

Thyroid Problems

What is the Thyroid?

The thyroid gland is below the thyroid cartilage (adam's apple). It produces thyroid hormones which control the body's metabolism. These hormones are important in regulating your body's energy.

Types of Thyroid Problems

The three most common types of thyroid problems are:

Underactive thyroid (Hypothyroidism)

This is where the body's immune system attacks the thyroid gland. Symptoms include:

- Fatigue and lack of energy
- Weight gain
- Dry skin and hair
- Feeling more sensitive to the cold

Overactive thyroid (Hyperthyroidism)

This is where the body's immune system overstimulates the thyroid. It is more common in older people. Symptoms include:

- Increased heartbeat
- Weight loss
- Shaking and feelings of irritability
- Feeling hot

Thyroid Nodules

Thyroid nodules are common and usually harmless. However, 4% of nodules are cancerous. Further tests are necessary to see if they are cancerous and they will then need to be removed. This type of thyroid problem causes lumps in the throat, which may cause pain but rarely causes problems swallowing.

Prevention and Treatment

Underactive thyroid – can be treated with thyroid hormone medication.

Overactive thyroid – can be treated with medication to cut down the production of the thyroid hormone; can be treated with radioactive iodine therapy; or part of the thyroid gland can be removed.

If you are concerned that you might be suffering from a thyroid problem, contact your GP. They will carry out a physical examination and a blood test. It is important to be alert and to look for any changes in the gland area.

If you are experiencing problems with your thyroid you should:

- Be aware of the symptoms of both an overactive and an underactive thyroid. It is important to keep checking your neck and to be aware of any lumps or bulges;
- Monitor your medication. If you are taking thyroid medication, take it at the same time every day; and
- Have regular checks with your GP to monitor your Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH).

Useful Information

- [British Thyroid Foundation](#)
- [Thyroid UK](#)
- [Healthtalk.org](#)
- [The Patient Information Centre](#) offers a range of health related information including;
 - medical conditions
 - procedures and treatments
 - details about self help and support groups
 - information about complaints procedures
 - copies of leaflets
- [Newcastle Thyroid Support Group](#) holds regular informal meetings for people with Thyroid problems.
- You may be eligible for free NHS prescriptions. Check on the [NHS BSA eligibility checker](#).

Please note – The content on this website is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your own doctor or any other health care professional. If you are feeling unwell, make an appointment to see your GP or contact [NHS 111](#). In an emergency, dial 999.

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Useful Organisations

Patient Information Centre – Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)

Website: www.cntw.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 246 7288

Address: St Nicholas Hospital, NE3 3XT

British Thyroid Foundation

Email: info@btf-thyroid.org

Website: <http://www.btf-thyroid.org/>

Telephone: 01423 810 093

Address: British Thyroid Foundation Suite 12, , HG2 8PB

NHS

Website: www.nhs.uk

Telephone: 01423 810 093

healthtalk.org

Email: info@healthtalkonline.org

Website: www.healthtalk.org

Telephone: 01423 810 093

Thyroid UK

Website: www.thyroiduk.org

Telephone: 01423 810 093

Address: 32 Darcy Road, CO16 8QF

Newcastle Thyroid Support Group

Email: thyroidgroup8@gmail.com

Telephone: 01423 810 093

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