

# Liver Cysts

## What Are Liver Cysts?

Liver cysts are fluid-filled sacs that develop in the liver. They are usually benign (non-cancerous) and often cause no symptoms. Many people have liver cysts without even knowing it, as they are often found by chance during a scan for another condition.

In most cases, liver cysts do not require treatment. However, if they grow large or cause discomfort, treatment options are available. At Birmingham Liver Clinic, we provide expert assessment and personalised treatment plans to help you manage liver cysts effectively.

## What Causes Liver Cysts?

The exact cause of simple liver cysts is not always known, but they may be present from birth or develop over time. Some types of liver cysts are linked to underlying conditions, including:

- **Simple liver cysts** - The most common type, usually harmless and filled with fluid.
- **Polycystic liver disease (PLD)** - A rare inherited condition where multiple cysts develop in the liver.
- **Hydatid cysts** - Caused by a parasitic infection, more common in certain parts of the world.
- **Cystadenomas and cystadenocarcinomas** - Rare types of cysts that may require further investigation or treatment.

## What Are The Symptoms Of Liver Cysts?

Most liver cysts do not cause symptoms and are only found during an ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI for another reason. However, larger cysts may lead to:

- A feeling of fullness or bloating in the upper abdomen
- Pain or discomfort in the upper right side of the abdomen
- Nausea or loss of appetite
- Swelling in the abdomen (if cysts are very large)

If you experience any of these symptoms, it is important to seek medical advice to rule out other liver conditions and determine the best course of action.

## How Are Liver Cysts Diagnosed?

Liver cysts are usually detected during imaging scans such as:

- **Ultrasound scan** – A non-invasive test using sound waves to create an image of the liver.
- **CT scan (Computed Tomography)** – Provides detailed cross-sectional images of the liver.
- **MRI scan (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)** – Offers a clear view of the liver's structure and cysts.

If a cyst appears unusual or is causing symptoms, further tests such as a blood test or a liver biopsy may be required to rule out more serious conditions.

## Do Liver Cysts Need Treatment?

Most liver cysts do not need treatment unless they are large, painful, or causing complications. Treatment options include:

- **Observation** – If the cyst is small and not causing symptoms, regular monitoring may be recommended.
- **Aspiration and sclerotherapy** – A procedure where the cyst is drained and a special solution is injected to prevent it from refilling.
- **Laparoscopic (keyhole) surgery** – If the cyst is large or recurrent, part of the cyst wall can be removed to prevent it from refilling.
- **Open surgery** – In very rare cases, if the cyst is complex or associated with other liver conditions, more extensive surgery may be needed.

## Are Liver Cysts Cancerous?

The vast majority of liver cysts are **benign** and not cancerous. However, in rare cases, complex cysts may need further evaluation to ensure they are not related to a more serious liver condition. Your specialist will discuss any concerns and arrange appropriate tests if needed.

## What Happens After Liver Cyst Treatment?

Recovery depends on the type of treatment. If you have had a drainage procedure or surgery, you may experience mild discomfort for a few days. Most patients recover quickly and can resume normal activities within a short period.

After treatment, your consultant may recommend regular follow-up scans to ensure the cyst does not return.

## When Should You See A Liver Specialist?

You should consider seeing a liver specialist if you:

- Have persistent or worsening abdominal pain
- Experience bloating or discomfort due to a large cyst
- Have a history of polycystic liver disease or other liver conditions
- Have been told you have a liver cyst and want further evaluation or treatment options

## Why Choose Birmingham Liver Clinic?

At **Birmingham Liver Clinic**, we offer expert diagnosis and treatment for liver cysts using the latest techniques. Our team of highly experienced liver specialists provides:

- Fast access to specialist consultations
- Advanced imaging and diagnostic tests
- Minimally invasive treatment options
- Personalised care tailored to your needs

## Contact Us

If you have concerns about a liver cyst or need expert advice, contact **Birmingham Liver Clinic** today to book an appointment. We are here to help you take control of your liver health.