

Underactive Thyroid?

If your mind and body feel sluggish most of the time, you may have an underactive thyroid. Test your thyroid function yourself with these helpful tips.

The thyroid gland, located in the base of the throat, produces the hormone thyroxine, which signals all brain and body cells to remain active. Prolonged stress and suboptimal nutrition can often lead to reduced production of thyroxine by the thyroid gland, resulting in undesirable symptoms.

Symptoms of an underactive thyroid include:

- Physical or mental fatigue
- Depression or irritability
- Dry skin and/or hair
- Intolerance to cold or cold hands and feet
- Constipation, gas, bloating, or indigestion
- Easy weight gain
- Painful periods (for women)
- Muscle pain
- Poor memory
- Sore throat or nasal congestion

If you have five or more of these symptoms, an underactive thyroid may be the issue.

Test your thyroid function with the Broda Barnes Temperature Test:

- Shake out your thermometer and keep it by your bed.
- Upon waking in the morning, before getting up, take your temperature for 10 minutes.
- Your temperature should be between 97.7 to 98.6 degrees F.
- Repeat these steps for at least 3 days (women should start this on day two or three of their period as body temperature fluctuates during the cycle).
- If any of your temperature readings are consistently below 97.7 degrees F, repeat these steps for a week to confirm.

If you suspect you may have an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism), consult your healthcare professional.

Natural ways to stimulate the thyroid:

- *Exercise* at least three days a week for 30 minutes per workout to optimize thyroid function.
- *Eat more thyroid-boosting foods* such as kelp, dairy products, eggs, bananas, lima beans, avocados, pumpkin seeds, and saltwater fish.



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- *Supplements:* Try 1,000 mg of tyrosine upon waking and at mid-day, taken on an empty stomach, along with a multimineral supplement containing 150 mg iodine, 11 mg zinc, and 55 mcg selenium. Invest in a quality multivitamin containing vitamins B, E, C, and A (beta-carotene) to be taken daily with food.
- *Consider an elimination diet or an IgG test* to identify food sensitivities. Gluten sensitivity, in particular, can affect thyroid health.

Sources: Mindell, E., *New Vitamin Bible*. Grand Central Life & Style: New York, 2011. Holford, P., *New Optimum Nutrition for the Mind*. Basic Health Publications Inc: Laguna Beach, 2009.



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