

THYROID

Thyroid is a butterfly shaped gland that sits low on the front of the neck. It is a gland of vertebrates lying at the anterior base of the neck.

THYROID SYMPTOMS

- ▶ Restlessness
- ▶ Nervousness
- ▶ Racing heart rate
- ▶ Irritability
- ▶ Increased sweating
- ▶ Shaking
- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Trouble sleeping
- ▶ Thin skin
- ▶ Brittle hair and nails
- ▶ Muscle weakness
- ▶ Weight loss
- ▶ Increased appetite
- ▶ Frequent bowel movements
- ▶ Bulging eyes (in Graves' disease)

WHAT CAUSES THYROID PROBLEMS?

All types of hyperthyroidism are due to an overproduction of thyroid hormones. Conditions include:

- ▶ **Graves' Disease:** The production of too much thyroid hormone.
- ▶ **Iodine Deficiency:** This means swelling of thyroid glands in the neck, a visible lump on the neck, weight gain, fatigue, weakness, dry skin, slowed heart rate, etc.
- ▶ **Autoimmune Disease**
- ▶ **Thyroid Nodules:** Growths on your thyroid. They are usually benign (not cancer). They may become overactive and make too much of the thyroid hormone.
- ▶ **Pituitary Gland Malfunctions or Cancerous Growths in the Thyroid Gland**

WHAT IS HYPERTHYROIDISM?

Hyperthyroidism (an overactive thyroid) causes your thyroid to make more thyroid hormone than your body needs. Hyperthyroidism can accelerate your body functions such as your metabolism (can cause unintentional weight loss) or a rapid or irregular heart rate.

HYPERTHYROIDISM SYMPTOMS

- ▶ Weight loss (even if you eat more than usual)
- ▶ Eating more than usual
- ▶ Rapid or irregular heartbeat or a pounding heart
- ▶ Feeling nervous or anxious
- ▶ Trouble sleeping
- ▶ Muscle weakness

THYROID

WHO IS AT RISK?

- ▶ You are at higher risk for hyperthyroidism if you're a woman, are older than **60**, have given birth, have history with thyroid problems or a thyroid surgery, have type **1** diabetes, or get too much iodine.

THYROID TREATMENTS

▶ Medication:

- ▶ Hormone Replacement Tablets

▶ Surgery:

- ▶ Removing the thyroid through surgery can cure hyperthyroidism. Although you won't have a thyroid, you would need to take thyroid hormone replacement medications for the rest of your life.
- ▶ **Total or Near-Total Thyroidectomy:** The removal of all or most of the thyroid gland. This is often indicated for thyroid cancers, Graves' disease, and large goiters.
- ▶ **Hemithyroidectomy or Thyroid Lobectomy:** The removal of one of the two lobes of the gland.
- ▶ **Isthmectomy:** The removal of the isthmus, the bridge of tissue that crosses over the middle of the trachea and sits between the thyroid lobes. This option is reserved for the removal of small tumors.