



## Sclerosing Cholangitis

Sclerosing cholangitis is a chronic liver disease characterized by inflammation and scarring of the bile ducts. Bile ducts are tiny tubes that carry bile, a fluid produced by the liver, to the gallbladder and small intestine. This bile helps in the digestion of fats and the removal of waste products from the body. When the bile ducts become inflamed and scarred, they can narrow or even become blocked. This blockage can cause bile to build up in the liver, leading to further liver damage.

### Primary vs. Secondary

Two main types of sclerosing cholangitis are primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC) and secondary sclerosing cholangitis. PSC is the most common type, and its exact cause is unknown, but it's often associated with other autoimmune disorders, such as inflammatory bowel disease. On the other hand, secondary sclerosing cholangitis usually occurs due to another condition or disease that causes damage to the bile ducts, such as a bile duct stone or tumor or previous surgery on the bile ducts.

### No Early Warning Symptoms

In the early stages of sclerosing cholangitis, you might not experience any symptoms. However, as the disease progresses, symptoms may develop. These can include fatigue, itching, abdominal pain, fever, and jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes).

### Diagnostic Testing

Diagnosing sclerosing cholangitis involves a combination of medical history, physical examination, and tests. Blood tests can check for signs of liver damage and inflammation. Imaging tests, such as an ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI, can show the size and shape of the liver and bile ducts and reveal any areas of blockage or narrowing. In some cases, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) may be used. This involves inserting a thin tube with a camera on the end (an endoscope) into the bile ducts to take pictures.

### Treatment

The treatment for sclerosing cholangitis aims to manage symptoms and prevent complications. Medications can help control symptoms like itching and improve the flow of bile. Sometimes, a procedure to widen the bile ducts (called a dilation) may be needed. A liver transplant may be necessary if the disease is advanced and the liver is severely damaged. Living with sclerosing cholangitis can be challenging, but with the right treatment and management, many people

with the condition can lead a full and active life. Working closely with your healthcare team to manage your condition and maintain your quality of life is important.

In conclusion, sclerosing cholangitis is a serious but manageable condition. Understanding this disease's causes, diagnosis, and treatments is the first step toward managing it effectively.

## **Center For Digestive Health & Nutrition**

725 Cherrington Parkway • Moon Township, PA 15108  
412.262.1000 • [www.gihealth.com](http://www.gihealth.com) • IG: @thedigestivetract

The Center for Digestive Health & Nutrition is a private medical practice comprised of experienced Gastroenterologists, Nurse Practitioners, and staff members dedicated to preventing and treating digestive disorders. Our physicians have been serving the needs of those in Western Pennsylvania and surrounding areas since 1977, having cared for tens of thousands of individuals with digestive problems. Our mission is to deliver high-quality gastroenterology services efficiently and cost-consciously. We realize the very sensitive nature of GI illness and understand the necessity to provide our services in an environment that stresses patient privacy and confidentiality and where patient satisfaction is the goal. Appointments can be conveniently scheduled online via our website above. Learn more about digestive issues on Instagram @thedigestivetract

---

DISCLAIMER: The information on this website is to provide general information. The information on this website does NOT reflect definitive medical advice, and self-diagnoses should not be made based on information obtained online. It is important to consult a physician for a consultation and examination regarding ANY and ALL symptoms or signs as they may signify a serious illness or condition. An accurate diagnosis and treatment plan should only be made by a qualified doctor to exclude a serious condition.