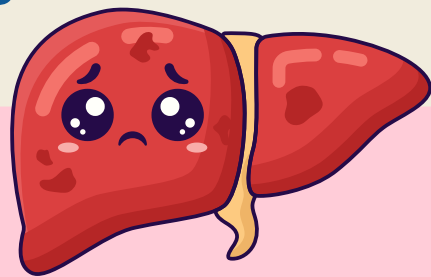


# WILSON DISEASE

A LIVER DISEASE THAT AFFECTS ONE IN EVERY 30,000 CANADIANS

## WILSON DISEASE & EFFECTS



Imagine your body is a house, and copper is like a helpful tool. Normally, your body knows how to use just the right amount of copper and throw away the extra. But with Wilson disease, your body forgets how to get rid of the extra copper. This extra copper starts to pile up, especially in important places like your liver, brain and the cornea of the eye, making them sick. Wilson disease can also affect the nervous system and your mental health. Copper overload damages these organs and if left untreated, Wilson disease can be fatal.

## SYMPTOMS

With Wilson disease, some people may have no symptoms for years. When symptoms develop, they can be difficult to notice. Some symptoms are feeling super tired, your stomach might hurt, or your skin and eyes could turn yellow like a lemon. Sometimes, you might have trouble talking or walking, and you could feel sad or grumpy for no reason. Some individuals can also have an enlarged liver and spleen and liver test abnormalities. Very rarely, Wilson disease may cause the liver to fail. This liver failure may be the first sign of having Wilson disease. Some individuals may require a liver transplant.



## CAUSE



Wilson disease is something you're born with (inherited). It's like getting a special code from both your parents that makes your body hold onto too much copper. The liver will begin to retain copper from birth and it can take years before symptoms start to develop. Did you know that the Canadian Liver Foundation helped fund the discovery of detecting the gene? They did, which is a great medical discovery.

## TREATMENT

There is no cure for Wilson disease but it is treatable. with a doctor prescription of D-penicillamine or high-dosage of Zinc. Individuals can also make dietary changes on top of the medicine to avoid foods rich in copper. Some of these foods are chocolate, liver, mushrooms, nuts, shellfish, dried beans, dried fruit and foods containing whole wheat. It is important that the medicine is taken daily to stay healthy.



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