

Combating Hypothyroidism Naturally

The condition known as hypothyroidism is when the thyroid gland does not function properly. This results in the body having reduced levels of thyroid hormone in it. Dry skin, hair loss, hoarseness, excessive menstruation, fatigue, lethargy, depression, intolerance to cold, constipation and weight gain are all symptoms of hypothyroidism. There are different causes of hypothyroidism, cretinism is a type of hypothyroidism that develops at birth and results in stunted growth and mental development. A common cause of hypothyroidism is Hashimoto's thyroiditis which is an autoimmune disease of the thyroid gland. Damage done during radiation treatment or surgery to the thyroid gland to treat hyperthyroidism (an over active thyroid gland) is another common cause of hypothyroidism. Also some drugs, such as phenylbutazone and lithium, sometimes also cause hypothyroidism. Some people with an enlargement of the thyroid gland which is known as goitre have hypothyroidism. This is caused by an iodine deficiency which could be the result of eating too many foods that contain goitrogens such as rapeseed, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, and cauliflower or by another disorder that affects the thyroid hormone production. A condition known as secondary hypothyroidism is caused by the hypothalamus or pituitary gland not stimulating the thyroid gland properly. Severe hypothyroidism is called myxedema. Extreme iodine deficiency is another possible cause of hypothyroidism but this is rare. Medical treatment of hypothyroidism consists of prescribing synthetic thyroid or desiccated thyroid hormone. Naturopathic practitioners like to use desiccated natural thyroid complete with all thyroid hormones. Thyroid hormone replacement is necessary in most cases of hypothyroidism. Changing the diet will help with hypothyroidism. Eating goitrogenic foods such as rapeseed, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower, sweet potatoes, maize, lima beans, soya and pearl millet should be limited. These foods contain natural goitrogens, which are chemicals that cause the enlargement of the thyroid gland by interfering with thyroid hormone synthesis. Cooking is known to make the goitrogenic elements less effective but it would be wise not to eat these foods raw. Foods that contain iodine such as kelp, beetroot, radish, parsley, potatoes, fish, oatmeal and bananas should be kept in the diet. In the treatment of underactive thyroid, fats, sugars, sodium chloride, red meat and egg intake should also be restricted. The relationship between iodine and thyroid is complex, iodine is needed by the body to form thyroid hormone, and goitre and hypothyroidism can occur through iodine deficiency. Extreme and prolonged iodine deficiency can lead to serious types of hypothyroidism, such as cretinism or myxedema. On the other hand, consumption of excessive iodine intake can result in either hypothyroidism or hyperthyroidism. The amount of 150 mg that is usually in multi-mineral supplements should be enough to stop iodine deficiency but not enough to do harm. The amino acid tyrosine is an essential part of the thyroid hormones and neurotransmitters; this has been found to be deficient in people with hypothyroidism. Practitioners often recommend a low dose of thyroxine such as 1000mg to correct hypothyroidism. People with depression also have low levels of tyrosine, this is why it has been linked to hypothyroidism. Vitamin A, vitamin B2, vitamin B3, vitamin B6, vitamin C, and vitamin E are needed for the synthesis of thyroxine. The B vitamins and copper are vital co-factors for tyrosine metabolism. Copper, iron, selenium and zinc are essential in the production of T3 from T4. Some herbs can help combat hypothyroidism, nettle will balance the thyroid with both under and over activity. Bladderwrack (*Fucus vesiculosus*) is a type of brown seaweed that contains iodine. Hypothyroidism due to small intake of iodine may possibly improve with bladderwrack supplementation; also kelp has been linked to helping with hypothyroidism. Some people with hypothyroidism have seen improvements by taking Chinese herbs. Another aspect to look at is chemical sensitivities. Research has shown an association between hypothyroidism and multiple chemical sensitivities. It was found that people with exposure to toxic heavy metals, polybrominated biphenyls and carbon disulfides through their occupations suffered from depression, fatigue, poor memory and constipation which are all symptoms of hypothyroidism. Another important factor in the treatment of hypothyroidism is exercise. Exercise increases tissue sensitivity to the thyroid hormone and stimulates thyroid gland secretion. This is especially true in people who are dieting; this is because when dieting the metabolic rate decreases but exercise prevents this decline. An exercise regime of between 15-20 minutes per day will be beneficial with hypothyroidism. This exercise needs to be strenuous enough to raise the heartbeat, an exercise such as walking, swimming, running and cycling. In conclusion, to combat hypothyroidism, it is best not to consume foods high in goitrogens especially raw but to increase foods high in iodine in the diet, to exercise daily for 20 minutes, to supplement the diet with multiminerals and multivitamins, B complex, vitamin C, manganese, tyrosine, kelp and iodine and to check whether sensitivity to chemicals are causing hypothyroidism. Some Chinese herbs may also help. The following supplements may help if you are suffering from Hypothyroidism. B vitamins complex, Manganese, Multivitamin and multiminerals, Vitamin C, Tyrosine, Kelp, Iodine.

About the Author

Diet and Fitness. Media the world over are jumping on news that a large new study suggests the controversial.

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