

Mayo Clinic Minute: Unlocking how the liver regenerates after surgery

The liver is the body's largest internal organ, helping to digest food, remove waste and make proteins. It's essential for life.

When part of the liver is removed to treat cancer or other conditions, the remaining tissue must regenerate to restore liver function.

VIDEO	AUDIO
Patrick Starlinger, M.D., Ph.D. Hepatobiliary and Pancreas Surgery Mayo Clinic	"The liver can regenerate quite dramatically, probably the most potential to regenerate in the entire human body, and we leverage this in liver surgery."
	Before surgery, the team assesses the liver to determine how much can be safely removed along with a tumor, while leaving enough healthy liver to regenerate.
	But in some patients, that regeneration does not happen, which can lead to liver failure and limit which tumors can be removed. Dr. Starlinger studies the mechanism of liver regeneration.
	"As we understand the mechanism, we can move forward with interventions to promote regeneration in these patients."
	Mayo Clinic researchers have analyzed liver samples from patients with healthy livers and those with underlying liver conditions to better understand what drives regeneration.
	"We were able to discover that the blood coagulation system is crucially important to allow these mechanisms of liver regeneration to actually occur."

	More research is needed, but researchers hope these findings could eventually lead to treatments that promote liver regeneration and expand the limits of liver surgery.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.