

HYPOTHYROID

Hypothyroidism = reduced secretion of thyroid hormone

Basic

- Thyroid gland does not produce enough thyroid hormone
- Thyroid hormones play a role in growth and development, metabolic rate, proper functioning of the brain, heart, immune and digestive systems
- Deficiency leads to slower physical and mental activity, cardiovascular diseases (such as atherosclerosis), infertility and osteoporosis

Symptoms

- Fatigue, lethargy, loss of energy, sluggishness, sleepiness
- Weight gain, constipation, cold intolerance, decreased perspiration, heavy menstrual bleeding
- Dry coarse skin, hair loss, loss of outer 1/3 of eyebrow, eye puffiness
- Depression, forgetfulness, low mood



Prevention strategies

- Implement dietary and lifestyle changes that reduce the likelihood of oxidative stress and inflammation – avoid highly refined and processed industrial seed and vegetable oils, refined flour and sugar. Stay physically active! Avoid exposure to environmental toxins, like heavy metals and bisphenol (e.g., BPA) which are endocrine disruptors. Be mindful that many medications have the potential to cause hypothyroidism.
- Eat a diet rich in zinc, selenium, magnesium, and iodine, the essential nutrients for a healthy thyroid gland. Add occasional sea vegetables such as Bladderwrack and Irish moss, a type of seaweed with high iodine and selenium content. Note that supplementing with selenium in the context of low iodine status may actually aggravate hypothyroidism as can exposure to excess iodine. Normalize your vitamin D as low levels can also lead to autoimmune thyroid disease.