



Tips on *Hypothyroidism* (Underactive Thyroid)



Hypothyroidism happens when your thyroid (a butterfly-shaped gland in the front of your neck) doesn't create and release enough thyroid hormone into your body. This makes your metabolism slow down, affecting your entire body. Also known as underactive thyroid, hypothyroidism is fairly common.¹



What are the symptoms of hypothyroidism?¹

The symptoms of hypothyroidism usually develop slowly over time, sometimes even over years.

Symptoms can include the following:

- Feeling tired
- Experiencing numbness and tingling in your hands
- Having constipation
- Experiencing soreness throughout your body
- Having higher than normal blood cholesterol levels
- Feeling depressed
- Being unable to tolerate cold temperatures
- Having dry, coarse skin and hair
- Experiencing decreased sexual interest
- Having frequent and heavy menstrual periods
- Seeing physical changes in your face (including drooping eyelids, as well as puffiness in the eyes and face)
- Having your voice become lower and hoarser
- Feeling more forgetful



How do I know if I have hypothyroidism?¹

A physical exam

- During a physical exam, your healthcare provider will gently feel your neck to check the size of your thyroid gland.

Blood test²

- Your healthcare provider may take a blood sample to test your levels of thyroid stimulating hormone (also called a TSH test). This is the most important and sensitive test for hypothyroidism.



What are my treatment options?¹

- In general, hypothyroidism is a very treatable condition. In most cases, hypothyroidism is treated by replacing the amount of hormone that your thyroid is no longer making with a medication.
- With careful management of your hypothyroidism, and follow-up appointments with your healthcare provider to make sure your treatment is working properly, you can lead a normal and healthy life.

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¹ Hypothyroidism. Cleveland Clinic website. Reviewed Accessed April 19, 2020. July 15, 2021. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/12120-hypothyroidism>.

² Hypothyroidism (Underactive). American Thyroid Association website. Accessed July 15, 2021. <https://www.thyroid.org/hypothyroidism>.