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Love The Skin You're In

HYPOTHYROIDISM GUIDE

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My Story

I was first diagnosed with hypothyroidism after the birth of my daughter Molly in 2014. I found that I was struggling with many of the typical symptoms of underactive thyroid, but dismissed them as they are also very much signs of having a new baby. i.e. tiredness, weight gain / difficulty to lose my baby weight, forgetfulness. But there were other symptoms that encouraged me to get checked including carpal tunnel and a very puffy face. When originally diagnosed I was put on 50mcg of levothyroxine.

During my pregnancy with my son in 2017 my dosage was increased to 100mcg to support the demand on my thyroid hormone due to pregnancy. Doctors said that following the birth of Paddy my dosage would likely reduce back but my levels never did restore so I remained on 100mcg until 2023 when I had a series of episodes that highlighted that my TSH was struggling, My hormones levels were 'in-range' but not optimal so my medication was increased to 125mcg and then 150mcg until I could feel my hormones were regulated,

After being diagnosed and medicated for many years, I can feel when my body is experiencing thyroid symptoms and recognise them well, this is important as when being tested doctors will normally only look within a normal range, not an optimal range. It is important to know that your hormones fluctuate regularly and I learnt that I was finding that when my progesterone dropped in my monthly cycle it was contributing to a strain on my TSH. I am now looking into the progesterone only coil for my contraception.

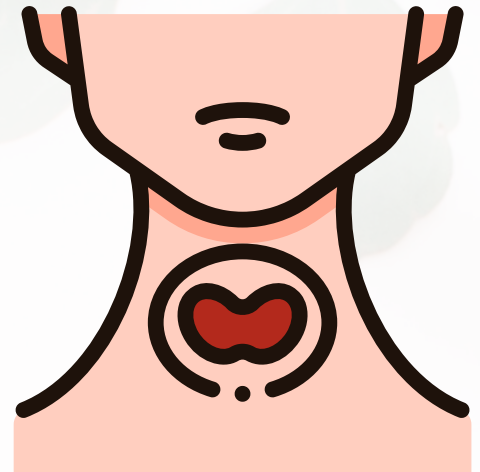
One thing I learnt is that medication can help you to restore a 'normal' hormone balance, but it is not a magic pill to lose weight. Once your hormones are balanced you will have more energy and focus to enable you to lead a healthy lifestyle to achieve and maintain a healthy body.

Nutrition and a healthy lifestyle is key to help you support your thyroid. In this guide I will answer the most common questions to help you understand your condition and also give recommendations to boost thyroid function and restore vitality.

For help with implementing a healthy lifestyle ask me about Diet Coaching.

1) WHAT IS THYROID HORMONE?

Thyroid hormone is the hormone that controls your body's metabolism, the process in which your body transforms the food you eat into energy. The two main hormones your thyroid releases — thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3) — collectively make up thyroid hormone. The thyroid gland is located in the neck. In the UK it affects 15 in every 1,000 women and 1 in 1,000 men.



2) WHAT IS HYPOTHYROIDISM?

Hypothyroidism is the term used to describe the inadequate output of the thyroid hormone by the thyroid gland. There is no way of preventing an underactive thyroid but it can often be successfully treated by taking a daily hormone tablet (levothyroxine) to replace the hormones that your thyroid is not making.

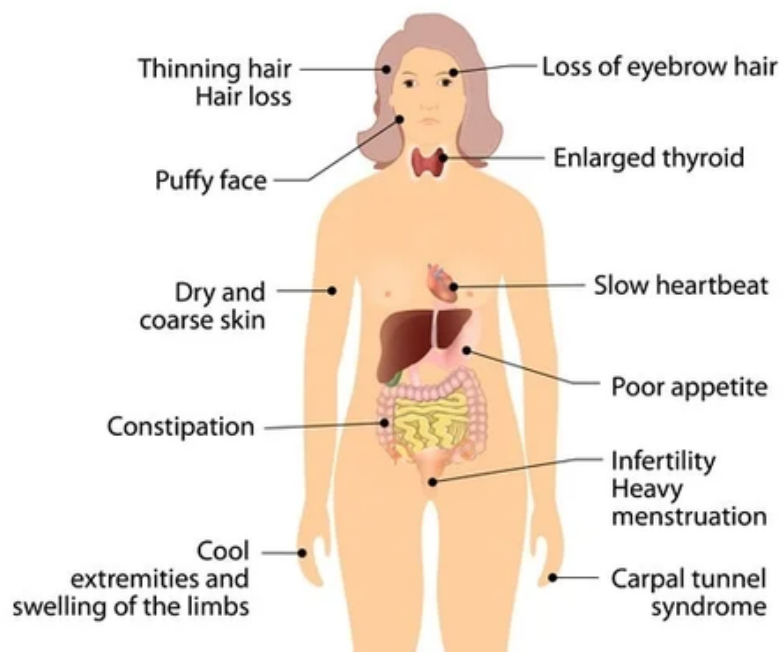
3) WHAT ARE THE CAUSES?

