

Hypothyroid Quick Check

In Hypothyroidism, or underactive thyroid, the body does not make enough thyroid hormone. Since the main purpose of the thyroid is to run the body's metabolism, hypothyroidism leads to symptoms associated with a slow metabolism.

There are two fairly common causes of hypothyroidism. The first is a result of inflammation of the thyroid gland, either previous or ongoing, which has damaged or destroyed a large percentage of the cells of the thyroid, making it incapable of producing sufficient hormone. The most common cause of inflammation leading to thyroid gland failure is autoimmune thyroiditis, or Hashimoto's thyroiditis, caused when the body's immune system attacks its own thyroid tissue.

The second major cause of hypothyroidism stems from medical treatments in which part or all of the thyroid gland is removed. Many thyroid conditions, including thyroid cancer, result in surgical removal of a portion or all of the thyroid gland. If the total mass of the remaining thyroid producing cells are not enough to meet the body's needs, the patient will develop hypothyroidism.

Sometime surgery is performed to remove a worrisome nodule, leaving half of the thyroid in the neck undisturbed. This remaining thyroid lobe and isthmus may or may not produce enough hormone to meet the demands of the body. It may be several years before a shortage is apparent.

There are several other rare causes of hypothyroidism. In one type a "normal" thyroid gland does not make enough hormone because of a problem in the pituitary gland. If the pituitary does not produce enough thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) then the thyroid gland simply will not receive the signal to make the needed hormones.

Left untreated, the symptoms of hypothyroidism will continue to progress. Rarely, complications can result in severe life-threatening depression, heart failure, or coma.

The test below is designed to give you a general baseline for your current risk of hypothyroidism. This test is not designed to diagnose or treat any condition.

Rate the following from 0 to 5, with 0 being "no problem", and 5 being a "severe problem".

1) Fatigue

0 1 2 3 4 5

2) Muscle aches and pains

0 1 2 3 4 5

3) Joint pains

0 1 2 3 4 5

4) Fibromyalgia

0 1 2 3 4 5

5) Feelings of weakness

0 1 2 3 4 5

6) Lethargy, or loss of interest in daily activities

0 1 2 3 4 5

7) Memory loss

0	1	2	3	4	5
8) Concentration difficulties					
0	1	2	3	4	5
9) Mental sluggishness					
0	1	2	3	4	5
10) Low moods					
0	1	2	3	4	5
11) Depression					
0	1	2	3	4	5
12) Cold hands and feet					
0	1	2	3	4	5
13) Sensitivity to cold					
0	1	2	3	4	5
14) Tendency towards constipation					
0	1	2	3	4	5
15) Weight gain					
0	1	2	3	4	5
16) Low blood sugar / hypoglycemia					
0	1	2	3	4	5
17) Menstrual problems					
0	1	2	3	4	5
18) Heavy bleeding during menses					
0	1	2	3	4	5
19) Repeated colds and flu					
0	1	2	3	4	5
20) Skin problems (itching, eczema, psoriasis, acne, or coarse, dry, scaly skin)					
0	1	2	3	4	5
21) Do not perspire easily					
0	1	2	3	4	5
22) Hoarse voice					
0	1	2	3	4	5
23) Feeling of fullness in neck					
0	1	2	3	4	5
24) Swelling of the eyelids					
0	1	2	3	4	5
25) Hair loss					
0	1	2	3	4	5
26) Dry, coarse hair					
0	1	2	3	4	5
27) Loss of outer 1/3 of eyebrows					
0	1	2	3	4	5
28) I have about as many mental and emotional symptoms as physical symptoms					
0	1	2	3	4	5

Your total is:

A score of 20-40 suggests mild hypothyroidism; 40-70 suggests moderate hypothyroidism; and over 70 suggests significant hypothyroid problems.