



ELITE

Personal Training and Fitness Solutions

# HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK

## 3/14: Thyroid

### Hypothyroidism

The thyroid is a small gland found at the base of the neck. It produces thyroid hormones [primarily thyroxine]. Thyroid hormones exert considerable influence over almost every aspect of human physiology. Essentially, they help regulate your metabolism.

Hypothyroidism, or an underactive thyroid, is a condition in which the thyroid gland does not produce enough hormones. This condition can have varied and serious consequences.

A staggering 20 million Americans have some form of hypothyroidism, but 60% are unaware of it. Women are more likely than men to have thyroid problems. In fact, one in eight women will develop thyroid issues during her lifetime. Stress, an unhealthy diet, and even normal aging can cause unhealthy thyroid function. If your thyroid is underactive, you may experience fatigue, depression, hair loss, muscle cramps, constipation, weight gain, cognitive deficits, dry skin, increased sensitivity to cold, and elevated cholesterol levels.

Many people have subclinical hypothyroidism. This means that some values are abnormal. However, your lab results show adequate hormone production. This situation does not usually produce major health problems, but it can undermine one's quality of life. More severe thyroid deficiencies can create complications such as goiter, depression, heart problems, infertility, nerve damage, and mental disorders.

This information underscores the importance of having an annual physical examination with your PCP and routine blood work. Symptoms arising from hypothyroidism generally require pharmaceutical intervention, often with a prescription for Synthroid (levothyroxine). The body's hormonal system is incredibly complex. Thyroid concerns should be evaluated and monitored by an endocrinologist.



Elite Personal Training and Fitness Solutions does not provide medical treatment or intervention. We acknowledge scientific evidence that appropriately intensive exercise and sustainable nutritional intervention can have significant impact on chronic health disorders and obesity, dramatically improving symptoms when recommendations are followed. Please visit us at [Eliteptf.com](http://Eliteptf.com) for more information and to schedule your evaluation.

# Lifestyle and your thyroid



## • Dietary Considerations

- The body needs iodine to make thyroid hormone. People who avoid iodized salt or who are vegetarians are at risk of developing iodine deficiency.



## • Exercise

- While exercise does not appear to directly affect thyroid function, it does improve muscle tone, maintain cardiovascular health, support energy levels, improve insulin resistance and prevent atherosclerosis and other complications of hypothyroidism.



## • Smoking

- Smoking is damaging to just about every part of your body, and the delicate thyroid gland is no exception.



## • Stress

- Stress can worsen thyroid dysfunction. Exercise and relaxation techniques may be useful in combatting stress and controlling symptoms of mild to moderate thyroid conditions.



## • Nutrients

- Iodine, selenium, vitamin A, and L tyrosine [an essential amino acid] are critical to thyroid function. Other important vitamins and minerals that play a role in thyroid health include zinc, iron, vitamin C, vitamin D, and vitamin B12. Take a good multivitamin and mineral supplement daily.

## • Supplements

- Ashwagandha is one of the most important herbs in holistic medicine. Research indicates Ashwagandha may promote optimal thyroid health.
- Korean ginseng is a native perennial plant of Asia and North America. It has been used for thousands of years and may have positive implications for diabetes, pulmonary disease, fatigue, sexual function, and immune function. Research has shown that Korean ginseng has improved the symptoms of suboptimal thyroid function.
- Turmeric is a plant related to ginger. It is native to Southeast Asia and India, where it has long been revered for its health benefits. Recent research indicates turmeric may play a role in maintaining thyroid health.



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## Are you taking a thyroid hormone?

If so, The Mayo Clinic offers the following guidance.

Don't take thyroid hormone at the same time as:

- Walnuts
- Soybean flour
- Cottonseed meal
- Iron supplements or multivitamins containing iron
- Calcium supplements
- Antacids that contain aluminum, magnesium, or calcium
- Some ulcer medications, such as sucralfate (Carafate)
- Some cholesterol-lowering drugs, such as those containing cholestyramine (Prevalite) and colestipol (Colestid)

To avoid potential interactions, eat these foods or use these products several hours before or after you take your thyroid medication.

Supplements containing biotin, common in hair and nail preparations, can interfere with the measurement of thyroid hormone. Biotin does not affect thyroid hormone levels, but supplements should be stopped for at least a week before measuring your thyroid function so that your thyroid status is accurately reflected.

If you have any questions about your thyroid function, please contact our office to schedule a consultation.