The most common cause of hypothyroidism in the developed world is **Hashimoto's** which is caused by autoimmune inflammation of the thyroid gland (the body's immune system attacking the thyroid gland)

Other causes can be due to medication or iodine deficiencies and a secondary cause could be in relation to the pituitary gland not producing enough TSH, this is called **Hypopituitarism** and it has quite a few causes including infections, tumours, after blood loss or radiation therapy.

4) WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Weight Gain
- Poor Memory
- Cold Sensitivity
- Tiredness
- Muscle Ache
- Joint Pain
- Pain, Numbness, Weakness in the hands and wrists
- Depression
- Loss of interest in sex
- Slow movements & thoughts



5) DIAGNOSIS

In order to diagnose Hypothyroidism you need a blood test. When being checked for under active thyroid your doctor will test your TSH and T3/T4 levels to determine any irregularities.

Primary Hypothyroidism is caused by a thyroid gland insufficiency T3/T4 is Low & TSH is High

Secondary Hypothyroidism is caused by the failure of the pituitary gland to secrete TSH

Normal Thyroid Gland Ranges (NHS)

Hormone	Low	High
TSH	0.38 mU/L	5.33 mU/L
Free T4	7.9 pmol/L	14.4 pmol/L
Free T3	3.8 pmol/L	6.0 pmol/L

NOTE
Ranges differ
for children &
pregnant
females

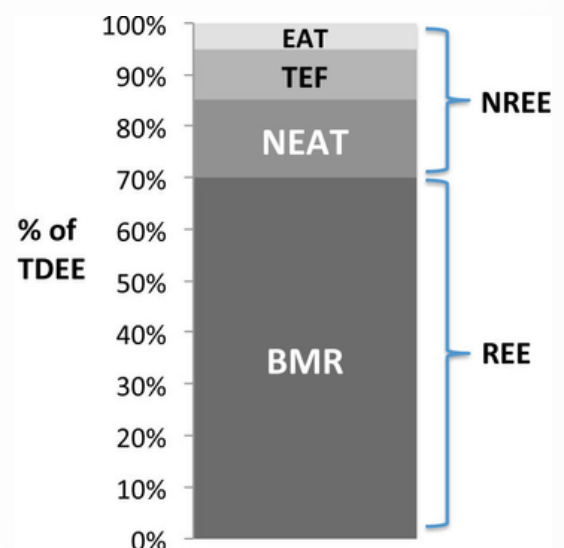
6) BMR / TDEE

Underactive Thyroid may cause a drop in your basal metabolic rate meaning that your TDEE is less. (Please refer to coaching manual for further explanation on BMR/TDEE). However, once medicated correctly this should restore. The ranges differ for everyone so standard calorie calculators are often not effective in determining your TDEE.

Consuming too little calories can be harmful to your metabolic rate and cause it to drop further. The consumption of food provides around 10% of your TDEE.

In fact, the best way to achieve fat loss with an Underactive Thyroid is by eating as closely to maintenance as possible. Not only does this support your metabolism but it will also provide you with energy to be more active and do things like weight train. Weight training is beneficial to everyone but it is very useful when trying to lose fat as you gain muscle mass which increases your BMR.

It is important to note that the types of food you eat are important. A macro balanced diet including nutrient dense foods will support your thyroid function to enable you to achieve a healthy body,

