

# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

## Scope for guideline update (starting 2025)

### Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease: assessment and management

NICE is updating its [guideline on non-alcoholic fatty liver disease: assessment and management](#) (NG49).

As part of this update, we will use the term ‘metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease’ (MASLD) instead of ‘non-alcoholic fatty liver disease’ (NAFLD) in the title and throughout the guideline. We will also be using the term ‘metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis’ (MASH) instead of ‘non-alcoholic steatohepatitis’ (NASH). These wording changes are being made because the terms NAFLD and NASH are now seen as inaccurate and potentially stigmatising, and concerns about their use have been raised by stakeholders and others in the healthcare system. This also reflects a decision from a multinational consensus group, made up of clinical experts and patient advocates, to adopt the terms MASLD and MASH.

The update will be developed using the methods and processes in [developing NICE guidelines: the manual](#).

### Who the guideline update covers

The current guideline covers all children, young people and adults with suspected or confirmed MASLD. The groups covered by the guideline will remain unchanged.

### Equality considerations

A new [equality and health inequalities impact assessment](#) has been completed.

### Settings

This current guideline covers all settings where NHS healthcare is provided or commissioned. The settings covered by the guideline will remain unchanged.

## Activities, services or aspects of care covered by the guideline update

We will make new recommendations or update existing recommendations on:

- diagnosing MASLD in children, young people and adults
- identifying people with advanced liver fibrosis
- monitoring MASLD in children, young people and adults
- lifestyle modifications for MASLD
- pharmacological treatment.

Note that guideline recommendations for medicines will normally fall within licensed indications; exceptionally, and only if clearly supported by evidence, use outside a licensed indication may be recommended. The guideline will assume that prescribers will use a medicine's summary of product characteristics to inform decisions made with individual patients.

## Exclusions for this update

This update will not cover:

- management of end-stage MASLD, and hepatocellular carcinoma and liver transplant associated with MASLD
- assessment and management of cirrhosis.

## Table: What NICE plans to do for each area of the current guideline

Area in the current guideline	What NICE plans to do
Identifying groups at higher risk of MASLD	No new evidence reviews for recommendations 1.1.1 to 1.1.2: retain recommendations.
Diagnosing MASLD	Review evidence (see draft review questions 1 and 2) and replace existing recommendation 1.1.3 in the section on identifying groups at higher risk of MASLD and recommendations in the section on diagnosing NAFLD in children and young people (recommendations 1.1.4 to 1.1.7), if appropriate.
Identifying people with advanced liver fibrosis	Review evidence (see draft review questions 3 and 4) and replace existing recommendations in the section on identifying people with advanced liver

	fibrosis (recommendations 1.2.1 to 1.2.8), if appropriate.
Monitoring for cirrhosis	Review evidence (see draft review question 5) and replace existing recommendations 1.2.7 and 1.2.8 in the section on identifying people with advanced liver fibrosis, if appropriate.
Extra-hepatic conditions	No new evidence review for recommendations 1.2.10 and 1.2.11: retain recommendations.
Lifestyle modifications for MASLD	No new evidence reviews for recommendations 1.2.12 to 1.2.14: retain recommendations. Review evidence (see draft review questions 6 and 7) and replace existing recommendations 1.2.15 and 1.2.16, if appropriate.
People with MASLD who are taking statins	No new evidence reviews for recommendations 1.3.1 and 1.3.2: retain recommendations.
Pharmacological treatment	Stand down recommendations in the section pharmacological treatment (recommendations 1.4.1 to 1.4.9). Prescribing of vitamin E and pioglitazone for advanced liver fibrosis is not routine practice because of concerns regarding side effects and long-term safety. There are several new drug treatments in late-stage clinical trials, which may be covered in a future update of the MASLD guideline. For more details, see the <a href="#">section on NICE technology appraisal guidance</a> and <a href="#">our web page on bringing our guidance together by topic</a> .

Recommendations that are being retained from the current guideline may be revised to update language, to reflect current policy or to ensure consistency.

## Draft review questions

We have identified the following draft review questions. These may change during guideline development, but the areas covered will remain as listed in the final scope. The areas covered and draft questions will also be used to develop more detailed review questions, which will guide the systematic review of the literature:

## Diagnosing MASLD

1. What is the diagnostic accuracy of investigations for diagnosing MASLD in children, young people and adults?
2. What is the clinical and cost effectiveness of investigations for diagnosing MASLD in children, young people and adults?

## **Identifying the severity or stage of MASLD**

3. What is the diagnostic accuracy of assessment tools for identifying the severity or stage of MASLD?
4. What is the clinical and cost effectiveness of assessment tools for identifying the severity or stage of MASLD?

## **Monitoring**

5. What is the most clinically and cost effective monitoring strategy to determine the risk of MASLD progression in children, young people and adults?

## **Lifestyle modifications for MASLD**

6. What is the clinical and cost effectiveness of dietary supplements for children, young people and adults with MASLD compared with standard care?
7. What is the relationship between alcohol consumption and MASLD outcomes?

## **Economic aspects**

We will take economic aspects into account when making recommendations. For each review question (or key areas in the scope), we review the economic evidence and, where appropriate, carry out economic modelling and analyses, using an NHS and personal social services perspective.

## **Question for consultation**

The current guideline (NG49) recommends that, in secondary and tertiary care settings, pharmacological treatment with pioglitazone or vitamin E may be considered for adults with NAFLD (MASLD) and advanced liver fibrosis. The use of pioglitazone and vitamin E in the current guideline recommendations is off label. To what extent are the pioglitazone and vitamin E currently used in clinical practice for adults with advanced liver fibrosis and why? Please share any information about local clinical pathways you are aware of.

## NICE guidance and quality standards that may be affected by this guideline update

- [FibroScan for assessing liver fibrosis and cirrhosis outside secondary and specialist care](#) (2023) NICE guideline DG48
- [MRI-based technologies for assessing non-alcoholic fatty liver disease](#) (2023) NICE guideline DG50
- [Liver disease](#). NICE quality standard QS152

## NICE technology appraisals

NICE technology appraisal guidance will be included where relevant. For further details, see our web page on [bringing our guidance together by topic](#).

NICE is currently consulting on a multiple technology appraisal of resmetirom and semaglutide for treating metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis with liver fibrosis. See the [in development page](#) for more details about its suggested remit, draft scope and provisional stakeholder list of consultees and commentators.

## Further information

NICE guidelines cover health and care in England. Decisions on how they apply in other UK countries are made by ministers in the [Welsh Government](#), [Scottish Government](#) and [Northern Ireland Executive](#).

The guideline update is expected to be published in December 2026.

To follow the progress of the update, see the [guideline in development page](#).

Our website has information about [how NICE guidelines are developed](#).

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