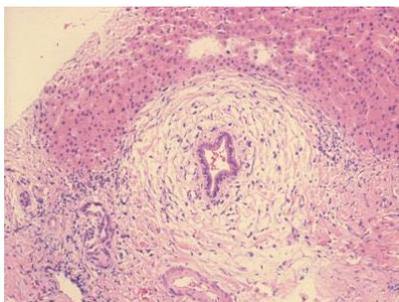


## What is PSC?

**Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC)** is a chronic liver disease involving inflammation and scarring of the bile ducts inside and outside the liver caused by the immune system.

Bile is a yellow liquid formed within the liver. It is stored in the gallbladder until it is transported through the bile ducts into the intestines where it is used for fat digestion and absorption.

Scarring and inflammation of the bile ducts will lead to a decrease in their size. This will prevent bile from leaving the liver and will lead to the damage of the liver cells. Damage to liver cells will eventually lead to cirrhosis.



## Contact Information

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@Autoimmueliver

## Resources and Support Groups

**Canadian Liver Foundation**

[www.liver.ca](http://www.liver.ca)

**PSC Partners Canada**

[pscpartners.org/psc-partners-canada/](http://pscpartners.org/psc-partners-canada/)

## How Can I Help?

**Donate:** Contact Josh Lai at 416-340-5204/ [josh.lai@uhn.ca](mailto:josh.lai@uhn.ca) or visit [tgwhf.ca](http://tgwhf.ca)

**Research:** PSC desperately needs new treatments. Ask your physician how you can take part in research to help improve our treatment of PSC

# Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC)



TORONTO CENTRE FOR  
LIVER DISEASE

## How do I know I have PSC?

Many people with PSC **may not have any symptoms.**

If symptoms are present, they can include:

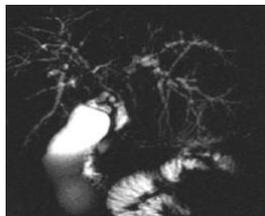
- Fatigue
- Itching
- Pain
- Jaundice, which is yellowing of the skin and eyes
- Weight loss
- Fever and chills.

## How is PSC diagnosed?

PSC cannot be confirmed through blood tests; however patients with PSC have higher values of specific liver enzymes such as ALP and ALT.

High levels of liver enzymes with symptoms such as jaundice, itching of the skin, fatigue and weight loss will likely trigger the physician to order imaging tests.

Diagnosis of PSC is confirmed with the use either MRCP (magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography) or ERCP (endoscopic resonance cholangiopancreatography). These are imaging techniques used to visualize the liver and bile ducts. MRCP is preferred as it is non-invasive whereas with (ERCP), a tube will be inserted down the mouth to inject dye to perform imaging.



## How is PSC Treated?

Currently, the only proven treatment for PSC is a liver transplant 10-15 years after diagnosis.

Symptoms such as itchiness can be managed through the use of skin creams and lotion or antihistamines. This may also be managed through home-remedies such as oatmeal baths.

Antibiotics may be prescribed in cases where infection develops in the bile ducts.

Ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA) is a treatment that is used for another disease known as primary biliary cholangitis (PBC). In some cases, this may also be prescribed in for PSC patients.

The use of the antibiotic, vancomycin as treatment for IBD and PSC is being investigated. A colonoscopy is also sometimes performed, to keep the risks of colon cancer to a minimum.

## Why do I have PSC?

Approximately 1 in 100,000 people have PSC with men making up a greater portion of diagnoses. The exact cause of PSC is unknown; however it may be involved with genetic and environmental factors.

Patients with PSC often have inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) such as ulcerative colitis (UC) or Crohn's disease (CD). Thus the two diseases may share risk factors.

## Virtual Medicine

Providing easy access to quality health care is a priority for physicians at The Toronto Center for Liver disease. For this reason, virtual communication tools are utilized to provide follow up appointments where appropriate.

## FAQ

### Will I need a liver transplant?

Many patients will need a transplant in their lives; however the disease course varies per individual. PSC patients with liver transplantation live longer lives than those without.

### What is my risk of bile duct cancer?

A majority of patients diagnosed with PSC do not have bile duct cancer, however 1/10 do.

### How often do I need an MRI?

Your physician will recommend an MRI if they determine that there are new/ changing symptoms or laboratory results.

### Is coffee helpful?

Studies have not proved that coffee can be helpful in the treatment of PSC.

### Can you remove the damaged bile ducts and cure the disease?

Removal of the bile ducts is not a cure for the disease. The only proven treatment for PSC is liver transplant.

### Will my children get PSC?

PSC has not been found to run in families. There is a small chance that children of patients with PSC will have the disease, however the risk is not significant.

## TAKE AWAYS

- **The immune system attacks the bile ducts inside and outside the liver in patients with PSC.**
- **PSC currently does not have a cure, however symptoms can be managed.**
- **People with PSC usually have IBD.**