

## The Thyroid and Metabolism

### Thyroid Facts

The thyroid is an important gland located in the front of the neck. Its main role in the body is to regulate the metabolism. However, the thyroid does much more than just help us burn calories. It is also responsible for regulating other hormones, including adrenaline production by the adrenal glands (our fight or flight response to stress). Thyroid gland hormones also influence digestion, libido, and overall energy. It is quite clear that a healthy thyroid is key to a healthy life.

### Thyroid Conditions

The two most common conditions associated with the thyroid are *hypothyroidism*, when there is not enough hormone production or utilization, and *hyperthyroidism*, where an overactive thyroid causes too much hormone production. Hypothyroidism is the most common hormone condition and has symptoms of low energy, fatigue, low libido, weight problems, and sensitivity to cold. Hyperthyroidism can lead to nervousness, restlessness, manic behavior, and difficulty concentrating. Fortunately, doctors are getting better at testing for such conditions, which is good news as thyroid conditions are very common, but easily overlooked.



### Thyroid and Nutrition

As with many illnesses, chronic issues, and diseases seen today, nutrition plays a vital role in restoring good health. One of the key nutrients studied to help boost the thyroid, and therefore metabolism, is iodine. High quantities of iodine are found in sea vegetables such as seaweed and kelp. More grocery stores are selling dried seaweed snacks to munch on; they are deliciously salty and crunchy and can be eaten on their own or as an added ingredient to salad.



## Anti-inflammatory Diet

Is seaweed not sounding so appetizing to you? An anti-inflammatory diet continues to be researched for its benefits for the thyroid and metabolism. The general guidelines for an anti-inflammatory diet are fairly simple to follow:

- Limit processed foods, especially those filled with sugar, hydrogenated oils/fats, and sugar.
- Eat organic whole foods whenever possible.
  - Raw nuts and seeds make a nice addition to salads and serve as a great snack filled with healthy fats and omega 3 fatty acids.
  - Beans and legumes add additional and much needed fiber.
  - Whole grains that are unprocessed such as buckwheat, quinoa, and brown rice are a good substitute for white breads and processed crackers (some researchers suggest eliminating all grains).
  - Fruits and vegetables - shoot for at least 5 servings a day.
- Hydrate with water, exercise regularly, and avoid stress as best you can.

Understandably, these tips may seem easier said than done. However, if you ever suspect something amiss with your thyroid, make an appointment with your physician to determine if you should get your thyroid tested.



### Did You Know?

Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli should be avoided if you have a diagnosed thyroid condition. These vegetables contain a phytochemical called *goitrogen* which slows the thyroid and can inhibit the body's ability to use iodine.

#### Resources:

[http://www.webmd.com/search/search\\_results/default.aspx?query=thyroid](http://www.webmd.com/search/search_results/default.aspx?query=thyroid)  
<http://nourishedkitchen.com/foods-thyroid-health/>  
<http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=george&dbid=47>

# Iodine helps your thyroid gland function properly.



For a healthy thyroid, crank up your Iodine intake by munching on these foods:

| Food                     | Serving Size       | Iodine (Daily Value) |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Dried seaweed            | ¼ ounce            | 3000% DV             |
| Yogurt                   | 1 cup              | 58% DV               |
| Cod                      | 3 ounces           | 66% DV               |
| Iodized salt (fortified) | 1 gram             | 51% DV               |
| Baked potato (with peel) | 1 medium           | 40% DV               |
| Milk                     | 1 cup              | 37% DV               |
| Shrimp                   | 3 ounces           | 23% DV               |
| Turkey breast            | 3 ounces           | 23% DV               |
| Navy beans               | ½ cup              | 21% DV               |
| Tuna (canned in oil)     | 3 ounces (1/2 can) | 11% DV               |
| Egg (boiled)             | 1 large            | 8% DV                |
| Strawberries             | 1 cup              | 8% DV                |
| Mozzarella cheese        | 1 ounce            | 6.7 % DV             |

Remember, if you ever suspect that you may have a thyroid condition, make an appointment with your physician to determine if you should get your thyroid tested. If you have a thyroid condition, do not overeat iodine-rich foods as overeating any food can actually worsen the issue.



# Quiz: Thyroid

1. What is the most common thyroid condition?

- a. Hypothyroidism
- b. Hyperthyroidism
- c. Hypertension
- d. Hypotension

2. The thyroid is located;

- a. Inside the inner thigh
- b. Inside the neck
- c. Lower back

3. Foods that help boost our thyroid function:

- a. Iodine rich foods
- b. Seaweed
- c. Fresh organic produce
- d. Fresh water
- e. All of the above

4. What to do if you suspect a thyroid condition:

- a. Diagnose yourself through webmd
- b. Talk to your doctor
- c. Ignore your symptoms

## Answer Key

1. A
2. B
3. E
4. B