



YOUR LIVER

ICP Support



PROCESSES DIGESTED FOOD

Your liver processes and stores nutrients, such as sugars and carbohydrates (as glycogen), in order to provide energy when the body needs it. Liver disease can cause low blood sugar, called hypoglycemia



CLEANS THE BLOOD

Your liver removes harmful chemicals and poisons, such as alcohol, from the body. Liver damage results when it can't complete this process – for example in alcohol or drug misuse

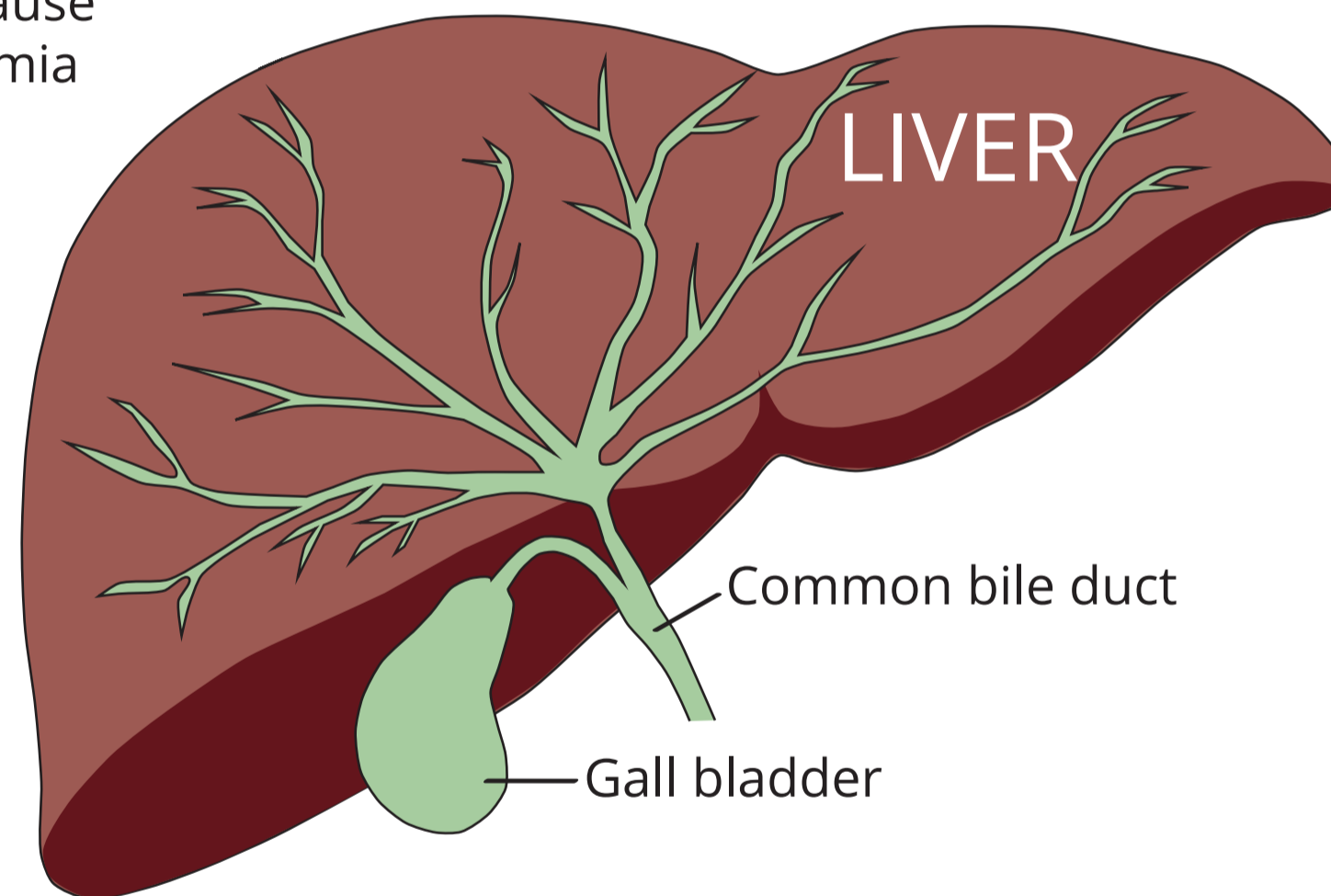


REGULATES HORMONES

such as estrogen, testosterone and insulin. When the liver can't do this, it can lead to problems such as diabetes

Your liver weighs about 1.5 kg.

You can think of it as the combined power station and sewage works of your body.



It performs over 500 separate functions.

Here are just a few examples.

STORES IRON AND VITAMINS

For example, vitamin K is a fat-soluble vitamin that is essential for clotting blood and preventing excessive bleeding and bruising. Your liver makes other proteins that help this process. Liver damage can stop this working properly



MAKES BILE

Your body needs bile to help absorb fat-soluble vitamins, but if your body can't remove the bile you become jaundiced (yellow skin)



FIGHTS INFECTION

Your liver contains cells that can destroy bacteria. If it is damaged it can't do this job properly



REMOVES WASTE

Some of the products of metabolism cannot be used by the body and must be removed. One of these, ammonia, is converted by the liver to urea and excreted by the kidneys

