



Towards Wellness Centre

Providing Solutions To Complex Chronic Health Conditions

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The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland in the neck. It is one of the endocrine glands, which make hormones. Thyroid hormones control the rate of many activities in the body. These include metabolism, growth, body temperature, muscle strength, appetite, and the health of the heart, brain, kidneys, and reproductive system.

Hyperthyroidism occurs when the thyroid is too active, it makes more thyroid hormones than the body needs.

Graves' disease is an autoimmune disorder where the body attacks itself and is the most common cause of hyperthyroidism. Other causes include thyroid nodules, thyroiditis, and consuming too much iodine.

Symptoms of Hyperthyroidism include

Difficulty concentrating - Fatigue - Frequent bowel movements - Goiter (visibly enlarged thyroid gland) or thyroid nodules - Hand tremor - Heat intolerance - Increased appetite - Increased sweating - Irregular menstrual periods in women - Nervousness - Restlessness - Sleep problems - Weight loss (or weight gain, in rare cases).

Hypothyroidism occurs when the thyroid gland is not active enough, it does not make enough thyroid hormone to meet the body's needs.

Hashimoto's is an autoimmune disorder where the body attacks itself and is the most common cause of hypothyroidism. Other causes include thyroiditis, thyroid nodules, surgical removal of part or all of the thyroid, congenital hypothyroidism, radiation treatment of the thyroid, and some medicines.

Symptoms of Hypothyroidism include

Fatigue - Weight gain - Puffy face - Cold temperature intolerance - Decreased sweating - Joint and muscle pain - Depression - Constipation - Dry skin - Dry and thinning hair - Heavy or irregular menstrual periods and fertility problems - Slowed heart rate.

- Hypothyroidism news and research from www.endocrineweb.com

[More info](#)

- The latest Hyperthyroidism news and research from www.endocrineweb.com

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Note: Always seek advice from a doctor before beginning any listed treatments, medications or supplements.

Underactive thyroid (Hypothyroidism)

Bio Medical Solutions

Thyroid Hormone Replacement Therapy: The standard treatment for hypothyroidism involves the patient taking thyroid hormone replacement medication such as levothyroxine (Levothroid, Synthroid, others). This oral medication helps to restore thyroid hormone levels and reverse the effects and symptoms of hypothyroidism. Sometimes side effects may occur during treatment due to toxic, elevated levels of thyroid hormones and these symptoms include chest pain, increased heart rate or pulse rate, excessive sweating, heat intolerance, nervousness, headache, insomnia, diarrhea, vomiting, weight loss, fever, and irregular menstrual cycles.

Professional Support: Working with a trained practitioner can assist you to develop skills to calm anxiety and can also equip you with knowledge to find your next steps towards wellness. Please ensure that you find a practitioner who understands how to navigate the territory of complex chronic health conditions.

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Alternative Solutions

Avoiding Soy: Soy may adversely affect the thyroid in patients and some may benefit from a soy free diet.

Balance Estrogen Levels (Women) -Excess estrogen slows down the thyroid gland. This means eliminating birth control medications, increasing the fiber in the diet, and avoiding all non-organic meats. Growth hormones in meats lead to imbalanced hormones. Reduce dairy intake, because milk often contains lots of estrogen.

Exercise: Regular exercise may reduce the recovery time in individuals.

L-Tyrosine and L-Arginine: are amino acid supplements which may boost thyroid hormone levels.

Iodine: The thyroid needs sufficient iodine levels to function properly. Those patients which are deficient in iodine should discuss iodine supplementation with their doctor for safety reasons.

Eat a natural diet: Avoiding processed foods and eating a wholefoods diet helps the body to heal itself, and removes burdens on the immune system. Refer anti inflammatory diet tips lower on page.

Pears and Apples: The ancient Chinese discovered that pears have a powerful tendency to balance hormones, especially in women. Pears are most effective when mixed with or juiced with apples.

Zinc and Selenium: Severe zinc or selenium deficiencies can cause decreased thyroid hormone levels so supplementation may benefit some patients. Always take zinc with food.

Coconut Oil: Cooking with coconut oil or taking 1 teaspoon daily may speed up the metabolism, encourage production of the thyroid hormone and kill candida yeast.

production of the thyroid hormones, and can cause goiter.

Chlorophyll: Supplementing with chlorophyll provides essential copper, helps oxygenate the body, builds healthy red blood cells, and it overall assists with skin health.

Avoid Canola Oil: Canola oil may interfere with the production of thyroid hormones

Mindfulness: Mindfulness is a set of skills for healing, intuition, insight, calmness, focus, resilience and hope that you can develop to counter the stresses that chronic illness brings. You can literally "train your mind to promote healing".

