



BRITISH LIVER TRUST – PUBLIC POLLING

MAY 2017

METHODOLOGY

ComRes interviewed 2,024 British adults aged 18+ online between 24th May and 25th May 2017. Data were weighted by age, gender, region and socio-economic grade to be representative of all GB adults aged 18+.

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- The company conducting the research (ComRes)
- The client commissioning the survey
- Dates of interviewing
- Method of obtaining the interviews (e.g. in-person, post, telephone, internet)
- The universe effectively represented (all adults, voters etc.)
- The percentages upon which conclusions are based
- Size of the sample and geographic coverage.

Published references (such as a press release) should also show a web address where full data tables may be viewed, and they should also show the complete wording of questions upon which any data that has entered the public domain are based.

All press releases or other publications must be checked with ComRes before use. ComRes requires 48 hours to check a press release unless otherwise agreed.

FINDINGS

From a list provided, the most common position liver disease is ranked is as the 5th largest cause of death in England and Wales annually among those of working age (23%). This suggests that British adults may have a broadly accurate perception of how common the condition is.

Q. Please rank the following according to how many deaths you think each causes in England and Wales annually, among those of working age (16 to 64).

	Ranked top (causing the largest number of deaths)	Ranked top three (conditions causing the largest number of deaths)
Heart disease	59%	86%
Road traffic accident	15%	33%
Breast cancer	9%	47%
Diabetes	7%	38%
Stroke	6%	56%
Liver Disease	3%	25%
Kidney Disease	2%	15%

Base: all respondents (n=2,024)

- By a significant margin, British adults are most likely to correctly identify heart disease as the biggest cause of death in England and Wales among those of working age (59%), compared to the closest comparator, road traffic accidents (15%), which the public largely overestimate.

The British public are most likely to say they would be concerned about their heart if they were told they had a problem with it (91% rank this in their top 3 greatest concerns).

Q. Please rank the following in terms of how concerned you would be, if at all, if you were told you had a problem with each.

	Would be of greatest concern	Would be in top 3 concerns
Heart	72%	91%
Lungs	13%	83%
Liver	5%	61%
Gallbladder	3%	8%
Skin	3%	13%
Kidney	2%	39%

Base: all respondents (n= 2,024)

- Whilst only 5% of British adults say that their liver would be of the greatest concern if they were told they had a problem with it, a majority do place it in their top three concerns (61%).
- Older British adults are more likely than their younger counterparts to say that they would be concerned if they were told they had a problem with their liver (65% of those aged 55+ place the liver in their top 3 greatest concerns vs. 54% of 18–34 year olds).

The British public are most likely to say that alcohol would make you more likely to develop liver disease (78%) when asked to name causes spontaneously. This demonstrates there are strong links in people's minds between alcohol and liver disease.

Q. Can you name three things that you think would make you more likely to develop liver disease?

Showing top 14 responses

	%
NET: Any mention of alcohol	78%
Alcohol / drinking alcohol	54%
Excessive alcohol consumption	17%
A poor diet / eating bad food	17%
Smoking cigarettes	14%
Drug use / abuse	12%
Fatty food	10%
Obesity / being overweight	9%
Alcoholism / alcohol addiction / abuse	7%
Hepatitis	6%
Genetics / family history	4%
Diabetes	3%
Cancer	3%
Medication / overuse of medication	3%

Base: all respondents (n= 2,024)

- Three quarters of British adults (78%) say that alcohol makes you more likely to develop liver disease, with over half (54%) saying this is due to just drinking alcohol. 17% say people are more likely to develop liver disease due to excessive alcohol consumption specifically, and 7% say the same about alcoholism.
- Indeed Britons are most likely to cite lifestyle factors as making you more likely to develop liver disease, including alcohol (78%), a poor diet (17%) and smoking (14%).
- Older Britons are more likely than their younger counterparts to say that alcohol makes you more likely to develop liver disease (83% of those aged 55+ vs. 71% of 18–34 year olds).

- Those from social grade AB are slightly more likely than those from DE to say that alcohol makes you more likely to develop liver disease (80% vs. 73% respectively).

When asked to select from a list of options what they think causes or increases the risk of liver diseases, British adults are also most likely to select alcohol (91%).

Q. Which of the following, if any, do you think cause or increase the risk of liver disease?

	%
Alcohol	91%
Obesity or being overweight	58%
Viruses such as Hepatitis B or C	56%
Smoking	40%
Type 2 Diabetes	32%
Old age	25%
Heart disease	11%
Sun exposure or other forms of radiation exposure	5%
Pregnancy	3%
Don't know	4%

Base: all respondents (n= 2,024)

*Rows highlighted in green represent correct answers, whilst those in red represent incorrect answers

- Interestingly, when presented with the option 'viruses such as Hepatitis B or C', more than half (56%) correctly say it causes or increases the risk of liver disease, placing it third, whilst only 6% say hepatitis when asked spontaneously what makes you most likely to develop liver disease and just 1% say a virus. This suggests that while viruses may not be an association that immediately comes to mind when thinking about liver disease, British adults know that they can be a cause.
- There are also differences in answers according to age:
 - Older Britons are more likely than their younger counterparts to say that alcohol and particularly that viruses cause or increase the risk of liver disease (95% of 55+ year olds say alcohol vs. 86% of 18–34 year olds. 69% vs. 37% for viruses).
 - Conversely, younger Britons are more likely than older Britons to say that smoking and heart disease cause or increase the risk of liver disease (45% vs. 38% respectively for smoking and 15% vs. 8% for heart disease).
- Those whose GP has either spoken to or tested then for liver disease are more likely than those who have not to say that viruses (68% vs. 55%) and type 2 diabetes (44% vs. 31%) cause or increase the risk of liver disease.

