Thyroid Health = The Best Herbs for Thyroid Health

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Lemon balm tea may help slow down an overactive thyroid. Photo Credit: Lemon balm image by hazel prouldlove from Fotolia.com

If your thyroid gland fails to work properly, the hormone produced by the gland won't achieve proper levels, leaving you either fatigued and with inexplicable weight gain or losing weight rapidly while unable to relax or sleep. In some cases, an inflamed thyroid can lead to stages of both overactive and underactive thyroid, with each stage requiring different treatments. Some herbs and minerals may help ease the complaints of a poorly functioning thyroid, but always check with your doctor for proper dosage and for possible side effects and drug interactions.

HERBS FOR HYPERTHYROIDISM

The American Thyroid Association reports that primary symptoms of hyperthyroidism, also known as overactive thyroid, include nervousness, excessive weight loss, rapid heartbeat and insomnia. Hyperthyroidism occurs when the gland produces too much of the thyroid hormone into the system.

Bugleweed may help stabilize overactive thyroid, according to the University of Maryland Medical Center. UMMC recommends making bugleweed tea from 2 grams of the dried herb. Lemon balm tea may be used alone or with bugleweed to treat hyperthyroidism. Use 2 tbsp. dried lemon balm.

Sip motherwort tea three times a day for the rapid heartbeat associated with an over-active thyroid. Use 2 grams when making tea. An enzyme extracted from pineapple, the supplement bromelain, appears to soothe inflammation. When this occurs in the thyroid, it can trigger hyperthyroidism. UMMC suggests taking 250 to 500 mg of bromelain three times a day.

Taking a turmeric supplement each time you take bromelain may increase the effectiveness of the latter, UMMC notes. Take 500 mg doses.

HERBS FOR HYPOTHYROIDISM

Underactive thyroid, or hypothyroidism, occurs when the thyroid under-produces the thyroid hormone. Symptoms include fatigue, weight gain, chills, muscle cramps and heavy menstrual flow in women.

The herb coleus forskohlii appears to help underactive thyroid glands by increasing the amount of the hormone it produces, according to UMMC. Take 50 to 100 mg three times a day.

Hawthorne may help lower high cholesterol, a symptom that sometimes accompanies underactive thyroid. Take 500 mg capsules twice a day to counteract this effect, suggests UMMC.

Taking bladderwrack is only advisable when underactive thyroid can be linked to an iodine deficiency, which is rare in the Western world, according to UMMC. Take the high-iodine seaweed bladderwrack only when directed by a doctor.
Herbs are plants or plant products, including roots, stems, leaves, flowers, seeds or fruits, valued for their scent, flavor or medicinal properties. They can be marketed and sold in raw form or as extracts. Herbal medicine has been practiced for thousands of years with scarce scientific evidence regarding the safety and efficacy of most herbal products. Basic research over the past few decades demonstrates that several plants have an effect on thyroid economy or thyroid hormone metabolism, although the limited numbers of studies on human subjects have led to contradictory results. **Guggulu** (the gum resin of Commiphora mukul) is reported to raise the triiodothyronine (T3)/thyroxine (T4) ratio in female mice[1,2] and reverse the effects of propylthiouracil in hypothyroid mice by stimulating thyroid function.[1]

Radovic et al. demonstrated that xanthohumol (*Humulus lupulus*) stimulates iodide uptake while in a culture of normal non-transformed rat thyrocytes, possibly by influencing the activity of the sodium iodide symporter, a key protein in thyroid hormone production.[3] This effect actually makes xanthohumol a potential candidate for improving radioactive ablation of the thyroid gland by means of stimulating better radioiodine concentration. Similar effects were observed with forskolin (*Coleus forskohlii*) in RET/PTC1-expressing thyroid follicular cells.[4]

**Withania somnifera** is credited with anti-aging properties, sedative and anti-inflammatory effects, as well as increased serum T4 but not (T3) levels. It is thought to be a thyroid stimulant, while **Bauhinia purpurea** bark extract increased both T4 and T3 levels in female mice. [5] A similar effect was observed with **Bacopa monnieri** (Indian pennywort) extract, which increased both T4 and T3 levels in male mice. [6]

**Moringa oleifera** leaf extract has been observed to decrease the conversion of T4 to T3 in female but not in male adult Swiss rats, therefore increasing the T4/T3 ratio,[7] indicating a potential use for therapy of hyperthyroidism. Similar effects were observed with **Aegle marmelos** extract, which was observed to decrease T3 with an increase in T4 serum concentration in male mice. [6]

Even widely used **Aloe vera extract** has been reported to cause a mild decrease in both T4 and T3 concentrations in male mice.[6] **Sea kelp** (*Ascophyllum nodosum*) and **bladderwrack** (*Fucus vesiculosus*) are known dietary sources of natural iodine, which, in excess, can be associated with thyroid overactivity.

In addition to herbal products, ground thyroid extract of animal origin was widely used for the treatment of hypothyroidism before the era of synthetic thyroid hormones, and can be found today in some over-the-counter (OTC) preparations found in health food stores, on the internet or by mail order. Animal thyroid gland extract contains a combination of T4 and T3 that can widely vary in amount from batch to batch and at times with a T3 content that is greater than what the human thyroid directly secretes on a daily basis.[8]

**HERBS FOR GENERAL THYROID HEALTH**

UMMC singles out horsetail, kelp and oat straw as three botanicals "rich in minerals that may help promote thyroid function." Additionally, research continues on the mineral selenium, found in
certain foods and herbs, including wheat germ, raspberry leaf, alfalfa, burdock root, ginseng and yarrow, selenium also comes in capsule form.

Medline Plus notes that the selenium's specific effectiveness on thyroid function remains unclear, but that people with natural deficiencies of the mineral often develop thyroid problems. Selenium may help with thyroid-related Grave's disease and goiter, but ask your doctor about the latest research and the pros and cons of adding selenium-rich foods or herbs to your diet or taking supplements.

"Selenium plays a role in thyroid function and is needed for the immune system to work properly," notes UMMC. "However, in most cases scientists aren't sure whether low selenium levels are a cause or an effect of the disease."

**Medical Marijuana Helps Treat Acquired Hypothyroidism**

**WHAT IS ACQUIRED HYPOTHYROIDISM?**

Acquired hypothyroidism is a condition where the thyroid gland makes too little or no thyroid hormone. This occurs anytime during childhood and usually affects children starting at six months of age. The thyroid gland is a butterfly-shaped organ that can be found in the front part of your neck. Thyroid hormones are special chemicals that help control how your body works. This includes keeping a normal body temperature, heart rate, and growth. The thyroid hormones also control how your body uses energy, and affects weight gain and loss. In children, thyroid hormones play an important role in normal growth and development.

**WHAT CAUSES ACQUIRED HYPOTHYROIDISM?**

The following conditions may cause or increase your child’s risk of having acquired hypothyroidism:

- **Autoimmune disease:** The immune system is your body’s defense against infections and diseases. A problem with the immune system may make the body attack even its own cells. Autoimmune thyroiditis (swelling of the thyroid gland) is the most common autoimmune disease that may cause acquired hypothyroidism.

- **Delayed onset of congenital hypothyroidism:** Some children who have hypothyroidism when they are born, may only show signs and symptoms much later in childhood.

