

In conjunction with the temperature test, your healthcare practitioner can explain to you the comprehensive thyroid testing offered by Great Smokies Diagnostic Laboratory. This test can give you an in-depth insight into the working of your thyroid gland, and can specifically help to pinpoint potential problems.

Your practitioner will also assess your symptoms, which in themselves can be an excellent indicator of mild hypothyroidism.

Supporting an under active thyroid gland

Once an under active thyroid gland has been identified as the cause of your symptoms, your practitioner will be able to recommend a suitable nutritional programme to support this. This programme will include a combination of optimum levels of nutrients, herbs and possibly glandular concentrates as well as specific dietary recommendations to promote optimum functioning of the thyroid gland.

1. Nutrients to support optimum thyroid function:

Tyrosine is an amino acid and an essential component for the synthesis of thyroid hormones and neurotransmitters. In order for thyroid hormones to be produced effectively, the body must be receiving optimum supplies of this amino acid.

Iodine is an essential nutrient for thyroid hormone synthesis. Typical iodine deficiency signs include a metallic taste in the mouth and heavy mucous secretions. Kelp is a concentrated source of bio-available iodine.

B vitamins and Copper are necessary for the normal manufacturing of the thyroid hormones.

Calcium and Magnesium imbalances can be a problem for thyroid hormone function. It is important that these two minerals are well balanced for optimum functioning of the thyroid gland.

Vitamin A supports thyroid hormone production.

Vitamin C, Zinc, and B vitamins all help to support the adrenal glands, which in turn, helps to support thyroid function.

Selenium is essential for balanced thyroid hormone production. The enzyme that converts thyroid hormone T4 into the more physiologically active T3 thyroid hormone is a selenium containing enzyme. Without selenium, this conversion cannot take place, and so can lead to an under functioning thyroid gland.

2. Herbal support for optimum thyroid function:

Liquorice root is an important herbal support for the adrenal glands. It is important to support the adrenal glands because they are closely linked to the thyroid gland.

Gum guggul is a resin derived from the mukul myrrh tree which supports the conversion of thyroid hormones in the body. This herb is an extremely useful addition to a thyroid support programme.

3. Glandular concentrates for thyroid support:

Thyroid glandular concentrate boosted by parotid concentrate, can help to nutritionally support this regulatory gland. Thyroid glandular concentrate contains the amino acids required to support healthy function of the thyroid gland.

4. In addition to specific nutrient, herbal and glandular support, your practitioner will be able to advise you on the best dietary modifications to specifically suit your needs.

Here are some general diet and lifestyle tips for optimising thyroid function:

Goitrogens are naturally occurring substances that can interfere with function of the thyroid gland and make it more difficult for it to make thyroid hormones. It is best to limit consumption of goitrogen-containing foods if you have an under functioning thyroid gland. These foods are broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, rutabaga, turnips, millet, peaches, peanuts, radishes, soybean and soybean products, spinach and strawberries. Although research studies are limited in this area, cooking does appear to help inactivate the goitrogenic compounds, so if you are going to eat these foods it would be wise to eat them cooked rather than raw. The foods listed above have many health benefits in areas other than the thyroid gland so don't feel you should cut them out of your diet entirely.

Light exercise is important as it directly stimulates the thyroid gland.

It is important to **drink filtered water** as the chlorine and fluoride in tap water can compete with iodine, which as identified earlier, is an extremely important mineral for thyroid hormone production.

In general **eat a healthy and varied diet** and avoid foods that are refined or processed. Focus on increasing your intake of foods high in iodine (fish, kelp, dulse, vegetables and potatoes), B vitamins (wholegrains, nuts and seeds) and vitamin A (dark, green and yellow vegetables).

Many people achieve amazing results from following a natural approach to improving thyroid function. Use these recommendations in conjunction with your practitioner's advice for a much healthier future.



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Thyroid Support

Natural solutions for an underactive thyroid gland



Read on to find out how supplements can support your thyroid

Tired all the time? Don't have the energy you used to have? Gain weight easily and find it difficult to lose? Feel the cold more than others around you?

If this sounds like you, then perhaps it's time you paid a little more attention to your thyroid gland. Situated just below the 'Adam's Apple' or larynx, your thyroid gland is fairly small, normally weighing less than one ounce, but is completely responsible for running the whole of your body's metabolism. Since this small, but very significant gland has such an important physiological role to play, it is understandable that when the thyroid gland is under functioning and all metabolic processes slow down, a multitude of debilitating symptoms can arise.

