

2023 Snapshot: Your Gift in Action



To all our dedicated donors of 2023, thank you for supporting people with liver disease and their families. Together, we can continue to provide immediate guidance and care to Canadians who are affected, and work towards a world free from liver disease. Keep on reading to discover how your support made a difference last year.

Paving the Way for Liver Cancer Breakthroughs

The incidence rate of liver cancer is on the rise, and last year, it was estimated that approximately 4,700 Canadians would face a diagnosis and 3,500 would die from the disease. As liver cancer is often diagnosed at an advanced stage, there is an urgent need to actively support research to unveil more treatment options.

In response to this reality, in October 2023 we, jointly with the Cancer Research Society, announced the recipients of four research grants of \$125,000 each over a two-year period.

Why is investing in liver cancer research so important?

- Liver cancer is a complex disease, and these grants will allow us to expand research and lead to the development of more effective treatments and better outcomes for patients.
- The partnership can help develop innovative new therapies and drugs to target the disease and improve survival rates.
- Research in liver cancer often requires bringing together experts in oncology, immunology, and genetics. Their combined focus on liver cancer research fosters collaboration and innovation across medical fields.
- Liver cancer research can help identify biomarkers, which are clues that can be used to diagnose the disease earlier and begin intervention sooner.



Your ongoing support means our best researchers can create new resources and solutions to help Canadians affected by liver disease live longer, better lives.

Advocating for Liver Health Curricula

As the voice of Canadians who care about liver health, we take a stance on timely liver disease issues and work with all levels of government to create a more liver-healthy society.

In April 2023, we released a petition calling on education ministers to include liver health in school health curricula. This call to action is critical as cases of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) rise, now impacting 25 percent of Canadians, with 1 in 5 of those affected being children.

NAFLD occurs when excess fat is stored in the liver. It is connected to nutrition and lifestyle choices, so it is crucial that we provide young Canadians with the knowledge and support to make healthy choices. ► *Continued on reverse.*



In October 2023, we brought our petition one step further by hosting the Canadian Liver Foundation's first ever lobby day at Queen's Park in Toronto. We met with members of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Members of Provincial Parliament to seek out ideas and support for the inclusion of foundational liver education in Canadian schools.

You are ensuring that liver health has a seat at the table. You are strengthening education and awareness for everyone, but especially the 1 in 4 Canadians who are affected by liver disease.



Try Our Latest Liver-Friendly Recipe! Blueberry Oat Smoothie

This smoothie is like something out of a perfect morning pastry dream – except without the refined sugar. Vivid purple in colour and coming together in minutes, it's a great option for a morning, lunch, or afternoon snack.

Ingredients (serves 1-2)

- 1 cup of frozen wild blueberries
- 1/2 of a frozen banana
- 1/3 cup of rolled oats
- 2 medjool dates, pitted
- 3/4 cup of almond milk
- 1/2 tbsp almond butter
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp of milled flaxseed
- 1 tbsp of hemp seeds

Directions

1. Combine all the ingredients in your blender and start blending on low for 30 seconds, blending for another two minutes on medium-high.
2. If your smoothie is too thick, feel free to add additional liquid such as more almond milk, water, or even black coffee. Pour into a mason jar or glass and enjoy.

Expanding Access to Screening in Your Community

2023 marked the second year of the Liver Beware Project, a community-involved research project that aims to raise public awareness of NAFLD.

The project offers testing to identify NAFLD and liver scarring, or cirrhosis, using a FibroScan. The FibroScan is non-invasive, using ultrasound technology to measure liver stiffness, and it can also determine the approximate amount of fat in the liver. As symptoms related to liver disease often do not present until it is too late, the test increases the potential for early identification and treatment.

Led by Dr. Peter Kwan, Clinical Associate Professor of Gastroenterology at the University of British Columbia, and made possible through exceptional donor support, more than 1,600 British Columbia residents were tested in 2023. Test results will help us determine the prevalence of fatty liver disease in Canada, to better direct treatment, awareness, and education.

Your generosity will help us expand the Liver Beware Project to more reach more Canadians in 2024, helping us to reduce the incidence and impact of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

Notes

- You can replace the rolled oats with gluten free oats. Be careful to read the package's food label to ensure the oats are labelled 'gluten free'.
- Feel free to use oat, cashew, macadamia, or dairy milk in place of the almond milk.
- If you'd like to add some greens to your smoothie, a handful of spinach is a great addition to this recipe. Just note that it will alter the colour of the smoothie to a less vibrant purple.

For more liver-friendly recipes, go to liver.ca/blog.