

The Functions of the Gallbladder and the Gallbladder Disease

The gallbladder is a small organ situated near mid-abdominal area of the body. Its main function is to store the bile that comes from the liver. Bile is a substance that helps in the digestion of fat. Fat does not dissolve in water, so in order to emulsify fat something special is needed. The liver produces the bile and then stores it in the gallbladder until the body needs to digest fats. When this moment comes, the gallbladder starts to let the bile flow down into the intestine, inside the duodenum, where fat is digested with its help and then absorbed by the organism. While bile sits in the gallbladder, the water from it pours out through the gallbladder's walls, making the bile more concentrated and therefore more effective. Bile also neutralizes some of the acids that are found in certain types of food. Just like every other organ in the body, the gallbladder can malfunction and cause illness. At some people, usually women that are over 40 years of age, (but there have been quite a large number of cases of men suffering from gallbladder too), the bile inside it can crystallize into small stones, called gallstones. Gallstones are made of salt, calcium and cholesterol, all put together in a small stone. These gallstones can cause some problems, starting with the inflammation of the gallbladder and ending with severe pain and blockage. In 3 quarters of the patients gallbladder does not cause any visible symptoms, but in one quarter something appears. These are the most encountered symptoms of the gallbladder disease: -variable pain in the abdominal area. Variable because this pain is sometimes easy, sometimes very bad, and sometimes it lasts long, sometimes it doesn't -vomiting accompanied by temperature -yellow-ish skin and eyes, when a gallstone obstructs the canal through which bile flows from the liver into the gallbladder. Fortunately, gallstones can leave the body by themselves, but in some cases they get stuck on the way and obstruct the flow of bile. If this happens surgery is required. The gallbladder surgery is called cholecystectomy, and it consists of a procedure that removes the gallbladder from the body and connects the liver directly to the stomach, so bile does not pass through it anymore. This causes the fat substance digestion to be less effective. In the most unfortunate cases, complications lead to gallbladder cancer. This can happen if someone suffering from the gallbladder disease has weight problems and also smokes and drinks a lot. Gallbladder cancer is a fatal illness, although advanced surgical techniques attempt to remove it most of the patients with gallbladder die. Gallbladder disease is in most cases almost harmless, but if you feel any of the symptoms you should visit a doctor and listen to his advice. Patients that have been operated of gallbladder and had it removed can soon return to their normal lives, but they need to pay attention to the quantity of fat that they eat, because without the gallbladder the body can't handle the fat substance digestion to well.

About the Author

Health information and discussion concerning prevention, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of the diseases and disorders related to indigestion, digestion.

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