- **Diet:** Having too little or no iodine in your child’s diet may cause hypothyroidism. Iodine is an important mineral used by the thyroid gland to work correctly and make thyroid hormones.

- **Family history:** Having a family member with hypothyroidism or autoimmune disease may also increase your child’s risk.

- **Medicines:** Taking certain medicines, such as those used to treat depression or other mental problems, may cause hypothyroidism. Medicines to treat hyperthyroidism (too much thyroid hormone) may also decrease the thyroid hormones in your child’s body.

- **Treatments:** Radiation therapy used to treat cancers of the head and neck can destroy your child’s thyroid gland. Surgery to remove all or part of the thyroid gland makes him more likely to develop hypothyroidism.

- **Other diseases or conditions:** Having thyroid problems, such as an enlarged or swollen thyroid. Nodules (lumps) caused by infections or cancer may grow in your child’s thyroid and affect how it works.
WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ACQUIRED HYPOTHYROIDISM?

The signs and symptoms of acquired hypothyroidism may be different depending on your child’s age.

- **Early signs and symptoms:**
  - Bulging soft mass in the belly button.
  - Coarse or dull-looking facial features.
  - Delay or failure in growth and development.
  - Dry, flaky skin or thin and brittle fingernails or hair.
  - Hoarseness and large tongue.
  - Large arm and leg muscles.

- **Later signs and symptoms:**
  - Feeling depressed, irritable, or lacking energy.
  - Feeling too cold when the temperature is just right or normal for everyone else.
  - Learning, speech, or behavior problems
  - Problems moving his bowel, such as constipation (dry, hard stools).
  - Delay in sexual development, like breasts or testes.
  - Swelling of his whole body, very slow heartbeat, and troubled breathing.
  - Teeth may erupt (appear) late.

**The Many Ways Cannabis Might Treat Thyroid Disease**

Medical Marijuana is a very old medicinal herb used for not hundreds but thousands of years to treat a great variety of ailments. Historically, Marijuana was used to treat insomnia, mental issues, pain, inflammation, intestinal conditions and cramping. Now, as modern medicines chimes in, the active ingredients of Marijuana, called Cannabinoids, have been shown to have anti-bacterial, anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory and anxiety reducing properties.

Let's look at an example Thyroid disease case. A woman in her late 40's has developed a swelling, a lump on her neck In error, prescribes hormone replacement therapy without result. What might Medical Marijuana do for this poor woman?

There are many issues to look at in Thyroid disease. The condition could be cancerous, there could be an excess or deficiency in iodine, there could be an infection and fluid build up, a benign tumor, cancer, infection or hormonal disorder. The absolutely amazing thing about the Cannabinoids in Marijuana is that they have been shown - in clinical settings - to help every one of the listed conditions. However, too much of the research evidence relies on animal trials

Disclaimer: The information provided here is for informational purposes and is not intended to prescribe a treatment for any disease or condition. While we’re excited about the wealth of outstanding research that concludes or suggests that Medical Marijuana might effectively treat Thyroid diseases and its symptoms; before acting on any
information herein, readers are advised to consult with a trusted medical professional before taking action.

With that said, it is very important to note that consensus research findings at this point indicate that Medical Marijuana is an adjunct therapy rather than a primary treatment.

**THYROID ISSUES - THE BASICS**

The thyroid is a gland located in the middle of your neck. The Thyroid produces hormones that regulate metabolic rate. If your thyroid is underactive, you’ll feel tired. An overactive Thyroid will cause you to race around and then burn out.

- *Marijuana can definitely modify receptors that control metabolism. Certain strains are known to be uplifting and some sedating. New strains high in the Cannabinoid CBD, without a stoner or psychoactive component tend to balance the metabolism.*

Thyroid issues range from somewhat "harmless" goiter to life threatening cancer. Most thyroid issues involve an abnormal production of thyroid hormones. Many Thyroid conditions can be successfully managed, however, side effects are often underestimated. Thyroid medications are often somewhat toxic.

- Synthroid LEVOTHYROXINE SODIUM   Levothyroxine is used to treat an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism). It replaces or provides more thyroid hormone, which is normally produced by the thyroid gland. Side effects include fast or irregular heartbeat; fever, hot flashes, sweating; sleep problems (insomnia); changes in your menstrual periods; or vomiting, diarrhea, appetite changes, weight changes and HAIR LOSS

**The Multiple Causes Thyroid Issues**

Hyperthyroidism: an overproduction of thyroid hormones

Graves' disease features irritability, muscle weakness, sleeping problems, a fast heartbeat, poor tolerance of heat, diarrhea, and weight loss.

- *Marijuana is commonly recommended by California Medical Physicians to treat all of these conditions listed above. See our Disease and Conditions section to learn how MMJ can treat your specific condition and symptoms.*

Toxic adenomas: Nodules in the thyroid gland and begin to secrete thyroid hormones, upsetting the body's chemical balance.

- Marijuana's Cannabinoids has been shown to induce suicide in rogue cell (tumors).

Subacute thyroiditis: Inflammation of the thyroid that causes the gland to "leak" excess hormones.

- Cannabinoids have been shown, time and again to reduce inflammation. The cannabinoid, CBG has been shown to take out Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)

Pituitary gland malfunctions or cancerous growths in the thyroid gland.

- Medical Marijuana has anti-cancer activity.

**Hypothyroidism:** an underproduction of thyroid hormones, leads to lower energy levels. In extreme cases this disorder can induce coma and even result in death. Causes include:
**Hashimoto's thyroiditis** : An autoimmune disorder where, the body attacks thyroid tissue and cells eventually die when thyroid hormones ceases.

- Medical Marijuana components, especially CBD and THC have been shown to modulate downward inflammation throughout the entire body.

**Exposure to excessive amounts of iodide**: Cold and Flu medicines, heart drug amiodarone, dyes given for X-rays may expose you to too much iodine. Lithium is implicated as a cause of hypothyroidism. Untreated for long periods of time, hypothyroidism can bring on a myxedema coma, a rare but potentially fatal condition that requires immediate hormone treatment.

- Look into healthy and unhealthy forms of Iodine. Ask your doctor if you can get rid of unhealthy forms is you have thyroid issues.

**Pituitary disorders** can cause the thyroid to act erratically because of an interruption in the secretion of thyroid stimulating hormone. Pituitary disorders are often caused by tumors.

- Medical Marijuana has shown anti-tumor properties.

**Cancer**: Relax a bit, consider that only 5% of thyroid nodules result in Cancer. Still, you should take action and consider lifestyle changes that might help your thyroid, Cancer or not.

- The US Cancer Institute found that, yes, Marijuana can KILL Cancer.

**Nodules and Swelling**

A **Single thyroid** nodule is benign 95% of the time, but it needs to be checked to see if it’s cancerous. In any case, you want to take preventative measures to reduce the size and growth of nodules.

**Multiple thyroid nodules** are common and rarely cancerous. Multinodular situations don’t usually require surgery unless you have problems swallowing or breathing or it’s too ugly for your taste.

**Diffuse goitre** is usually caused by autoimmune thyroid conditions like Hashimoto’s thyroiditis and Graves’ disease.

**Retrosternal goitre** Multinodular thyroid can grow from behind the breastbone, impinging and constricting the windpipe (trachea) and the large veins in the neck and esophagus. If the growth and/or inflammation cannot be reduced, surgery is the final option.

**Colloid and Hyperplastic nodules**

These are benign lumps don’t usually require surgery.

