?7 in 10 people with liver disease in the UK don’t even know they have it

Monday 18 June, 2018

Although over 60,000 adults in the UK have cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, nearly 75% percent don't know it, according to research published in the Lancet[1]. For many, the first indication is following admission to Accident and Emergency when the disease is advanced and chance of survival is very low. This week, 18th to 24th June, is Love Your Liver week, and the British Liver Trust has launched a new version of an online screening tool so that people can find out if they are at risk.

Liver disease is one of the leading causes of premature death in England and is responsible for more than 1 in 10 deaths of people in their 40s.

Liver problems develop silently with no obvious symptoms in the early stages yet the disease is largely preventable through lifestyle changes. The ***Love Your Liver*** awareness campaign, promoted by the British Liver Trust, aims to reach the one in five people in the UK who may have the early stages of liver disease, but are unaware of it.

More than 90% of liver disease is due to three main risk factors: obesity, alcohol and viral hepatitis.

Judi Rhys, Chief Executive, British Liver Trust said, “Helping people understand how to reduce their risk of liver damage is vital to address the increase in deaths from liver disease. Although the liver is remarkably resilient, if left too late damage is often irreversible. I would urge everyone to take our online screener on our website to see if they are at risk.”

The British Liver Trust’s Love Your Liver campaign focuses on three simple steps to Love Your Liver back to health:

- Drink within recommended limits and have three consecutive alcohol-free days every week
- Cut down on sugar, carbohydrates and fat and take more exercise
- Know the risk factors for viral hepatitis and get tested or vaccinated if at risk

Finding out your risk of **liver disease** only takes a few minutes. It could be the most important thing you do today. Take the British Liver Trust’s screener here: https://www.britishlivertrust.org.uk/our-work/love-your-liver/love-liver-health-screener/

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For further information or to arrange an interview please contact:

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Notes to editors

1. The British Liver Trust is the largest UK charity for all adults with liver disease. We tackle the serious and growing public health problem of liver disease. Liver disease is the third leading cause of premature death and more than one in five of us are at risk of developing the condition. We provide up to date information and support and campaign for improved services and care.

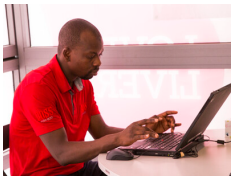
2. The liver is the largest working organ in the body, responsible for over 500 processes including removing toxins and alcohol from the blood, defending the body against infection, aiding digestion, controlling cholesterol and regulating blood sugar levels.

3. British Liver Trust’s Love Your Liver campaign encourages the best possible liver health for all through encouraging prevention, raising awareness of the risk factors and promoting early detection.

www.britishlivertrust.org.uk

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[1] Addressing liver disease in the UK: a blueprint for attaining excellence in health care and reducing premature mortality from lifestyle issues of excess consumption of alcohol,

obesity, and viral hepatitis. The Lancet, 2014

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