- Conversely those who have not spoken to or been tested for liver disease are more likely than those who have to say smoking causes or increases the risk of liver disease (42% vs. 33% respectively).
- Two in five British adults (40%) incorrectly say that smoking increases the risk of liver disease whilst only 3% correctly say that pregnancy increases the risk. It is also interesting to note that women are just as uninformed about the risk of liver disease when pregnant as men (3% for both).

Eight in ten British adults correctly say that it is true that liver disease is one of the top 5 biggest killers in the UK (80%).

Q. For each of the statements below, please indicate whether you think it is true or false.

	True	False
Anyone can develop liver disease, regardless of their lifestyle	82%	18%
Liver disease is one of the top 5 biggest killers in the UK	80%	20%
Alcohol is more likely to damage the liver if people are overweight	77%	23%
There are usually no symptoms in the early stages of liver disease	75%	25%
Bowel cancer causes more deaths than liver disease	56%	44%
Most people who develop liver disease are alcoholics	47%	53%
Liver disease is almost always caused by alcohol consumption	45%	55%

Base: all respondents (n=2,024)

- Whilst at least three quarters of British adults agree with a majority of the options, Britons' opinions are highly divided about the following:
 - Bowel cancer causes more deaths than liver disease (56% say it is true vs. 44% who say it is false);
 - Most people who develop liver disease are alcoholics (47% vs. 53% respectively);
 - Liver disease is almost always caused by alcohol consumption (45% vs. 55%).
- Matching the results from previous questions, older Britons are slightly more likely than their younger counterparts to incorrectly agree that liver disease is almost always caused by alcohol consumption (50% of those aged 65+ compared to 44% of 18–24 year olds).

Just over one in ten (12%) British adults say their GP has spoken to or tested them for liver disease, the smallest proportion of any of the options tested.

Q. Has your GP ever spoken to you about or tested you for any of the following?

	Yes	No	Don't know
Blood pressure levels	68%	30%	2%
Cholesterol levels	47%	50%	2%
Diabetes	35%	62%	2%
Dietary issues	23%	75%	2%
Alcohol consumption	16%	83%	1%
Liver disease	12%	84%	4%

Base: all respondents (n= 2.024)

- British adults are most likely to report that their GP has spoken to them about or tested them for blood pressure levels (68%) and cholesterol levels (47%).
- Just 16% of British adults say that their GP has spoken to them about or tested them for alcohol consumption, while eight in ten (83%) say that their GP has neither spoken to them about nor tested them for it.
- For each of the options tested, older British adults are more likely than their younger counterparts to have been spoken to about, or tested for, each by their GP.
 - For example, nearly double the proportion of 55+ year olds says they have been spoken to about or tested for alcohol consumption (20% of 55+ year olds vs. 12% of 18–34 year olds).
- Whilst around half of those whose GP has spoken to them about or tested them for liver disease say that they have also been spoken to about or tested for alcohol consumption (48%), just over one in ten (11%) of those who have not been spoken to about or tested for liver disease say the same.

A majority of the British public (83%) have not been affected by liver disease of any sort with just 16% reporting that they have been affected by it.

Q. Have you or, to your knowledge, any of your family or friends been affected by liver disease of any sort?

	%
NET: YES	16%
Yes - me	3%
Yes - my family or friends	13%
No	83%
Prefer not to say	1%

Base: all respondents (n=2,024)

- Older British adults are more likely than their younger counterparts to say they or a friend or family member have been affected by liver disease (19% of 55+ year olds vs 11% of 18-24 year olds).

Eight in ten (78%) British adults cannot provide an answer when asked what charity comes to mind when they think of liver disease.

Q. What charity, if any, comes to mind when you think of liver disease?

	%
British Liver Trust	7%
Cancer Research	3%
Alcoholics Anonymous	2%
Macmillan	1%
British Heart Foundation	1%
Foundation for Liver Research	1%
Liver Foundation	1%
Cancer UK	1%
Other	7%
None / Don't know	78%

Base: all respondents (n=2,024)

- Positively for The British Liver Trust, British adults are most likely to say British Liver Trust when asked spontaneously what charity comes to mind when they think of liver disease (7%). Younger British adults are more likely than their older counterparts to respond with British Liver Trust (15% of 18–24 year olds vs. 5% of 65+ year olds), which is particularly interesting when you consider that older British adults are more likely than their younger counterparts to say that they have been affected in some way by liver disease. This also suggests that the charity could benefit from raising its profile among older British adults.

Just over one in ten (11%) British adults say they have heard of the British Liver Trust when asked, compared to 7% of those who say they were aware when asked spontaneously.

Q. Have you ever heard of the charity the British Liver Trust?

	%
Yes	11%
No	88%
Don't know	2%

Base: all respondents (n=2,024)

- Similarly to when asked spontaneously to name charities they think of in relation to liver disease, younger Britons are more likely than their older counterparts to say British Liver Trust (19% of 18–24 year olds vs. 8% of 65+ year olds)., which is once again particularly interesting considering that older adults are more likely to have been affected by liver disease.
- Those affected by liver disease (themselves or family / friends) are more likely than those who have not been affected by it to say they are aware of the British Liver Trust (22% vs. 10% respectively).

THANK YOU

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