**Thyroid adenoma**

This benign lump can resemble cancer in scans and biopsy and needs confirmation by microscopic examination.

**Thyroid cyst**

This swelling contains fluid that may be removed with a needle. Some cysts may require surgery, but healthy living and other therapies may cause cysts to shrink to a non-threatening size.
Thyroid cancer
Thyroid cancer is rare and responds well to traditional therapy. In this procedure, most or all of the thyroid and the nodules are removed. Post-op, patients are put on thyroid replacement therapy.

MMJDOCTORONLINE Notes: If you have any questions relating to this article you can chat with a Medical Doctor online in a Cannabis Consultation. If you would like to try Cannabis as an adjunct therapy (supporting other approaches) be sure to discuss the matter with a trusted healthcare professional first. To buy lab tested Marijuana to treat your conditions and symptoms you must have a Medical Marijuana Recommendation from a licensed medical doctor. A 420 Evaluation online only takes a few minutes of your time and is much cheaper than a visit to the clinic. Click here to apply online.

FURTHER READING: THYROID DISEASE AND MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Natural Remedy to Reduce Thyroid Nodule Swelling
After you see your doctor, consider natural ways to treat your symptoms.

More Natural Remedies for Thyroid Nodules
"Thyroid nodule is a cystic condition sometimes filled with fluid. Depending on the size of thyroid nodules, it may affect your appearance. The nodules are solid and fluid containing. They are noncancerous and generally do not lead to any symptoms. Thyroid nodules are benign and can easily be treated with use of products that shrink the skin and phlegm."

Marijuana and your thyroid - Elevated Information - Powered by Weedmaps
"Hi everyone. I am located in the USA and there is like, little to no info on what I am looking for. I have been damned with a hyper thyroid and it is freakin miserable. I'm trying to find out info on: 1.Does smoking cause thyroid problems? 2. Does smoking help with a hyper thyroid?"

GrassCity Discussion - Users and Patients of MMJ for Thyroid Issues
"Seriously get real medicine don't rely on marijuana for a Thyroid condition ever. You need pills and such. Cannabis works fine for pain or anxiety or the Michigan list of accepted diseases."

Endocrine effects of Medical Marijuana
"Dig deep into the science of Marijuana and your hormones. This basic information may lead the way to better medical use of Cannabinoids in the treatment of disastrous hormonal dispositions."

Marijuana Shows Potential in Treating Autoimmune Disease
"Researchers have discovered a novel pathway through which marijuana's main active constituent, THC, can suppress the body's immune functions. The recent findings show that THC can change critical molecules of epigenome called histones, leading to suppression of inflammation."

Medical Marijuana United States Patent 6,630,507
"Cannabinoids have been found to have antioxidant properties, unrelated to NMDA receptor antagonism. This new found property makes cannabinoids useful in the treatment and prophylaxis of wide variety of oxidation associated diseases, such as ischemic, age-related, inflammatory and autoimmune disease."
Medical Marijuana U.S. Patent 6630507
"The U.S. Patent Office issued patent #6630507 to the U.S. Health and Human Services filed on 2/2/2001. The patent lists the use of certain cannabinoids found within the cannabis sativa plant as useful in certain neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and HIV dementia."

What is Thyroid Hormone Replacement Therapy?
"If you are prescribed a form of thyroid hormone replacement therapy, the goal is to compensate for the lack of hormone secreted by your thyroid gland. In most cases, you will take a daily dose of T4 in a pill taken orally."

Avoid hypothyroidism by avoiding the causes

(NaturalNews) There are many pathways available for the regulation of the production and conversion of thyroid hormones. Consequently, there are a lot of opportunities for things to go wrong. A healthy thyroid relies on many factors, including, but not limited to, a healthy endocrine system, stable hormone levels, healthy and balanced gut flora, a healthy liver, properly functioning adrenals, healthy kidneys, and clean, healthy blood.

CANDIDA

Candida overgrowth leads to a host of problems and eventually causes autoimmune disease. It also inhibits the body's ability to properly digest and assimilate nutrition. An overabundance of Candida toxifies the blood in many different ways, which inhibits all gland activity.

AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE

Hashimoto's disease is a condition where the immune system attacks the thyroid. Autoimmune disorders occur when your immune system produces antibodies that attack your own tissues. This is
typically due to a leaky gut as a result of an overabundance of Candida due to poor diet and/or antibiotic use.

**CONVENTIONAL HYPOTHYROIDISM TREATMENTS**

People with overactive thyroids are often treated with radioactive iodine or anti-thyroid medications intended to normalize thyroid function. Often these treatments result in permanent hypothyroidism (permanent by conventional medical standards).

**THYROID SURGERY**

Removing a portion of your thyroid gland will diminish or halt hormone production. A person who wants to balance their hormones after thyroid removal surgery (or partial removal) needs to either take hormones for life or grow back their thyroid.

**RADIATION THERAPY**

Radiation used to treat cancers of the head and neck can do serious long-term damage to the thyroid gland.

**MEDICATIONS**

Many medications contribute to hypothyroidism, including, but not limited to, medications for mental health, sleep medications, painkillers, and allergy medications.

**OTHER DRUGS (NICOTINE, CAFFEINE, MARIJUANA)**

Any stimulant will wear out the thyroid and the adrenals. Many people consume a lot of caffeine over a period of time, eventually leading to adrenal fatigue and hypothyroidism.

Marijuana disrupts the entire endocrine system, affecting all glandular hormone production. THC, in particular, lowers the immune system's ability to fight infection, and can, with heavy use, lower thyroid hormonal output. Also, smoking anything causes the blood to become thick and toxic with free radicals and carcinogens that clog glands and hinder hormone production.

**IODINE DEFICIENCY**

The thyroid gland converts iodine into thyroid hormones. Iodine is a trace mineral found primarily in seafood, seaweed, plants grown in iodine-rich soil, unrefined sea salt, and iodized table salt. Many people do not get enough iodine, and contrary to popular belief, this includes many people in developed countries.

Iodine from iodized salt is poorly absorbed and is not a healthy choice for raising iodine levels in the diet as refined table salt contributes to a host of health problems. Iodine is absolutely necessary for thyroid function, but too much iodine (especially iodine outside of food) can impair thyroid function as well.

**GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS**

Eating genetically modified foods can trigger autoimmune conditions like Graves' Disease or Hashimoto's Thyroiditis. GMOs destroy the gut lining and lead to a host of problems.

**VACCINES**

Vaccines can wreck havoc on the endocrine system and cause autoimmune issues that can end up attacking the thyroid. Formaldehyde and heavy metal toxins such as mercury and aluminum are
huge contributors to the hypothyroidism epidemic. Many studies have concluded that the ingredients in vaccines harm thyroid function.

**MERCURY AMALGAM FILLINGS**

A mouth full of mercury is usually synonymous with a problematic thyroid. Mercury wrecks havoc on the endocrine system, the nervous system, the brain, and well, the whole body. Amalgam fillings absolutely must be removed to restore normal, healthy thyroid function. See the first two sources for more oral health and this issue.

**FLUORIDE**

Even small amounts of fluoride lessen the pituitary gland’s ability to function, which in turn slows thyroid production. Larger amounts of fluoride, which most people do consume from tap water, disrupt the whole endocrine system and wreck havoc on hormone production. Fluoride consumption over time essentially slows the whole body down, including the brain.

**ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS**

The thyroid is quite vulnerable to environmental toxins including, but not limited to, pesticides, herbicides, BPAs, jet fuel, perchlorates, thiocyanates, PCBs, lead, chlorine, fluorine, bromine, and many other chemicals we come in contact with that have been proven to cause hypothyroidism. We are bombarded with these chemicals due to the way we construct buildings, the way we produce products, the way we travel, and the way we grow food. Our only defense is high quality nutrition and avoiding toxin exposure through diet, chemical exposure in our environment, and absorption through the products we use for personal care.

**LESS OFTEN...**

Less often, hypothyroidism may result from congenital disease, a pituitary disorder, or pregnancy (due to lack of nutrition while pregnant).

**THYROID, ADRENALS, AND THE BODY'S HORMONES**

Weakened adrenal glands lead to the development of thyroid disorders. Adrenal fatigue is often, perhaps usually, the root cause of hypothyroidism.

What causes adrenal fatigue? Pretty much the same things that cause low thyroid output. When the adrenals are constantly being worked (due to stress, stimulants, and lack of sleep), an overabundance of cortisol produced by the adrenals will cause a host of problems and completely unbalance the hormone levels of the body. For instance, cortisol can also inhibit proper T3 utilization. When the adrenal glands are performing poorly for a long enough period of time, the body ends up in a state of catabolism; the body begins to break down. Eventually, the adrenals will "crash" and cortisol levels fall well below optimum levels. This is adrenal fatigue.

Truly healing the thyroid typically requires healing the adrenals or the entire endocrine system.

Be sure to read *Kill Candida*, because an unbalanced ecosystem is the most common precursor to disease, including hypothyroidism. The thyroid will not heal unless the digestive system is healed. Also, be sure to check out *Understand Hypothyroidism - Prevention and Natural Remedies* and *Natural Remedies for Adrenal Fatigue*.

**Sources:**
- http://www.organiclifestylemagazine.com
- http://www.organiclifestylemagazine.com
Michael Edwards is the founder, owner, editor-in-chief, and janitor for Organic Lifestyle Magazine and Green Lifestyle Market. At age 17, Michael weighed more than 360 pounds. He suffered from ADHD, allergies, frequent bouts of illness, and chronic, debilitating insomnia. Conventional medicine wasn't working. While he restored his health through alternative medicine he studied natural health and became immersed in it.

Learn more: http://www.naturalnews.com/048920_hypothyroidism_autoimmune_disease_causes.html#ixzz4KG8pbZR

How to Heal Your Thyroid Naturally

15 of The Best Herbs and Plants To Stabilize and Boost Thyroid Function

Many natural health practitioners are often quick to tell you that "thyroid problems mean you need iodine" or iodine supplements, however this is not always the case and supplementing with natural iodine will only help those who are deficient. Understanding which herbs can stabilize and boost thyroid function is integral in any natural treatment plan for hyper- or hypothyroidism.

It is estimated that over 200 million people globally (about 35 million people in North America) suffer from at least one of the many forms of thyroid disease. In fact, thyroid problems are increasing so much in frequency that scientists are calling it an epidemic. The incidence of thyroid illness occurs about seven times more frequently in women than men, and it is thought that at least 50% of the cases are undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. Some homeopathic remedies are very useful in relieving symptoms associated with imbalance in thyroid gland function. However, herbs can directly act on the gland and the immune system itself. Here are 15 herbs that can make in stabilizing and boosting thyroid function.

1. SCHISANDRA

Schisandra and its berries provide powerful antioxidant protection, particularly from free radicals and other toxins in the environment that may cause cellular damage. Much of the clinical research has focused on the effects of Schisandra on the production of various detoxifying enzymes as well as the antioxidant activity of the extract. More research is needed to fully understand the exact biochemical activity of this tremendous plant. Extensive experimental research in Russia has documented the many adaptogen properties of this herb, including the positive effects it has on the central nervous, sympathetic, endocrine, immune, respiratory, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal systems and prevention of atherosclerosis, high blood sugar and other outcomes under periods of chronic stress.
2. RHODIOLA

Rhodiola has been categorized as an adaptogen because of its ability to help us increase our resistance to a variety of chemical, biological and physical stressors. It is also known as “golden rod,” with tremendous fat burning, energy enhancing and brain boosting power. Its purported benefits include acting as an antidepressant, an anticancer agent and having cardio-protective and central nervous system enhancement abilities. It adaptogenic qualities are particularly notable in its ability to enhance the body’s stress buffering systems and protect the stress responding endocrine glands, the adrenal, thyroid, ovary or testes. Even for individuals who don’t have chronic fatigue syndrome, rhodiola is becoming increasingly popular to counter the exhaustion that occurs from working the body too hard, either physically or mentally. With rhodiola, problems of fatigue- or exhaustion-related sleep, appetite, and headache may lift. Those struggling to recover from an intense work schedule may also benefit from the herb’s apparent energy-boosting powers.

3. ASHWAGANDHA

Ashwagandha also known commonly as Indian ginseng, poison gooseberry, or winter cherry is a plant that flourishes in India and North America. The roots of the ashwagandha plant have been employed for millennia by Ayurvedic healers. Numerous modern studies have found that ashwagandha shows great promise for being effective in reducing inflammation, decreasing stress, increasing mental activity, invigorating the body, and as an antioxidant. It is even known to relieve arthritis better than medication. Ashwagandha leads to larger amounts of three different natural antioxidants: superoxide dismutase, catalase and glutathione peroxidase. It has been shown to decrease blood cortisol levels by up to 26% in chronically-stressed individuals and boosts immune function, endocrine function, mental functioning and enhances libido -- all features of an anti-stress adaptogen.

4. REHMANNIA

Sometimes known as Chinese Foxglove, the plants have large flowers and are grown as ornamental garden plants in Europe and North America, and are used medicinally in Asia. It contains the vitamins A, B, C, and D as well as other compounds, such as catalpol, an iridoid glycoside, that has been shown to exert protective effects in reducing pro-inflammatory factors. Rehmannia is especially used for treating hormonal disorders, such as menopause, thyroid imbalance and adrenal insufficiency.

5. LICORICE

Licorice has many uses and is considered a tonic plant in many traditional medicinal systems. It has been used to support a healthy digestion, lung and respiratory function and promote a healthy adrenal response to stress. Licorice contains triterpenoid saponins, notably glycyrrhizin and glycyrrhetinic acid as well as a fair amount of flavonoids and flavones like liquiritin, and numerous chalcones and isoflavones. Many people who have suffered from hypothyroidism have found that small, safe dosages of licorice have been dramatically beneficial. People with hypothyroidism often produce lower levels of cortisol and licorice stimulates the production of cortisol by the thyroid gland, suggesting that it could be useful in the treatment of hypothyroidism.
6. **BACOPA**

Bacopa is a potent as thyroid stimulating drugs to fight hypothyroidism. Some experiments found that Bacopa monnieri’s extract increases by 41% the concentration of Tyroxine, while T3 levels do not change. This suggests that Bacosides work directly on the Thyroid Gland, stimulating the synthesis and/or release of T4, without altering the conversion of T4 into T3. These studies confirm that the plant has a stimulant effect on the Thyroid Gland.

