



## QUICK FACTS ABOUT THYROID DISEASE

### Prevalence:

- An estimated 20 million Americans have some form of thyroid disease
- Up to 60% of people with thyroid disease are unaware of their condition
- More than 12% of the U.S. population will develop a thyroid condition during their lifetime

### Gender Disparities:

- Women are 5-8 times more likely than men to have thyroid problems
- 1 in 8 women will develop a thyroid disorder during her lifetime
- Thyroid problems can occur at any age but become more common after age 35

### Economic Impact:

- Thyroid disease costs Americans billions annually in healthcare expenses
- Undiagnosed thyroid disease puts patients at risk for serious conditions including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and infertility



# What is the Thyroid?

The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland located at the base of the neck, just below the Adam's apple. Despite its small size (approximately 2 inches long), it produces hormones that regulate:

- Metabolism and weight
- Energy levels
- Body temperature
- Heart rate
- Mood and mental clarity
- Digestive function
- Muscle strength

## Risk Factors

Individuals at higher risk for thyroid disease include:

- Women, especially over age 35
- People with family history of thyroid disease
- Those with other autoimmune disorders (Type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus)
- Pregnant women or those who recently gave birth
- People who have received radiation therapy to neck or chest
- Those with iodine deficiency or excess

## Screening and Diagnosis

**Primary Test:** TSH (Thyroid-Stimulating Hormone) blood test

- Simple, affordable screening tool
- Can be done at regular doctor visits
- Additional tests (T3, T4, thyroid antibodies) may be ordered for complete assessment

**Physical Examination:** Doctor checks for thyroid enlargement or nodules

**Imaging:** Ultrasound or radioactive iodine uptake test if abnormalities detected

**Biopsy:** Fine needle aspiration for suspicious nodules

# Common Thyroid Conditions

| Hypothyroidism                                                                                                                                                                                         | Hyperthyroidism                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Thyroid Nodules                                                                                            |
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| <p>Thyroid doesn't produce enough hormone</p> <p>Symptoms: Fatigue, weight gain, cold sensitivity, depression, dry skin, hair loss</p> <p>Treatment options include hormone replacement medication</p> | <p>Thyroid produces too much hormone</p> <p>Symptoms: weight loss, rapid heartbeat, anxiety, tremors, heat sensitivity, insomnia</p> <p>Treatment options include medication, radioactive iodine, or surgery</p> | <p>Lumps in the thyroid gland-very common and most are benign.</p> <p>May require monitoring or biopsy</p> |
| Thyroid Cancer                                                                                                                                                                                         | Hashimoto's Thyroiditis                                                                                                                                                                                          | Graves' Disease                                                                                            |
| <p>Highly treatable with high survival rates when detected early.</p>                                                                                                                                  | <p>Autoimmune condition that causes hypothyroidism</p>                                                                                                                                                           | <p>Autoimmune condition causing hyperthyroidism</p>                                                        |

# Symptoms to Watch For

| Hypothyroidism                                                                                                                                           | Hyperthyroidism                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Fatigue • Weight gain • Cold intolerance • Constipation • Dry skin • Hair loss • Depression • Memory problems • Muscle weakness • Slow heart rate</p> | <p>Weight loss • Rapid heartbeat • Anxiety • Tremors • Sweating • Heat intolerance • Frequent bowel movements • Difficulty sleeping • Irritability • Bulging eyes (in Graves' disease)</p> |

*This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. Always consult with a qualified healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment of thyroid conditions. For more thyroid resources, visit [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org).*