

Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD)

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Health

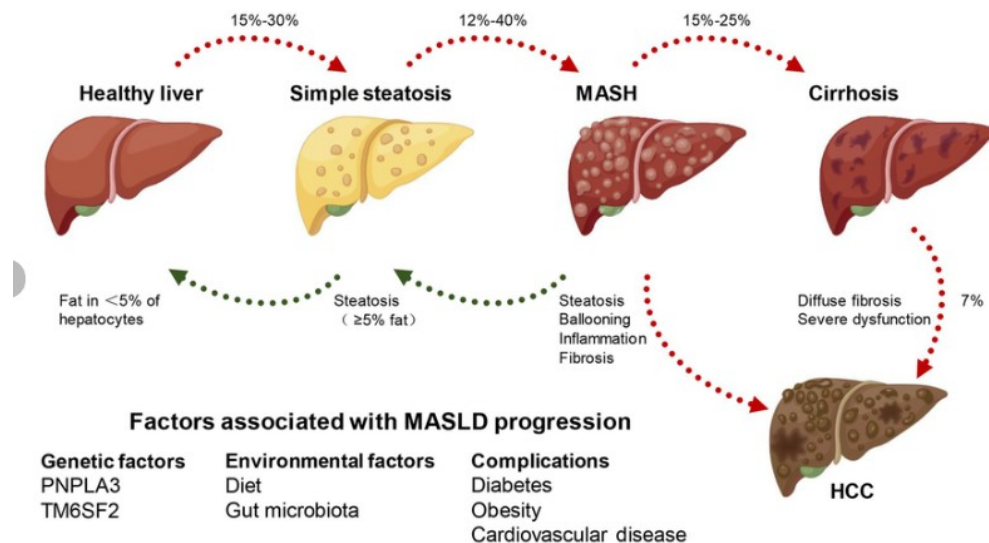
Why in News?

Recently, Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD) has been emerging as a major public health concern in India.

- **About** - MASLD is a **metabolic liver disorder** characterised by excessive fat accumulation in the liver.
- Earlier termed as **Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD)**.
- The new term highlights that the disease is a metabolic one, linked to factors such as obesity, diabetes, and high cholesterol.
- **Symptoms** - It is often a silent disease with no symptoms in the early stages.
- As it progresses, it can cause liver inflammation and long-term damage with the **risk of liver failure and liver cancer**.
- **Causes** - It is caused by **metabolic dysfunction** associated with obesity, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.
- **Vulnerable populations** - Overweight or obese persons, People with Type 2 diabetes, Individuals with high blood pressure, Persons with high cholesterol levels, middle-aged and older adults and physically inactive or sedentary individuals.
- **Progression Stages - Steatosis** - It initially presents as simple steatosis, where fat accumulates in the liver without causing significant inflammation.
- **Steatohepatitis** - The disease can progress to steatohepatitis, a more severe stage characterized by inflammation (MASH, formerly NASH) of the liver cells.
- **Fibrosis** - This inflammation can lead to the formation of scar tissue, a process known as fibrosis.
- **Cirrhosis** - As fibrosis becomes extensive, it can lead to cirrhosis, a late-stage condition where the liver is permanently scarred and unable to

function properly.

- Hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer)- At this point, the risk of liver failure and hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer) becomes extremely high.



- **Diagnosis** - Initial clues come from blood tests and liver function tests.
- Imaging techniques like ultrasound and *FibroScan* help assess liver fat and fibrosis non-invasively.
- **Treatment** - MASLD is a highly manageable disease, primarily through lifestyle changes, especially weight loss and regular physical activity.
- Managing diabetes and high cholesterol is also essential.

References

1. [TH | MASLD](#)
2. [NCIB | MASLD](#)