7. **BLADDERWRACK**

Bladderwrack is a seaweed also known by the common names black tang, rockweed, bladder fucus, sea oak, black tany, cut weed, dyers fucus, red fucus, and rock wrack. It was the original source of iodine, discovered in 1811, and was used extensively to treat goitre, a swelling of the thyroid gland related to iodine deficiency. Primary chemical constituents of this plant include mucilage, algin, mannitol, beta-carotene, zeaxanthin, iodine, bromine, potassium, volatile oils, and many other minerals. Many patients who have taken synthetic or natural thyroid hormones have been able to eventually wean off these drugs with the help of this herb (under the supervision). In fact, Dr. Janet Lang, who is the founder of Restorative Endocrinology, talks about this herb as being “liquid magic” for people with hypothyroid conditions. When combined with the herb Ashwaganda this herb can stimulate the production of thyroid hormone in some people with hypothyroid conditions. Since the amount of iodine is low in this herb, most people with Hashimoto’s don’t have a problem taking this herb, although some will still choose to avoid it out of fear that it will exacerbate their condition. This herb shouldn’t be taken by those with hypothyroidism, and is contraindicated in women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Bladderwrack, being a seafood, is also prone to high levels of toxins such as heavy metals like arsenic found in ocean water so source is key.

8. **BLACK WALNUT**

Black walnut is a species of flowering tree in the walnut family. It has been promoted as a potential cancer cure, on the basis it kills a "parasite" responsible for some cancers. The fresh green hulls are used to produce the herbal medicine and are concentrated in the chemical juglone. Many cultures have used Black walnut hulls to support a healthy intestinal environment and eaten the nuts for their rich Omega 3 essential fatty acid content, vitamin C and flavor. Aside from seafoods, black walnut is considered as one of the richest sources of iodine. Research shows, iodine is an essential nutrient that plays a vital role in optimizing the health and functioning of the thyroid glands. Furthermore, it was found out that insufficient amount of iodine usually lead to a number of conditions which include chronic fatigue, depression, mental impairment, and goiters.

9. **ECHINACEA**

This very popular herb is responsible for enhancing immune system function. It is an antioxidant plus it has anti-inflammatory, anti-viral and pain-relieving properties. There are distinct functions to differentiate depending on the part of the plant being used. It is important to look for and use products that have been tested for activity and list either Alkylamides or Polysaccharide content on the label, as these constituents are relatively unstable and need to be prepared and delivered properly to maximize efficacy. The flowers when harvested in their early developmental phase contain Arabinogalactin Proteins and Polysaccharides. These chemicals support ongoing immune function and are best-used long term for supporting the immune system. The roots harvested in the fall contain large amounts of Alkylamides and support a healthy inflammatory response in the
sinuses and are best used at onset, not for long-term use. Most people with autoimmune thyroid conditions are TH-1 dominant and Echinacea has been found to exacerbate the condition in a minority of people. Others benefit and experience no ill effects. Echinacea is a wonderful herb that can benefit many people with Graves’ Disease and Hashimoto’s Thyroiditis and will typically NOT aggravate an autoimmune condition.

10. ELEUTHERO

Eleuthero has a broad-spectrum, normalizing action that brings an organism back to homeostasis. In Chinese herbology it is used by people with bone marrow suppression caused by chemotherapy or radiation, angina, hypercholesterolemia, and neurasthenia with headache, insomnia, and poor appetite. It exhibits excellent anti-inflammatory, immunogenic and antidepressant-like properties. It increases the ability of subjects to withstand stress such as heat, noise, motion, exercise, and increase in workload. Patients with both hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism can take this herb (including both Hashimoto’s Thyroiditis and Graves’ Disease). The herb doesn’t directly affect the thyroid gland, but instead helps the body to adapt to stressful situations, and also helps with the health of the immune system. For people with adrenal problems, which is common in people with thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions, this is a very beneficial herb.

11. COLEUS FORSKOLII

In Ayurvedic medicine Coleus species have been used to treat heart disease, convulsions, spasmodic pain and painful urination. The herbal teas contain rosmarinic acid and also flavonoid glucuronides and diterpenoids. The chemical constituents of Coleus Forskohlii have been show to gave excellent antioxidant activity and acetylcholinesterase inhibition. A recent PubMed search yielded 17,256 studies on this plant compound. There are over 35 known biological activities for Forskolin alone. One of the most interesting, researched and prospectively helpful is it’s ability to promote healthy cells through the enzyme Cyclic Adenosine Monophosphate (cAMP). This enzyme is a cellular messenger, you can think of it as the intelligence of the cell for when a cell is carrying out its function properly, high amounts of cAMP are found and when a cell is not functioning properly, low amounts are found. Low cAMP levels are found in hypersensitized mast cells and other unhealthy cells that will not burn their stored fat.

12. HAWTHORN LEAF AND BERRY

Used to promote the health of the circulatory system, treat angina, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure and cardiac arrhythmia and has been found to strengthen the heart. Hawthorn is widely regarded in Europe as a safe and effective treatment for the early stages of heart disease and is endorsed by Commission E- the branch of the German government that studies and approves herbal treatments. It is used to promote the health of the circulatory and endocrine system and has been found useful in treating angina, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, cardiac arrhythmia and endocrine disorders. Animal and laboratory studies have found that hawthorn contains active compounds with antioxidant properties. Antioxidants are substances that scavenge free radicals; damaging compounds in the body that alter cell membranes, tamper with DNA, and even cause cell death. Free radicals occur naturally in the body, but environmental toxins (including ultraviolet light, radiation, cigarette smoking, and air pollution) can also increase their number.
13. LEMON BALM

Lemon balm is a member of the mint family, is considered a calming herb. Lemon balm is an incredible herb that is considered beneficial by acting directly on the thyroid gland. It may block some of the activity of thyroid hormone in the body. Therefore, it has been used in the past to treat Grave's disease. Research shows that this herb is useful in normalizing the activities of overactive thyroid glands by reducing the production of thyroid hormones and easing the symptoms associated with hyperthyroidism.

14. BUGLEWEED

For many people who don’t want to take antithyroid drugs, Bugleweed is an option. It is essentially is an “antithyroid herb”. Key components include phenolic acids (including derivatives of caffeic, chlorogenic, and ellagic acids). The organic acids in bugleweed may work to lower levels of TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone), or it may block the TSH receptors and prevent the hormone from entering the thyroid gland to stimulate production of other hormones. In Graves’ Disease, the thyroid gland produces excessive hormones, resulting in accelerated metabolism with such symptoms as rapid pulse, weight loss, sensitivity to heat, excessive sweating, fatigue, and physical changes, including the development of an enlarged thyroid (goiter) and bulging eyes. Bugleweed appears to influence the metabolism of iodine, which the thyroid uses to make its hormones. Only a very small amount is needed to decrease thyroid function. It is contraindicated for people who have hypothyroidism, and also shouldn’t be taken by those women with hyperthyroidism who are pregnant or lactating.

15. COMMIPHORA MUKUL

Commiphora Mukul produces a resinous sap known as gum guggul. The extract of this gum, called gugulipid, guggulipid or guglipid, has been used in UNANI & Ayurvedic medicine, a traditional UNANI medicine, for nearly 3,000 years in India. Commiphora extract enhances the conversion of T4 to the more potent T3 form. It appears to boost thyroid function without influencing the release of the pituitary hormone TSH, indicating the herbs work directly on the thyroid gland and other body tissues to exert their effects. His action is important. Ninety-five percent of all hypothyroidism cases are not due to pituitary problems. The problem is with the thyroid itself and an impaired T4-to-T3-conversion in tissues outside the gland. 100mg of Commiphora is sufficient for a therapeutic effect.

