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I was only 52 years old and in what I thought was good health other than having an underactive thyroid. I went for my annual physical and my doctor ran blood work and told me my liver test results were abnormal. When she did further investigation, she found I had huge gallstones and I ended up having my gallbladder removed.

After several weeks, there was no change in my bloodwork. My liver tests were still abnormal so my doctor referred me to a specialist. After two tests to examine my bile ducts and a liver biopsy, I was diagnosed with stage one PBC (also known as primary biliary cholangitis).



The specialist told me that PBC is progressive and that I would eventually need a liver transplant. He also told me that there was a medication that could help slow down the disease and suggested that I go on the internet to learn more. The problem was, I didn't own a computer and had never even used one. My daughter helped me with the research but the information she printed out for me scared us both!

21 years later however, I consider myself lucky to still be at barely stage one and almost asymptomatic.

Unfortunately, fatigue often rules my life. Daily naps are almost imperative. Take today for example. I enjoyed eight hours of sleep, ran a couple of errands and was going to do more but I physically couldn't. I had to come straight home and crawl into bed to sleep for 1 ½ hours.

In addition, despite having had a career as a banker and holding several positions on community boards, there are times now that my 'foggy brain' makes me feel stupid.

My advice to others would be to make sure your doctor runs liver tests and to get a copy of the results. Ask questions about anything that is not in the normal range. Because I had a doctor who was diligent, I was diagnosed and was put on medication at a very early stage.

Just because you can't see liver disease doesn't mean it's not there. 1 in 4 Canadians may be affected by liver disease. It could be anyone. It could be you. #toocloseforcomfort Learn more visit www.liver.ca/TooClose4Comfort

To receive liver health tips, liver research updates and to learn more about the work of the Canadian Liver Foundation, [subscribe to our newsletter](#).