



## Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** has launched the operational guidelines for integration of **NAFLD (Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease)** with **NPCDCS (National Programme for Prevention & Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke)**.

The **NPCDCS** is being implemented under the **National Health Mission (NHM)**. It was launched in 2010 to prevent and control **Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)**.

### Key Points

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- **About NAFLD:**
  - It is the **abnormal accumulation of fat in the liver** in the absence of secondary causes of fatty liver, such as harmful alcohol use, viral hepatitis.  
Fatty liver occurs when too much fat builds up in liver cells.
  - It is a **serious health concern as it encompasses a spectrum of liver abnormalities**, from a simple non-alcoholic fatty liver (NAFL, simple fatty liver disease) to more advanced ones like **non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH)**, **cirrhosis** and even liver cancer.
    - **Steatohepatitis** is characterized by **inflammation of the liver** with concurrent fat accumulation in the liver. Mere deposition of fat in the liver is termed steatosis.
    - **Cirrhosis** is a complication of liver disease that involves loss of liver cells and irreversible scarring of the liver.
  - NAFLD acts as an **independent predictor of future risk of cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes** and other metabolic syndromes like hypertension, abdominal obesity, dyslipidaemia, glucose intolerance.

- **Risk From NAFLD:**

- **High Fatality Rate:**

- Over the last two decades, the global burden of NASH has more than doubled. NASH caused 40 lakh prevalent cases of compensated cirrhosis in 1990, which increased to 94 lakh cases in 2017.

- **Risks Obese and Diabetic Individuals:**

- Epidemiological studies suggest that prevalence of NAFLD is around 9% to 32% of the general population in India with a higher prevalence in those with overweight or obesity and those with diabetes or prediabetes.

- **Incurable:**

- Once the disease develops, there is **no specific cure available**, and **health promotion and prevention aspects** targeting weight reduction, healthy lifestyle, etc. can prevent the mortality and morbidity due to NAFLD.

- **Steps Taken by the Government:**

- **Aligning NPCDCS programme strategies** to prevent and control NAFLD by encouraging behavior changes, early diagnosis and capacity building at various levels of healthcare.

- Promoting screening of cancer, diabetes and hypertension under **Ayushman Bharat scheme**.

- Along with the focus of **‘Eat Right India’** and **‘Fit India Movement’**, the entire vision of the government is to move from Diagnostic Cure to Preventive Health.

**Source: PIB**