



## AMERICAN LIVER FOUNDATION

*Celebrating 50 Years of Impact – Leading the next 50 Years Forward*

For five decades, American Liver Foundation (ALF) has stood at the forefront of liver health – educating, advocating, and funding research to save lives. From groundbreaking scientific initiatives to empowering patients and families, every milestone reflects our unwavering mission: to improve liver health and quality of life for all. This timeline honors the progress we've made together and sets the stage for an even brighter future.

### 1976

- ALF was founded as a national 501c3 nonprofit organization.

### 1980

- Established a [Research Awards Program](#), which has provided nearly \$30 million in funding to 923 early-career scientists and innovative projects advancing liver biology, disease, and treatment. Before this program, ALF awarded research students approximately \$1,000 each to support summer fellowship opportunities.

### 1983

- Opened a national toll-free helpline, 1-800-GO-LIVER (1-800-465-4837), providing trusted liver health information and support in all 50 states and over 100 languages.

### 1987

- *Love Your Liver*, ALF's first community education program, was designed to introduce elementary school children to the risks of excessive alcohol and drug use, exposure to liver toxins, and the importance of healthy eating.

### 1989

- ALF became the first official charity team of the Boston Marathon®, beginning an annual tradition that has raised more than \$40 million for liver health and sparking what is now known as ALF's [Liver Life Challenge®](#) endurance program.

### 1991

- [FLAVORS](#), a unique culinary fundraising event, was started by renowned Chef Christopher Gross in Phoenix, AZ.
- The first [Irwin M. Arias Symposium: Bridging Basic Science & Liver Disease](#) launched, uniting global scientists and physicians to bridge basic science and liver disease. Now in its 35th year, this one-day event has featured breakthroughs in diagnosing and treating liver diseases in children and adults worldwide.

### 1993

- Nationwide Public Service Announcements featuring Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, Naomi Judd, and NY Giants coach Dan Reeves, were created to raise awareness about liver disease.

### 1995

- ALF convened a Scientific Advisory Council of leading hepatitis and liver disease researchers to draft the nation's first Research Agenda, setting priorities for Congress to accelerate cures.

### 1996

- *Children's Liver Research Agenda: A Scientific Blueprint*, was created to help guide families coping with pediatric liver disease.

### 1997

- Awarded the first [Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award \(DSAA\)](#), a prestigious award honoring a basic researcher or physician scientist who has made major contributions to basic liver research or its application in the treatment of liver diseases, to Francis V. Chisari, MD from the Scripps Research Institute.

**1999**

- [Liver Life Walk®](#) was created to bring the liver community together and raise awareness and funds in a festive and inspiring environment.

**2004**

- Launched the *THINK (The Hepatitis Information You Need to Know)* campaign, a multi-year community education and awareness initiative.

**2006**

- [Liverfoundation.org](#), ALF's official website, was launched. In 2024, liverfoundation.org reached 5.2 million views.

**2007**

- ALF Board Chair James Boyer, MD, testified before Congress, advocating for increased funding for NIH, CDC Viral Hepatitis, and HRSA Organ Transplantation.

**2009**

- *FLIP (Fatty Liver Information Program)*, ALF's third national community educational program, was created to raise awareness about liver health. This program laid the groundwork for what is now [Think Liver Think Life®](#).

**2011**

- Music legends Gregg Allman and Natalie Cole joined ALF to launch 'Tune in to Hep C' a nationwide campaign raising awareness of hepatitis C.
- ALF created an official Facebook page, which started out with 945 followers and today boasts more than 171,000 followers.

**2012**

- HepC123.org, dedicated to hepatitis C education and awareness was created, welcoming 500,000 visitors annually.

**2013**

- HE123.org launched, providing educational resources and tools to help manage hepatic encephalopathy (HE).

**2014**

- The National Patient Advisory Committee (NPAC) was formed to amplify patient voices and advocate on Capitol Hill. Today they're known as [Liver Life Advocates®](#).

**2015**

- The NPAC introduced liver health advocacy to Capitol Hill, educating lawmakers and amplifying the patient voice. This ignited an annual tradition, now known as the [Liver Life Advocacy® Summit](#), where liver health advocates from across the country unite on Capitol Hill to meet with their lawmakers and champion liver health.

**2016**

- ALF launched the live educational series, *Ask the Experts*, which brought liver health specialists into communities to raise awareness and answer questions about liver health.
- A new text messaging program was created to provide support and reduce isolation for people newly diagnosed with primary biliary cholangitis (PBC).

**2017**

- Expanded PBC support services to include a peer-to-peer support program and [Facebook support group](#).
- Offered educational programming in Hawaii for the first time, expanding our reach across all 50 states.
- Created educational resources for U.S. veterans about their increased risk for hepatitis C. Today, [ALF hosts](#) the [Liver Health for Veterans Information Center](#), an online hub offering guidance on early detection, lifestyle management, and practical tools specifically for veterans.
- Awarded Chun-Hao Huang, PhD, from UC Berkeley, a [Postdoctoral Fellowship Award](#) to advance the understanding of cellular immune responses to viral translation during liver damage, under the mentorship of Jennifer A. Doudna, PhD, who was awarded the [2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry](#).

**2018**

- Integrated [Antidote](#), a clinical trial matching tool, on liverfoundation.org to help patients looking for trials relevant to their care.

- Xiaobo Wang, PhD, from Columbia University, received ALF's [Liver Scholar Award](#) for research that led to a novel understanding of fibrosis and liver cancer in MASH, and introduced a potential new antifibrotic target. That same year, Aveline Filliol, PhD, from Columbia University, received ALF's [Postdoctoral Fellowship Award](#) for research resulting in a first-author *Nature* publication and a new concept on how hepatic stellate cell diversity drives different outcomes in MASH and liver cancer.