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8 NATURAL HYPOTHYROIDISM TREATMENTS THAT WORK
Every week I get questions about hormone imbalance and a slow metabolism. These are conditions that are chronically plaguing both men and women all across America. What causes most of these issues? Problems with the thyroid.

The good news is I’m here to tell you the top natural hypothyroidism treatment and thyroid remedies.

Did you know that according to the United States National Library of Medicine and National Institutes of Health, an estimated 27 million Americans suffer from thyroid disease? Not only that but 13 million of these sufferers are currently undiagnosed. Additionally, the risk of thyroid disease increases as you age and women are seven times more likely than men to be diagnosed with thyroid issues.

The thyroid is a small gland which can be found in the middle of the lower neck that produces a hormone that impacts each and every cell, organ and tissue in the human body. The thyroid gland is responsible for regulating body temperature and the heart rate as well as the production of protein and controlling the rate of your metabolism.

The causes of thyroid issues can be varied, but the 4 most common causes are:

1. **Toxicity**: Radiation and Heavy Metal exposure
2. **Deficiency**: In Iodine and Selenium
3. **Food Intolerance**: Gluten and A1 Casein Allergy
4. **Hormone Imbalance** – High Cortisol from stress, too many carbs, too little fat in diet.

In just a minute I will discuss the top ways to cure your thyroid problem but let’s first see if you potentially have a thyroid problem.

An underactive thyroid, hypothyroidism, is when the thyroid gland doesn’t produce enough thyroid hormone and an overactive thyroid, hyperthyroidism, is when the vital gland produces too much of the needed regulatory hormone.

Symptoms of **Hypothyroidism**:

- Extreme fatigue
- Depression
- Forgetfulness
- Weight gain

Symptoms of **Hyperthyroidism**:

- Irritability
- Nervousness
- Muscle weakness
- Unexplainable weight loss
- Vision and eye issues
• Sleep disturbances and problems

Although these are the symptoms associated with thyroid issues, either type of thyroid problem is very difficult to diagnose without a proper urine or blood test.

Dr. Brownstein says, “The commonly used iodine spot skin test is useless. It’s better to get a ‘spot urinary iodine test’ – which test your morning urine to see how much iodine is present. Or, you can take a “24 hour iodine loading test” – which gives you a pretty good idea how much iodine has been excreted and retained. Bottom line: get tested and consult a qualified, holistic medical professional.”

According to Dr. Datis Kharrazian, 90% of people with hypothyroidism have Hashimoto’s, an autoimmune hypothyroid condition, whereby the immune system attacks thyroid tissue. Therefore, to cure thyroid disease, or any autoimmune condition, you have to get to the source of the imbalance; not suppress the symptoms as is done with medication.

Most often thyroid conditions are treated with pharmaceutical’s like Synthroid, which have damaging side effects to your overall health. The great news is there are all-natural remedies that can help support thyroid function!

So let’s talk about the top 7 things you MUST do to cure your thyroid for good.

Natural Hypothyroidism Treatment

Here are the 8 Secrets to fixing your thyroid issues:

1. **Go Gluten and A1 Casein FREE** – the most common allergies and food intolerances today are from wheat and dairy products because of the hybridized proteins of gluten and a1 casein. These proteins can cause “Leaky Gut” which in turn will cause inflammation of the thyroid and effect it’s function. Follow a grain-free diet or at least [go gluten free](#). Then only consume dairy products that come from A2 cows, goat milk, or sheep milk.

2. **NO BPA** – Bisphenol A ([BPA](#)) is found in plastic bottles and can disrupt your endocrine system and effect your thyroid. I recommend only drinking out of glass, stainless steel, or BPA free plastic bottles.

3. **Check Your Iodine Levels** – If they are low use a kelp or organic liquid iodine supplement.

4. **Heavy Metal Detox** – I recommend using a combination of Milk Thistle, Turmeric, Chlorella, and Cilantro to detox these harmful metals from your cells and organs.
5. **More Selenium** – Make sure you’re getting enough selenium in your diet but also don’t go overboard. Some of the best selenium containing foods are brazil nuts, salmon, sunflower seeds, beef, mushrooms and onions.

6. **Adaptogen Supplements** – Can lower cortisol levels and improve thyroid function like Ashwagandha and Tulsi.

7. **Silver Fillings Removal** – if you have amalgam fillings talk with a DAMS mercury safe dentist about proper removal.

8. **Lower Carbohydrate Intake** – Lower your intake of sugars and grains and replace them with healthy fats. Most women especially consume far too many carbs which increase estrogen and negatively effect the thyroid. Instead consume healthy fats that will balance hormones, like: coconut oil, coconut milk, avocado, grass-fed beef, wild salmon, chia, flaxseeds, and hemp seeds.

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## Hypothyroidism (Underactive Thyroid)

**IN THIS ARTICLE**

- What Causes Hypothyroidism?
- Who Is at Risk for Hypothyroidism?
- Symptoms of Hypothyroidism
- How Is Hypothyroidism Diagnosed?
- How Is Hypothyroidism Treated?
- Complications of Hypothyroidism

Hypothyroidism, also called underactive thyroid disease, is a common disorder. With hypothyroidism, your thyroid gland does not make enough thyroid hormone.

The thyroid gland is located in the front lower part of your neck. Hormones released by the gland travel through your bloodstream and affect nearly every part of your body, from your heart and brain, to your muscles and skin.

The thyroid controls how your body's cells use energy from food, a process called metabolism. Among other things, your metabolism affects your body's temperature, your heartbeat, and how well you burn calories. If you don't have enough thyroid hormone, your body processes slow down. That means your body makes less energy, and your metabolism becomes sluggish.
WHAT CAUSES HYPOTHYROIDISM?

The most common cause of hypothyroidism is Hashimoto’s thyroiditis. “Thyroiditis” is an inflammation of the thyroid gland. Hashimoto’s thyroiditis is an autoimmune disorder. With Hashimoto’s, your body produces antibodies that attack and destroy the thyroid gland. Thyroiditis may also be caused by a viral infection.

Other causes of hypothyroidism include:

Radiation therapy to the neck area. Treating certain cancers, such as lymphoma, requires radiation to the neck. Radiation damages the cells in the thyroid. This makes it more difficult for the gland to produce hormone.

Radioactive iodine treatment. This treatment is commonly prescribed to people who have an overactive thyroid gland, a condition known as hyperthyroidism. However, radiation destroys the cells in the thyroid gland. This usually leads to hypothyroidism.

Use of certain medications. Certain medicines to treat heart problems, psychiatric conditions, and cancer can sometimes affect the production of thyroid hormone. These include amiodarone (Cordarone), lithium, interferon alpha, and interleukin-2.

Thyroid surgery. Surgery to remove the thyroid will lead to hypothyroidism. If only part of the thyroid is removed, the remaining gland may still be able to produce enough hormone for the body’s needs.

Too little iodine in the diet. The thyroid needs iodine to produce thyroid hormone. Your body doesn’t make iodine, so you need to get it through your diet. Iodized table salt is rich in iodine. Other food sources of iodine include shellfish, saltwater fish, eggs, dairy products, and seaweed. Iodine deficiency is rare in the U.S.

