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Summary

NONALCOHOLIC FATTY LIVER DISEASE IN LEAN SUBJECTS: CLINICAL , EPIDEMIOLOGICAL AND METABOLIC FEATURES

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A comparative study of 184 NAFLD patients found that lean subjects (19% of the cohort) had significantly higher triglycerides, fasting glucose, and liver enzyme elevations compared to overweight or obese NAFLD patients, suggesting greater metabolic and hepatic disturbances despite lower BMI.

KEY POINTS

- Among 184 NAFLD patients identified from 317 subjects screened by Fibroscan, 19% had BMI below 25 kg/m^2 (lean NAFLD) while 81% were overweight or obese.
- Lean NAFLD patients had significantly higher mean fasting plasma glucose (8.3 vs 6.4 mmol/l, p=0.01) and triglycerides (1.9 vs 1.6 mmol/l, p=0.03) compared to the obese group.
- Liver enzyme elevations were greater in lean patients, with mean PAL significantly higher (458 vs 179, p=0.02) and trends toward higher AST, ALT, and GGT, though advanced fibrosis prevalence was similar (1.8%) in both groups.
- The authors suggest lean NAFLD may be more severe with greater metabolic disturbances than obese NAFLD, warranting particular clinical attention to this population.
- This material is relevant to hepatologists and general practitioners evaluating NAFLD in patients across the BMI spectrum.

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