## 2019

- Held a national dialogue in partnership with National Kidney Foundation to advance awareness and treatment strategies for people with hepatorenal syndrome (HRS-1).

## 2020

- Consolidated 16 regional divisions into a unified national structure during COVID-19, streamlining operations and preserving mission delivery.
- [Partnered with UPMC](#) to create ALF's [Living Donor Liver Transplant Information Center](#), offering tips, videos, and other resources to help guide patients and donors through the transplant process.
- Began offering clinical trial visibility to industry partners, helping patients access information about trials that may support their care while advancing liver research.

## 2021

- [Honored 2020 Nobel Laureates](#) Charles M. Rice, PhD, Harvey Alter, MD, and Michael Houghton, PhD, DSc, at ALF's 45th Anniversary Leadership Celebration for their discovery of the hepatitis C virus and transformative contributions which lead to a cure. All three laureates are past recipients of ALF's [Distinguished Scientific Achievement Award \(DSAA\)](#); Dr. Alter in 2002, Dr. Rice in 2013, and Dr. Houghton in 2018.
- Established a dedicated Marketing and Communications department which [revitalized ALF's brand](#) and refreshed its website to focus on liver wellness and community connection.
- Hosted the organization's first national gala, the National Legacy Gala, to honor and celebrate those who have made a lasting impact in the liver community.

## 2022

- Gathered liver transplant recipients, caregivers, loved ones and medical professionals for the first virtual Re-Birthday Celebration to celebrate the gift of life and the advancements made in liver transplantation.
- Launched [Think Liver Think Life®](#), ALF's first nationwide public health initiative to screen U.S. adults for metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD) and liver cancer, raising awareness and connecting communities to care. Are you at risk? Visit [thinkliverthinklife.org/quiz](http://thinkliverthinklife.org/quiz) and take our free liver health quiz today.
- Created the [Pediatric Liver Disease Information Center](#) and [Life with Pediatric Liver Disease Facebook Support Group](#), offering families age-appropriate resources, patient stories, and support for children, teens, and adults.
- Established a Transplant Workgroup, which helped ALF identify needs and actively work towards filling gaps in the U.S. liver transplant system.
- Expanded Living Donor Information Center with [a series of five 60-second animated videos](#) offering transplant candidates tips on finding a living donor.

## 2023

- Over 350 patients, caregivers, clinicians, and advocates joined a two-day virtual [Autoimmune Liver Disease Forum](#) to improve outcomes for people with PBC, PSC, and autoimmune hepatitis.
- ALF extended its [Research Awards Program](#), allocating \$2.5M to 65 liver researchers and, for the first time, incorporated the patient voice through a new Research Patient Group. That same year, ALF funded [Maria E Moreno-Fernandez, PhD](#), from Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, for research on how regulatory T cells drive liver inflammation and disease progression in metabolic liver conditions. The significance of this work was underscored in 2025 when the scientists who first discovered and described these cells received the [2025 Nobel Prize in Medicine](#).
- ALF became the first liver organization to [join the American Society of Transplantation's Living Donor Circle of Excellence](#) as a Strategic Partner, supporting paid leave and reducing barriers to living donor liver transplantation.
- Re-launched the [Irwin M. Arias Symposium](#) as a hybrid virtual and in-person event that now brings together over 500 scientists and trainees each year.

## 2024

- ALF Liver Life Advocates® helped spark the [first-ever federal study](#) to assess the prevalence of [MASLD](#) in the U.S.
- Released the [Bili the Brave™ toolkit](#), complete with plush lion, children's book, and resources to support children and families affected by [biliary atresia](#).
- Launched [The American Liver Foundation Patient Registry](#), the first-ever patient registry for all types of liver disease, empowering patients to share their experience with liver disease and contribute directly to research through a secure, survey-based platform.
- Started [Caring Connections – an ALF peer to peer support program](#), a free peer-to-peer support program that matches patients, caregivers, and transplant recipients with trained mentors through a secure online platform.
- Created [The Liver Health ECHO Program](#), a free virtual education series offering expert-led mentorship and training for non-liver medical professionals and healthcare providers on MASLD diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.
- Launched [Sharing the Journey](#) – a series of three new monthly support groups, moderated by a licensed social worker, for [patients](#), [caregivers](#), and [liver transplant recipients](#).
- [FLAVORS – a national culinary event](#), a beloved signature fundraiser, returned after a four-year pandemic pause.
- Developed [new transplant center lookup](#) to help patients find a transplant center.
- Liver Life Challenge® went international after being [accepted as a charity partner of 2024 BMW Berlin Marathon](#).
- Introduced a [30-day Liver Healthy Meal Plan](#) making simple, nutritious eating accessible to anyone, anywhere.
- Announced [new Pilot Research Awards program](#), funding eight innovative projects focused on PSC, AIH, and BA, totaling \$400,000 in new research support. Research by [Sanjiv Harpavat, MD, PhD](#) from Texas Children's Hospital led to a novel method for earlier diagnosis of biliary atresia in infants. Now in clinical trials, this approach shows promise in reducing the need for lifesaving liver transplants.

## 2025

- [Partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#) to educate Veterans on liver health through tailored resources, a dedicated [Facebook support group](#) moderated by VA volunteers, and more.
- Launched the [ALF Living Donor Network™](#), the first national database connecting non-directed liver donors with transplant centers to help eliminate the pediatric waitlist and save lives.

Today, **ALF reaches over 6.2 million people** annually with trusted education, resources, and support services. In just the past two years, **we've invested more than \$2.5 million** in groundbreaking liver research and **led the charge for stronger public health policy** on Capitol Hill. This timeline not only celebrates 50 years of impact—it offers a glimpse into the bold, transformative, future we're building for the next **50 years forward**.