Pregnancy. The reason isn’t clear, but sometimes inflammation of the thyroid occurs after pregnancy. This is called postpartum thyroiditis. Women with this condition usually have a severe increase in thyroid hormone levels followed by a sharp drop in thyroid hormone production. Most women with postpartum thyroiditis will regain their normal thyroid function.

Problems with the thyroid at birth. Some babies may be born with a thyroid gland that did not develop correctly or does not work properly. This type of hypothyroidism is called congenital hypothyroidism. Most hospitals in the U.S. screen babies at birth for this disease.

Pituitary gland damage or disorder. Rarely, a problem with the pituitary gland can interfere with the production of thyroid hormone. The pituitary gland makes a hormone, called thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH), which tells your thyroid how much hormone it should make and release.

Disorder of the hypothalamus. An extremely rare form of hypothyroidism can occur if the hypothalamus in the brain does not produce enough of a hormone called TRH. TRH affects the release of TSH from the pituitary gland.

Primary hypothyroidism is caused by a problem with the thyroid gland itself.

Secondary hypothyroidism occurs when another problem interferes with the thyroid's ability to produce hormones. For example, the pituitary gland and hypothalamus produce hormones that trigger the release of thyroid hormone. A problem with one of these glands can make your thyroid underactive.
Sometimes, an underactive thyroid that results from a problem with the hypothalamus is called tertiary hypothyroidism.

**WHO IS AT RISK FOR HYPOTHYROIDISM?**

Women, particularly older women, are more likely to develop hypothyroidism than men. You are also more likely to develop hypothyroidism if you have a close family member with an autoimmune disease. Other risk factors include:

- Race (being white or Asian)
- Age (growing older)
- Prematurely graying hair
- Autoimmune disorders such as type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, celiac disease, Addison's disease, pernicious anemia, or vitiligo
- Bipolar disorder
- Down syndrome
- Turner syndrome

**SYMPTOMS OF HYPOTHYROIDISM**

Symptoms of hypothyroidism may be vague and can often mimic other conditions. They may include:

- Changes in the menstrual cycle
- Constipation
- Depression
- Dry hair and hair loss
- Dry skin
- Fatigue
- Greater sensitivity to cold
- Slow heart rate
- Swelling of the thyroid gland (goiter)
- Unexplained weight gain or difficulty losing weight
- Carpal tunnel syndrome

Babies with hypothyroidism may have no symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they can include:

- Cold hands and feet
- Constipation
- Extreme sleepiness
- Hoarse cry
- Little or no growth
- Low muscle tone (floppy infant)
- Persistent jaundice (yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes)
- Poor feeding habits
- Puffy face
- Stomach bloating
- Swollen tongue

Make an appointment with your health care provider if you or your baby has any of these symptoms. It is important to note that these symptoms can be due to other medical conditions.
**HOW IS HYPOTHYROIDISM DIAGNOSED?**

If you have symptoms of hypothyroidism, your doctor will order blood tests to check hormone levels. These may include:

- Thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH)
- T4 (thyroxine)

Lower-than-normal T4 levels usually mean you have hypothyroidism. However, some people may have increased TSH levels while having normal T4 levels. This is called subclinical (mild) hypothyroidism. It is believed to be an early stage of hypothyroidism.

If your test results or physical exam of the thyroid are abnormal, your doctor may order a thyroid ultrasound, or thyroid scan, to check for nodules or inflammation.

**HOW IS HYPOTHYROIDISM TREATED?**

If you have hypothyroidism, your doctor will prescribe a synthetic (man-made) thyroid hormone T4. You take this pill every day. Certain other medications can interfere with how your body absorbs synthetic thyroid hormone. Make sure you doctor knows about all the medicines, herbs, and supplements you take, including over-the-counter products.

You will need regular blood tests to check your thyroid hormone levels. Your doctor may need to adjust your medication dose from time to time.

**Complications of Hypothyroidism**

Untreated, hypothyroidism may cause:

- Heart problems
- Infertility
- Joint pain
- Obesity

**Thyroid problems** in a pregnant woman can affect the developing baby. During the first three months of pregnancy, the baby receives all thyroid hormone from its mother. If the mother has hypothyroidism, the baby does not get enough thyroid hormone. This can lead to problems with mental development.

Extremely low levels of thyroid hormone can cause a life-threatening condition called myxedema. Myxedema is the most severe form of hypothyroidism. A person with myxedema can lose consciousness or go into a coma. The condition can also cause the body temperature to drop very low, which can cause death.

**MAKING YOUR THYROID HEALTHY**

The thyroid gland is located at the base of your neck and is shaped a bit like a bow tie or a butterfly that bends around the bottom of the throat. It is a very important gland, producing thyroxine, a hormone that helps regulate your metabolism, your heart rate and in children, their growth and development. Imbalances in your thyroid can result in an under-functioning or overactive thyroid. You can support your thyroid’s function with proper diet, exercise, and rest and by minimizing the stress in your life.
Eating the Right Foods

1 **Understand the link between nutrition and thyroid function.** The thyroid depends on good nutrition to get the iodine, selenium and vitamins it needs to function properly. Without the proper nutritive balance, the thyroid cannot do its job properly.

Make time for nutrition. While it is not always the simplest thing to do, you will be doing you and your family a great service by making your own food and encouraging everyone in your family to follow a healthier diet.

2 **Limit the processed and pre-packaged food that you eat.** Processing in general adds sugar to foods. This can worsen any thyroid problems. It takes a bit of practice and planning, but the closer you can get to cooking from scratch, the better. Using whole foods that have not been processed keeps most of their original vitamins, minerals and other nutrients.

One general rule of thumb is that if the food is too white, such as white bread, white rice, white pasta, it has been overly processed. Eat whole grain bread, brown rice and whole grain pasta instead.

3 **Increase the vegetables and fruits in your diet.** Whenever possible, choose to eat local, seasonal, organic produce, the fresher the better. Don't worry too much about sourcing the vegetables. Any produce is better than no produce, even frozen fruits and vegetables can benefit your health.

4 **Limit your meat intake.** Try to eat less meat, particularly red meat. If you do eat meats, make sure any beef is lean (preferably grass-fed, since this has a more natural ratio of omega-3 and omega-6 fats), and any poultry is skinless.

All meat you consume should be raised without hormones or antibiotics. Most meat will specify on the packaging that it is hormone-free. If it doesn’t specify that it’s hormone-free, it’s probably not. Check the organic section for hormone-free meat options.

5 **Boost your fish consumption.** Fish is good quality protein and often has high amounts of the healthy omega-3 fats. Fish is usually lean and can be fairly easy to prepare.

Use caution when selecting fish. Fish that is high in mercury may be bad for your thyroid function.
6 **Include beans and legumes in your diet.** Legumes include foods like lentils and contain many of the vitamins and minerals needed by the thyroid to make thyroid hormone. They are also a good source of protein for individuals who have limited or given up meat consumption.

7 **Reduce your sugar intake.** To keep your sugar levels low, choose complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains. Avoid sugar and sugar substitutes. Simple sugar, either as granulated table sugar or as high fructose corn syrup, is much like an addictive drug. Try using the herb stevia as a sugar substitute if you have a hard time giving up sweets.

