



Hypothyroidism: Health and Diet Guidelines

General Guidelines

Exercise

Although you may feel tired and fatigued due to your hypothyroidism, exercise is critical to your wellbeing. Exercise regularly- daily for 45 minutes. In addition to being great for helping to improve energy levels, exercise stimulates thyroid hormone secretion and increases the sensitivity of the tissue to thyroid hormones.

Yoga can have a very beneficial effect on the thyroid, via increased circulation and stimulation of the thyroid gland, as well as via its stress-reducing actions

Walking is easy, practical and relaxing.

Just get moving!

Schedule time for exercise, just as you would an important meeting.

Sunshine: Try to get some sunshine while you exercise- at least 15 minutes every day. This will help your skin make vitamin D, which is required for healthy thyroid hormone action inside your cells.

Stress Management

Try to reduce stress levels as part of a daily routine. Stress, and the corresponding hormones involved in the stress response (cortisol) can contribute to hypothyroid issues.

Work in finding tools and strategies to put in place when you feel stressed. Some examples include:

- Learn meditation and practice meditation for 15 minutes twice daily
- Exercise daily- yoga is especially good for reducing stress
- Learn breathing techniques
- Join a singing group (this also moves energy through the thyroid area)
- Hypnotherapy , massage and acupuncture are excellent stress reducing therapies.
- Ensure you are getting 8-5.8 hour sleep every night and rest well. The more rested you are, the better you will cope with day-to-day stress.



Key Nutrients to Increase

Zinc: Zinc, together with Vitamin E and Vitamin A, plays an important role in the manufacturing of thyroid hormones. A zinc deficiency will lead to a lower production of thyroid hormones. Zinc is a cofactor in the conversion of T4 to T3, which is essential for the body's use of thyroid hormones at the cellular level.

Studies have shown up to 80% of people have at least a mild zinc deficiency.

Try the Zinc Tally Taste Test to evaluate your zinc levels.

Do you have white spots in your nails? This is another common sign of zinc deficiency.

Iodine: Iodine is the most essential mineral for the thyroid gland and is necessary for the production of T4 hormone. Iodine deficiency can lead to hypothyroidism or goiter (enlarged thyroid gland). Iodine is very deficient in modern day soils, especially in in-land (non coastal) areas.

Copper: Copper, along with Zinc and Selenium, is a required cofactor in the conversion of T4 to T3, which is essential for the body's use of thyroid hormones at the cellular level. Levels of Zinc and Copper need to be kept in a delicate balance. Mineral hair analysis or bloods tests can best determine if you are deficient in copper and to ensure your Zinc/Copper ratio is in balance.

Selenium: Selenium is a required cofactor in the conversion of T4 to T3. Selenium levels are very low in most modern-day soil, especially in Australia. It has been shown that thyroid disease is highest in areas where the Selenium levels are low in the soil. Therefore, it is vital to supplement with Selenium for adequate levels. Selenium levels needs to be monitored carefully.

Tyrosine: Tyrosine is an amino acid (protein building block). When combined with iodine in the thyroid gland, the hormones T4 and T3 are manufactured. A deficiency can lead to hypothyroidism and fatigue. Stress and poor digestion significantly depletes tyrosine levels.

Vitamin A: Vitamin A, together with Zinc is important in the manufacturing of thyroid hormones.

Iron: Iron is necessary to assist our cells utilization of thyroid hormones. If you are anemic, your cells struggle to use T3 and your cellular energy levels will suffer.

Vitamin D: Vitamin D3 deficiency had been linked to Hypothyroidism and auto immune diseases such as Hashimoto's disease. Vitamin D deficiency is still a common problem in many populations, particularly older adults. Numerous studies have shown that optimizing your Vitamin D levels may actually help prevent as many as 16 different types of cancer including pancreatic, lung, breast, ovarian, prostate and colon cancers.



Foods to Increase

Iodine Rich Foods

- These include seafood, sea vegetables (seaweeds) and sea salt.
- Incorporating sea vegetables into the diet is much easier than many people realize.
- Kombu can be added to cooking legumes, to make the legumes more digestible and add valuable nutrients to the meal.
- Dulse flakes are readily available and can be sprinkled as they are onto all foods.
- Arame seaweed needs only to be soaked for ten minutes and then can be eaten as is, or added to salads, soups, stir-fries, etc.
- Many whole foods cookbooks include recipes for sea vegetables, including baked goods and desserts, which use the sea vegetables agar or Irish moss as thickeners.
- Nori is used to wrap sushi, and can be used at home to make all kind of wraps or hand rolls, or shredded and used as a condiment on foods, it is especially delicious shredded on top of rice dishes.

Zinc Rich Foods

- Seafood (especially oysters)
- Pumpkin seeds and oil
- Lamb and beef (especially liver)

Copper Rich Foods

- Liver
- Sesame seeds (especially tahini)
- Cashews
- Barley
- Sunflower seeds

Selenium Rich Foods

- Brazil nuts, no more than 2-3 per day
- Liver
- Sardines and most fish
- Barley

Vitamin A Rich Foods

- All orange and yellow colored vegetables, as they are a good source of vitamin A
- Spinach
- Kale
- Organic grass fed cow dairy products

Vitamin D Rich Foods

- Salmon
- Sardines
- Organic grass fed cow dairy products



Foods to Avoid or Minimize

Avoid all Goitrogens

Goitrogens are substances that combine with iodine in the body, thus making it unavailable for use by the thyroid in synthesizing thyroid hormones.

Foods that contain goitrogens include: *raw* brassica vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, mustard, broccoli, brussel sprouts, peaches, spinach, radishes, strawberries, turnips, soy, peanuts, pine nuts, walnuts, flax seeds and millet.

Foods that contain goitrogens, however, can be consumed when cooked or fermented (i.e. soy as tempeh or miso), as both of these processes act to neutralize the toxicity of the goitrogens and render them harmless to the thyroid.

Minimize or try to avoid refined carbohydrates, not only are these detrimental for health in general as they deplete B vitamins and stress the pancreas, but they also cause a surge and then a drop in blood sugar levels, which can further deplete energy levels and encourage weight gain.

Soaking Grains, Nuts and Legumes

Soaking all grains, beans and nuts makes them more digestible.

All of these foods contain phytic acid which blocks zinc and other mineral absorption.

If you soak the grains in water before cooking, it removes or greatly reduces the phytic acid.

Non-traditional, unfermented soy products (such as soy protein isolate) are also high in phytic acid, so if you're eating soy, it's best to eat traditional foods like fermented tofu, tempeh, miso and tamari.

Raw nuts also contain oxalic acid, which inhibits calcium absorption. Soaking the nuts first, greatly reduces the amount of oxalic acid.

The following website will teach you how to soak and prepare your grains, nuts and legumes
www.nourishedkitchen.com/soaking-grains-nuts-legumes

Resources

Great Cookbooks

Nourishing Traditions By Sally Fallon and Mary G. Enig, PhD
Wholefood by Jude Blereau

Great recipe and info websites

www.wholefoodcooking.blogspot.com
www.101cookbooks.com
www.whfoods.com