

# THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HYPOTHYROIDISM

In the Clinic  
Annals of Internal Medicine

## What is the thyroid gland?

The thyroid gland is a hormone-secreting gland located in the neck, just below the Adam's apple.

## What do thyroid hormones do?

Thyroid hormones regulate the body's use of energy.

## What is hypothyroidism?

Hypothyroidism is a condition in which the thyroid gland secretes too little thyroid hormone into the circulation.

## What are the symptoms of hypothyroidism?

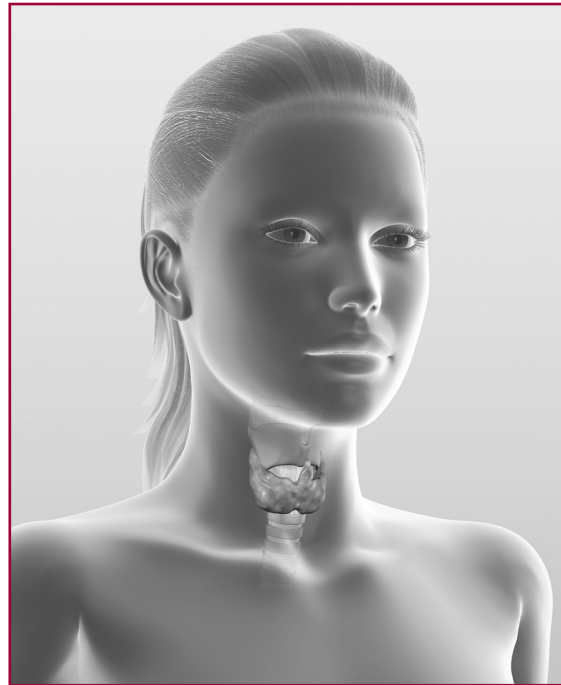
Symptoms include fatigue, depression, increased need for sleep, dry skin, cold intolerance, hoarseness, weight gain, menstrual irregularity, and constipation.

## How is the diagnosis of hypothyroidism made?

Blood tests can detect low levels of thyroid hormones.

## How is hypothyroidism treated?

Hypothyroidism is treated with oral thyroid hormone replacement.



## How long do I have to take thyroid hormone replacement?

Once a person has developed hypothyroidism, the condition is usually permanent. Thyroid hormone replacement is a lifelong requirement.

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## For More Information

### Web Sites With Good Information About Hypothyroidism

[www.acponline.org/patients\\_families/diseases\\_conditions/hypothyroidism/](http://www.acponline.org/patients_families/diseases_conditions/hypothyroidism/)

Access information for patients with hypothyroidism prepared by the American College of Physicians.

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000353.htm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000353.htm)

Access information for patients with hypothyroidism prepared by the National Library of Medicine of the National Institutes of Health.

[www.thyroid.org/patients/patient\\_brochures/hypothyroidism.html](http://www.thyroid.org/patients/patient_brochures/hypothyroidism.html)

Access information for patients with hypothyroidism prepared by the American Thyroid Association.

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