Diabetic patients need to have their thyroid checked. Thyroid patients need to have their blood sugar monitored because comorbidities (people who have both diabetes and thyroid problems) are very common.

8 **Get enough iodine.** If you eat a diet that includes moderate amounts of salt and some red meat, you probably get plenty of iodine. But, if you have given up salt in order to try to control your blood pressure, make sure you have an alternate source of iodine. The thyroid needs iodine for proper function. If needed, get a high quality supplement that contains at least 50% of the iodine daily requirement. You can also supplement your diet with some of the following sources of iodine:

- Brownish Sea vegetables (kelp, wakame, dulse)
- Seafood and fish
- Yogurt
- Milk
- Eggs

9 **Ask your doctor about other supplements.** Speak with your healthcare provider about the advantages of supplementing with zinc and selenium, minerals necessary for proper thyroid function. Also, ask about supplementing with Vitamin D3 (2000 IU every day). Autoimmune disease is correlated with low Vitamin D levels.

10 **Drink plenty of water.** Always be sure to stay hydrated with water. It helps your body function properly and will keep you feeling healthy in general.

**PART 2**

Getting Exercise and Rest

1 **Understand the importance of exercise to thyroid function.** Exercise for 30 minutes every day. Your exercise doesn't have to be rigorous or take place at a gym to be effective. 30 minutes of brisk walking a day can be enough to make a difference to your health. You can increase either the speed or the length of your walking if you feel that you need to intensify your exercise.
2 **Try a fitness class.** If you have trouble motivating yourself to exercise, try engaging in group fitness. There are some approaches to wellness, such as yoga, tai chi, and qigong, that are excellent choices to be active and also protect the thyroid gland.

Exercise keeps the blood flowing. This lets the thyroid hormone reach every cell.\[8\]

3 **Reduce your stress levels.** Identify areas of stress in your life and work to reduce their effect on you. You may have to make some tough choices about obligations that you’ve agreed to in the past for the sake of your health. Learn meditation techniques like breathing, visualization, or counting breaths.

4 **Visualize using the chakra system.** Sit quietly and visualize a blue light entering your body at the site of the thyroid. Every time you breath in, the light gets brighter and more blue. As you breath out, it dims a bit. Keep this visualization in mind for as long as you can, but try it for at least 5 minutes every day.

In the ancient chakra energy system, the thyroid gland is at the 5th chakra (Vishuddha) and is characterized by a blue color.\[9\]

5 **Give yourself time to rest.** Make sure you get enough sleep at night and enough down time during the day. The thyroid is very sensitive to stress because it is one of the glands that responds to stress. Because of this, your thyroid needs time to “re-boot.” Rest and relaxation gives the thyroid the time it needs.

**PART3**

Understanding Thyroid Function

1 **Learn about hypothyroidism, or under-functioning thyroid.** Hypothyroidism can be caused by viral infections, radiation damage, some medications, pregnancy and other rarer causes. Most often, too little iodine in the body can cause hypothyroidism. Hypothyroidism is diagnosed by symptoms and lab tests (eg High TSH). Symptoms of an under-active thyroid include:

- Fatigue
- Changes in the menstrual cycle
- Constipation
- Depression
- Dry, coarse hair
- Hair loss
- Dry skin
- Disturbed sleep cycle, usually sleeps a lot more
- Intolerance to cold
- Decreased heart rate
Swelling of the thyroid gland (goiter)
Unexplained weight gain or difficulty losing weight

2 Learn about hyperthyroidism, or over-active thyroid. Hyperthyroidism is most commonly seen as Grave’s disease. It can also be caused by thyroid nodules, which are small growths in the thyroid. Hyperthyroidism is diagnosed by symptoms and lab tests (Eg. Low TSH). Untreated or poorly treated hyperthyroidism can lead to heart problems, bone problems and a very serious condition called a thyroid storm. Symptoms of an overactive thyroid include:
- Rapid heart rate
- Increased respiratory rate
- Frequent and loose bowel movements
- Fine hair that may be falling out
- Unexplained weight loss
- Nervousness, irritability, a feeling of high energy
- Moodiness
- Intolerance to heat
- Sweatiness
- Reddish skin which may be itchy

3 Know when to see a doctor. If your thyroid symptoms seem to be worsening, or you’re still having symptoms after 4 to 6 weeks of trying to heal your thyroid naturally, seek medical assistance. See your general practitioner first. Then, you may need to go to a thyroid specialist.

If you are hypothyroid, your doctor will most likely prescribe thyroid replacement hormone (levothyroxine).

If you have hyperthyroidism or Grave’s Disease, there are a number of options including radiation therapy, medicines which act to inhibit the thyroid, drugs to treat any irregular heartbeats (beta-blockers) or surgery.

4 Continue your wellness practice. If you need medical treatment, you should still follow the diet, exercise, and rest recommendations given here to support healthy thyroid function. Be certain to discuss these steps with your doctor.

Eltroxin Side Effects

Generic Name: levothyroxine

Applies to levothyroxine: oral capsule liquid filled, oral tablet

Other dosage forms:
- injection powder for solution
In addition to its needed effects, some unwanted effects may be caused by levothyroxine (the active ingredient contained in Eltroxin). In the event that any of these side effects do occur, they may require medical attention.

You should check with your doctor immediately if any of these side effects occur when taking levothyroxine:

Less common

- Chest pain or discomfort
- decreased urine output
- difficult or labored breathing
- difficulty with swallowing
- dilated neck veins
- extreme fatigue
- fainting
- fast, slow, irregular, pounding, or racing heartbeat or pulse
- fever
- heat intolerance
- hives or welts
- increased blood pressure
- increased pulse
- irregular breathing
- irritability
- menstrual changes
- nausea
- pain or discomfort in the arms, jaw, back, or neck
- shortness of breath
- skin itching, rash, or redness
- sweating
- swelling of the eyes, face, lips, throat, or tongue
- tightness in the chest
- tremors
- troubled breathing

Rare

- Blurred or double vision
- dizziness
- eye pain
- lack or slowing of normal growth in children
- limp or walk favoring one leg
- pain in the hip or knee
- seizures
- severe headache

If any of the following symptoms of overdose occur while taking levothyroxine, get emergency help immediately:

Symptoms of overdose

- Change in consciousness
- cold, clammy skin
- confusion
- disorientation
- fast or weak pulse
- lightheadedness
- loss of consciousness
- sudden headache
- sudden loss of coordination
- sudden slurring of speech

Some of the side effects that can occur with levothyroxine may not need medical attention. As your body adjusts to the medicine during treatment these side effects may go away. Your health care professional may also be able to tell you about ways to reduce or prevent some of these side effects. If any of the following side effects continue, are bothersome or if you have any questions about them, check with your health care professional:

Less common
- Abdominal or stomach cramps
- change in appetite
- crying
- diarrhea
- false or unusual sense of well-being
- fear
- feeling not well or unhappy
- feeling of discomfort
- feeling of warmth
- feeling things are not real
- feelings of suspicion and distrust
- hair loss
- headache
- increased appetite
- mental depression
- muscle weakness
- nervousness
- quick to react or overreact emotionally
- rapidly changing moods
- redness of the face, neck, arms, and occasionally, upper chest
- restlessness
- trouble getting pregnant
- trouble sitting still
- unusual tiredness or weakness
- vomiting
- weight gain
- weight loss
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