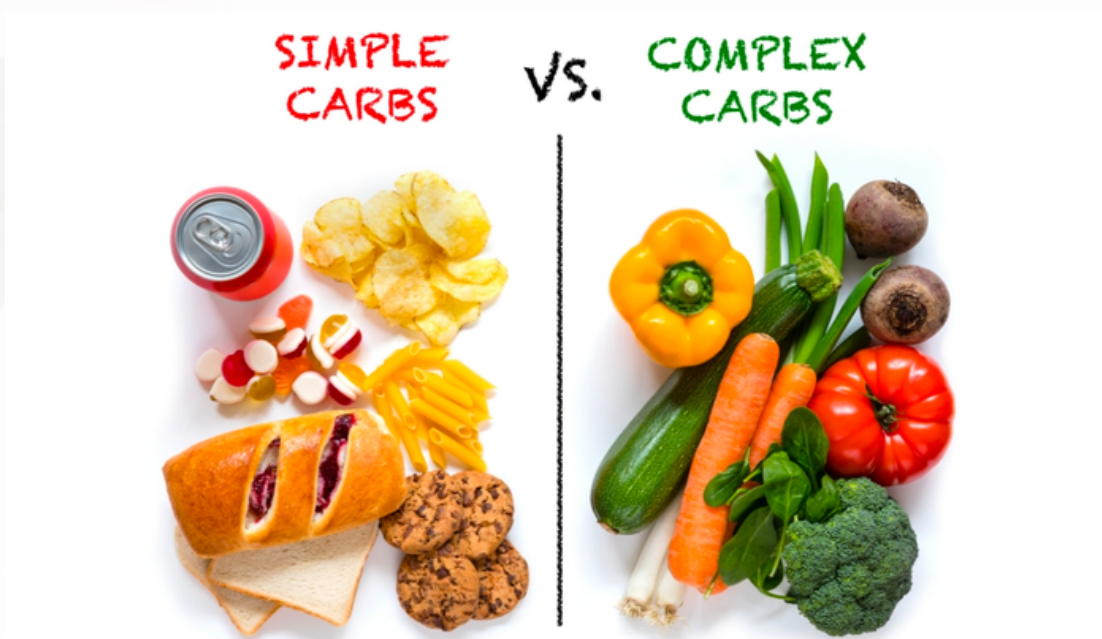


7) MACROS

CARBS

Prioritising protein and healthy fats is key with Underactive Thyroid. Advice on ranges vary. Modern diets include a lot of carbohydrates, carbohydrates are a fantastic source of energy, fibre and they have many nutritional benefits. In fact, to make the proper thyroid hormones, the body needs glucose. Without adequate carbohydrates, the body can not make the proper amount of hormones or will not be able to make them at all.

There are two types of carbohydrates however and we need to ensure we are working towards eating as many complex carbohydrates as possible as opposed to simple carbohydrates.



PROTEIN

A high protein diet is beneficial for fat loss due to TEF (Thermic Effect of Food). Protein requires the most energy to digest, up to 30%, in comparison to carbohydrates at 5-10% and fats at 0-3%.

Eating more foods that are high in protein is associated with better thyroid function



FATS

Consuming plenty of fats from healthy sources help to manage the inflammation associated with Thyroid. Healthy fats include monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats. Foods including nuts, olives, avocados, cold water fish, flax and chia seed, walnuts.

8) SUPPLEMENTS

Where possible it is always best to get your nutrition from whole foods but you can support your diet with supplements. RDA information provided from NHS.

Please note studies advise that taking supplements like calcium and iron should be separated by 4 hours to avoid any interference with levothyroxine.

Most advise that levothyroxine should be taken on an empty stomach 60 minutes before food intake to avoid erratic absorption of the hormone.

VITAMIN B COMPLEX

- broccoli
- brussels sprouts
- leafy green vegetables
- peas
- chickpeas and kidney beans

RDA for women

- B1 - 0.8mg
- B2 - 1.1mg
- B3 - 13.2mg
- B6 - 1.2 mg
- B7 - not provided
- Folic Acid - 200mcg
- B12 - not provided



SELENIUM

- Brazil nuts
- Fish
- Meat
- Eggs

RDA for women

- 60µg



ZINC

- Meat
- Shellfish
- Dairy foods
- Bread
- Wheatgerm

RDA for women

- 7mg



VITAMIN D

- Oily fish
- Red meat
- Liver
- Egg Yolks

RDA for women

- 10mcg
- From late March/early April to the end of September the majority of people should get enough from sunlight on their skin



8) SUPPLEMENTS CONT.

MAGNESIUM

- Spinach
- Nuts
- Wholemeal bread

RDA for women

- 270mg



IRON

- Liver
- Red meat
- Kidney beans, edamame beans & chickpeas
- nuts
- Dried Fruits

RDA for women

- 14.8mg age 19-49
- 8.7mf age 50+



OMEGA 3,6,9

- Oily fish
- White fish
- Shellfish

RDA for women

- 2 portions of fish per week including 1 oily fish



9) CAFFEINE

Caffeine not only interferes with levothyroxine absorption, but it can also stimulate the adrenals and over time cause them to be weakened.

When the adrenals are weak, they tend to make less progesterone in favour of cortisol (stress hormone). This often leads to low levels of progesterone, which can lead to estrogen dominance.

Estrogen increases thyroxine binding globulin and the need for thyroid hormone in women

So ... best bet - go decaf



Disclaimer

I am not a medical practitioner and cannot diagnose any condition or prescribe any medication, supplementation or diet but I can provide information from trusted sources and provide recommendations based on my own experience. If you have or think you have a thyroid condition please always seek advice from a medical practitioner before undertaking any diet or fitness regime.

Thisfitmum strongly recommends that you consult with your doctor before beginning any exercise or diet program. Thisfitmum is not a licensed medical care provider and represents that it has no expertise in diagnosing, examining, or treating medical conditions of any kind, or in determining the effect of any specific exercise or diet on a medical condition. You should understand that when participating in any exercise or diet program, there is the possibility of physical injury or illness. If you engage in Thisfitmums exercise and/or diet program, you agree that you do so at your own risk, are voluntarily participating in these activities, assume all risk of injury and illness to yourself, and agree to release and discharge Thisfitmum from any and all claims or causes of action, known or unknown, arising out of Thisfitmum negligence

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