Symptoms most commonly associated with an underactive thyroid gland (hypothyroidism) include:

- Chronic constipation
- Axillary temperature test below 97.8 °F or 36.6 °C
- Slow heart rate
- Sensitive to cold weather
- Chronic fatigue and weakness
- Excess hair loss
- Gain weight easily
- Recurrent infections
- Skin problems (dry, flaky skin)
- PMS
- Depression
- Cold hands and feet
- Cry easily
- Headaches/dizziness
- Slow speech
- Feel worse in the morning
- Increased triglyceride and cholesterol levels
- Feel better after exercising
- Cracking and peeling of skin on heels and hands
- Brittle fingernails
- Short windedness
- Sudden change in personality
- Loss of libido



You may be hypothyroid and not even know it....

Hypothyroidism is much more common than you would think; millions of people are currently hypothyroid and don't even know it. It is actually much more common in women than men and it is now estimated that as many as 10 percent of women may have some degree of thyroid hormone deficiency. The fact that there are different degrees of thyroid hormone deficiency really is the key to understanding, identifying and supporting this problem.



Mild hypothyroidism is often overlooked

It is often the case that people can experience the symptoms of thyroid hormone deficiency, go to the doctor and yet test negative for this condition through standard diagnostic testing. The problem with conventional testing is that a mild deficiency can be completely missed, so no treatment is offered and the patient simply has to put up with the symptoms they are experiencing. It is important to recognise two distinct types of hypothyroidism to help overcome this problem.

Recognising two types of hypothyroidism....

Clinical Hypothyroidism – This is where blood level abnormalities of thyroid hormones (T3 & T4) show up on standard diagnostic tests.

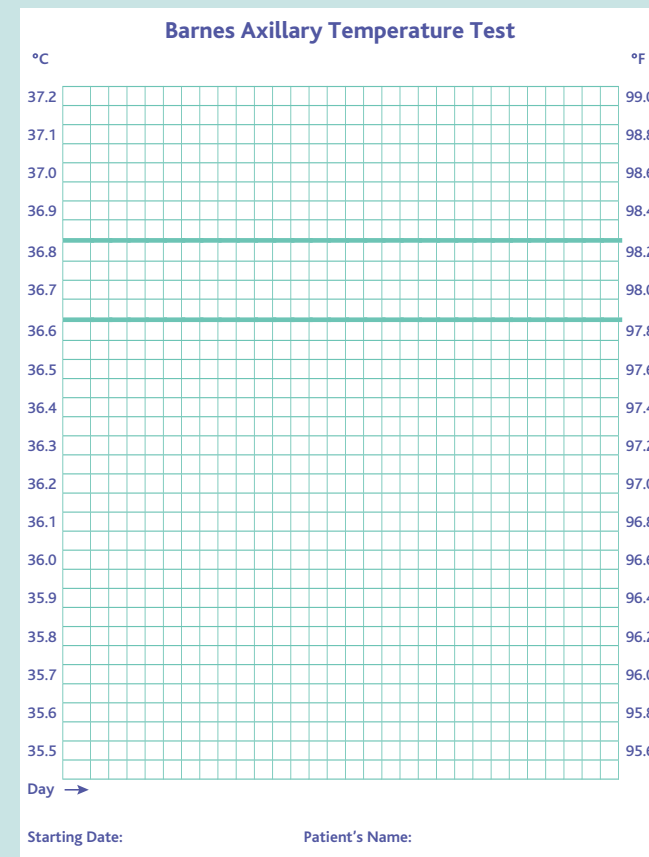
Subclinical/Functional Hypothyroidism – This is where blood levels of the thyroid hormones are in the normal ranges, but temperature tests and other indicators show a mild deficiency state, which can still cause dramatic symptoms.

Support through nutrition

The good news is that even though a mild deficiency can be completely missed by conventional testing, natural alternatives have a lot to offer in the way of supporting even a mildly under active thyroid gland.

How do I test for hypothyroidism?

The first step to identifying mild hypothyroidism is to perform a simple temperature test each day, as detailed on the following page. Temperatures below 97.8 °F or 36.6 °C indicate hypothyroidism that needs to be addressed.



How to test your basal metabolic rate using the Barnes Axillary Temperature Test

1. Before retiring to bed, shake down an oral thermometer and place it within easy reach of the bed.
2. Immediately upon waking, place it under the armpit until reading is ready to take (see manufacturer's instructions). It is important that you remain still and quiet in order to get an accurate reading.
3. Note the temperature and plot onto the graph above.
4. Try to do this at the same time each day.
5. Test for at least 5 consecutive days.
6. Your temperature should fall between the 2 thick green lines on the graph i.e. between 36.6°C and 36.8°C.

NB: Men can check the temperature on any three days. For women who are menstruating, the temperature is best measured on days 2, 3 and 4 of their period.