



### **What causes Fatty Liver Disease**

**2019-04-29**

When a human, other animal, or a bird has been diagnosed with Fatty Liver Disease, they are commonly put on a low-fat diet (although this is changing). The same goes for heart disease and many other conditions.

However, peer reviewed research is not hard to find and the culprit is *not* fat, but carbohydrates. This is one I picked because it's short and sweet.

*Ingested carbohydrates are a major stimulus for hepatic de novo lipogenesis (DNL) and are more likely to directly contribute to NAFLD than dietary fat.*

*[Note: DNL is the process by which fatty deposits are created in the liver, NAFLD is "non-alcoholic fatty liver liver disease" which should be self-explanatory.]*

*Carbohydrate intake and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease: fructose as a weapon of mass destruction—Hepatobiliary Surgery and Nutrition—April 2015*

Just as it's difficult to get your head around the notion that dietary fat doesn't make you fat, it's difficult to comprehend that fat doesn't lead to the creation of fat in the liver, carbohydrates do.

But it's actually not that difficult. It's broadly accepted that carbohydrates can get converted into fat by the body, so in the case of fatty liver, it's not dietary fat itself being deposited, but carbohydrates that are turned into fat.

A surprising number of vets don't know the new reality of fatty liver disease. It's not that they are ill-informed, it's just that their knowledge is out of date. Until the last ten years or so, the low-fat diet was the cure for everything related to fat or cholesterol being deposited in the body. We now know better.

As my previous post about [animal research into fat and disease](#) shows, the tide has decisively turned and your vet needs to update their knowledge or your bird will suffer instead of recover from fatty liver disease.

Finally, rather than wait for your bird to get Fatty Liver Disease from a high carbohydrate diet, switch over to a higher fat low carbohydrate diet. Either switch to a seed-based diet or feed a combined pellet and seed diet. Pellets are higher in carbs and seed is higher in fat, so there could be a happy medium in there somewhere.