[More info](#)

Overactive thyroid (Hyperthyroidism)

Bio Medical Solutions

Anti-thyroid Medications: such as propylthiouracil and methimazole (Tapazole), work by preventing the thyroid gland producing excess amounts of hormones. Symptoms usually start improving in six to 12 weeks, but treatment with these medications typically continues at least a year and often longer. This treatment sometimes clears up the problem permanently, but some patients may experience a relapse. Both drugs have the potential to cause serious liver damage, sometimes leading to death. Because propylthiouracil has caused far more cases of liver damage, it generally should be used only when you can't tolerate methimazole. A small number of people who are allergic to these drugs may develop skin rashes, hives, fever or joint pain. These medications may also make patients more susceptible to infection.

Radioactive Iodine: Taken orally, radioactive iodine causes the thyroid gland to shrink and symptoms to subside, usually within three to six months. This treatment can be too effective causing the thyroid gland to be under active (hypothyroidism), the patient may eventually need to take daily medication to replace thyroxine.

Beta Blockers: do not affect thyroid hormone levels but can be effective in treating the symptoms of rapid heartbeat and heart palpitations which are symptoms sometimes associated with hyperthyroidism.

Surgery (thyroidectomy): may be an option for those that are unable to tolerate anti-thyroid meds and iodine.

Graves' ophthalmopathy: if Graves disease affects the patients eyes, they should avoid wind and bright lights and using artificial tears and lubricating gels. For more severe cases the doctor may prescribe a corticosteroid such as prednisone and possibly even consider surgery for more extreme cases.

Alternative Solutions

Diet: if the patient has lost a significant amount of weight or experienced muscle wasting, they may need to add extra calories and protein to their diet. An anti-inflammatory diet avoiding foods high in sugar, saturated fats and processed foods can help to modulate the immune system and help with autoimmune diseases such as Graves' disease. Anti-inflammatory herbs such as turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, rosemary, & oregano among others should be used as much as possible.

Good food options to consider include

- tomatoes.
- olive oil.
- green leafy vegetables, such as spinach, kale, and collards (e.g cabbage and broccoli).
- nuts like almonds and walnuts.
- fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, tuna, and sardines.
- fruits such as strawberries, blueberries, cherries, and oranges

Calcium: supplementation may be an option for patients because hyperthyroidism may contribute to thinning bones, it's important to get enough calcium every day to help avoid osteoporosis.

Vitamin D: may help patients as it helps coordinate the immune response by allowing the body to recognise between foreign and self proteins. This reduces inflammation and auto-immune reactions.

Mindfulness: Mindfulness is a set of skills for healing, intuition, insight, calmness, focus, resilience and hope that you can develop to counter the stresses that chronic illness brings. It is possible to literally "train your mind to promote healing".

[More info](#)

Hyperthyroidism and Hypothyroidism are more common in women, and in those older than 60.

Hypothyroidism & Hashimoto's:

- **Doctors examination** - the doctor may test for an underactive thyroid if the patient is increasingly tired, has dry skin, constipation, is experiencing weight gain, or has had previous thyroid issues.
- **Blood tests** - that measure the level of TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone) and the level of the thyroid hormone thyroxine are used to help diagnose hypothyroidism. A low level of thyroxine and high level of TSH indicate an underactive thyroid.
- **Antibody test** - Hashimoto's disease is an autoimmune disorder. A blood test may confirm production of abnormal antibodies.

Hyperthyroidism & Graves':

- **Doctors examination** - The doctor will look for symptoms including a slight tremor in the fingers when they're extended, overactive reflexes, eye changes and warm, moist skin and rapid pulse. The physical thyroid gland should also be examined as the patient swallows to see if there are any irregularities such as an enlarged, bumpy or tender thyroid gland.
- **Blood tests** - that measure the level of TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone) and the level of the thyroid hormone thyroxine are used to help diagnose hyperthyroidism. A high level of thyroxine and low level of TSH indicate an overactive thyroid.
- **Antibody Test** - Graves' disease is an autoimmune disorder. A blood test may confirm production of abnormal antibodies however test usually isn't necessary to make a diagnosis, but a negative result might indicate another cause for hyperthyroidism.

If blood tests indicate hyperthyroidism, one of the following tests may be done to help determine why thyroid is overactive:

overactive.

- **Radio iodine uptake test** - The patient takes a small, oral dose of radioactive iodine (radioiodine) and the iodine collects in the thyroid gland because the thyroid uses iodine to manufacture hormones. A high uptake of the radioiodine indicates either Graves' disease or hyperfunctioning nodules. A low uptake indicates possible thyroiditis.
- **Thyroid scan** - a radioactive isotope is injected into a vein on the patient. The patient then lies on a table with their head stretched backward while a special camera produces an image of the thyroid gland on a monitor.
- **Ultrasound** - An ultrasound can show if the thyroid gland is enlarged, and is used in patients who can't undergo the radioactive iodine uptake test, such as pregnant women.
- **Imaging tests** - such as a CT scan, MRI and specialised x-ray technology may be ordered to help diagnose Graves' eye disease.

Disclaimer: Information and advice shared by the Towards Wellness Centre is of a general nature and is not intended to replace qualified medical advice. The Towards Wellness Centre does not accept responsibility for any actions or treatments undertaken.