+editorial[pt])+AND+%22last+2+Years%22[edat]&tool=MedlinePlus)]

Directories

- Find a Liver Expert [<http://patients.gi.org/find-a-liver-expert/>] (American College of Gastroenterology)

Organizations

- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<http://www2.niddk.nih.gov/>] **NIH**
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke [<http://www.ninds.nih.gov/>] **NIH**
Also available in Spanish [<http://espanol.ninds.nih.gov/>]
- Wilson's Disease Association International [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/>] (Wilson's Disease Association)

Newsletters/Print Publications

- Wilson Disease Association Newsletters [<http://www.wilsonsdisease.org/wilson-disease-patients/wda-newsletters.php>] (Wilson's Disease Association) - PDF

Patient Handouts

- Wilson's disease [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000785.htm>]
Also available in Spanish [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/spanish/ency/article/000785.htm>]

You may also be interested in these related encyclopedia pages:

- 24-hour urine copper test [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003604.htm>]
- Ceruloplasmin [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003662.htm>]

- Wilson's disease [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000785.htm>]

You may also be interested in these related MedlinePlus topics:

- Brain and Nerves [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/brainandnerves.html>]
- Digestive System [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/digestivesystem.html>]
- Genetics/Birth Defects [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/geneticsbirthdefects.html>]
- Metabolic Problems [<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/metabolicproblems.html>]

The primary NIH organization for research on *Wilson Disease* is the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases [<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/>]

Date last updated: 20 May 2013

Topic last reviewed: 9 May 2013