

Hormone Disorders

Hypothyroidism

Patient's Guide



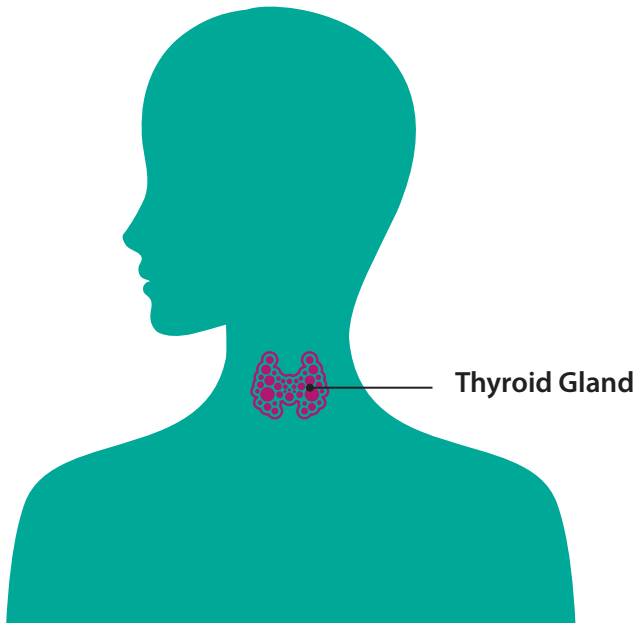
Easy readability



Hello!

Today we'll tell you about **Hypothyroidism**. You may think that it sounds a bit difficult, but do not worry! We'll tell you what it means, why it happens and how doctors treat it.

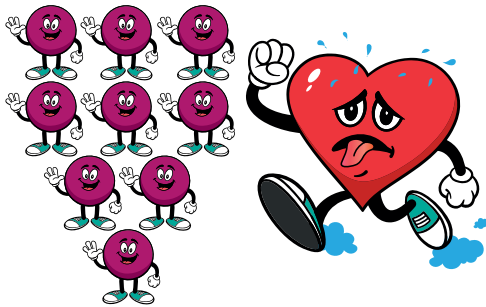
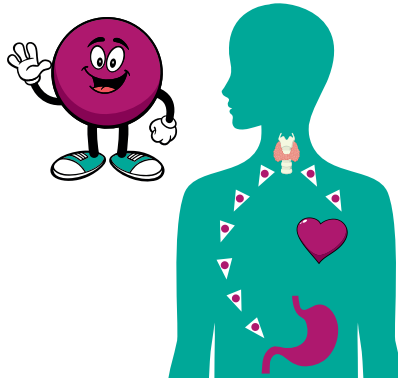
First let's talk a bit about a small organ in your body called the **thyroid gland**. This organ is located in your neck, just below the Adam's apple. The thyroid gland helps to control the speed at which your body works.



Thyroid Gland

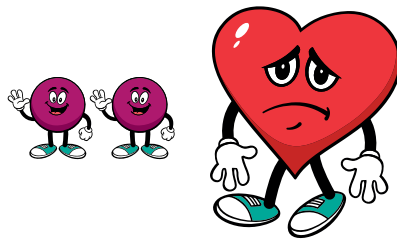
What does the thyroid gland do?

The thyroid gland is in charge of controlling the speed at which the body works. It does this by making and sending a special messenger to the organs in your body. This messenger is called **thyroxine** and it tells the organs just how hard to work!



If the thyroid gland sends too much thyroxine, your body will work too fast.

But, if too little is sent, then your body will work too slowly!



For the body to work at the right speed, it's important to have normal amounts of thyroxine.



What is Hypothyroidism?

Normally, the thyroid gland works fine all through our lives. But sometimes, it stops working and does not make anymore thyroxine. This lack of thyroxine is called **hypothyroidism**.

What is Congenital Hypothyroidism?

Some children are born without a thyroid gland, or one that is too small or one that doesn't work. All babies have a heel prick blood test after birth to check for this. Treatment with thyroxine makes learning and growing return to normal.

What can Hypothyroidism do to children?

It can cause children to grow and develop more slowly than normal. It may also cause some weight gain. Other changes may include having a pale or puffy face, and losing some hair.

How is this treated?

As you already know, hypothyroidism happens when there is a lack of thyroxine. To treat this, you will need to take tablets that contain thyroxine in the amount your body needs.

It's very important that you take these tablets every day. Otherwise, you may not grow as tall as your mates!





Congratulations!

Now you know about hypothyroidism, why it happens and how it's treated. If you have not understood some things in this leaflet, don't feel shy to ask your doctor or other friendly people in the hospital. They will happily explain these or any other questions you may have.



Hypothyroidism

(Revised November 2019)

This leaflet is part of the **Hormone Disorders Series**

The following are also available:

Growth Hormone Deficiency

Puberty and the Growth Hormone Deficient Child

Precocious Puberty

Emergency Information for Children with Cortisol and GH Deficiencies and those Experiencing Recurrent Hypoglycaemia

Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia

Growth Hormone Deficiency in Young Adults

Constitutional Delay of Growth and Puberty

Multiple Pituitary Hormone Deficiency

Diabetes Insipidus

Craniopharyngioma

Intrauterine Growth Retardation or Small for Gestational Age

Hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid)

Type 2 Diabetes and Obesity

The development of these leaflets was funded (as a service to medicine) by Merck. They are based on the original booklets series devised by the UK Child Growth Foundation and the BSPED, and the previous adaptations for easy and average readability levels by ESPE.



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