

# “Thyroid Disorders”

Deaf Health Talks  
Rochester Recreation Club for the Deaf  
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# Supporters

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("REAP")



# Overview

- What does the thyroid gland do for us?
- What are common types of thyroid disorders?
- What are causes for thyroid disorders?
- How can we protect our thyroid?
- How can we best work with your doctors?



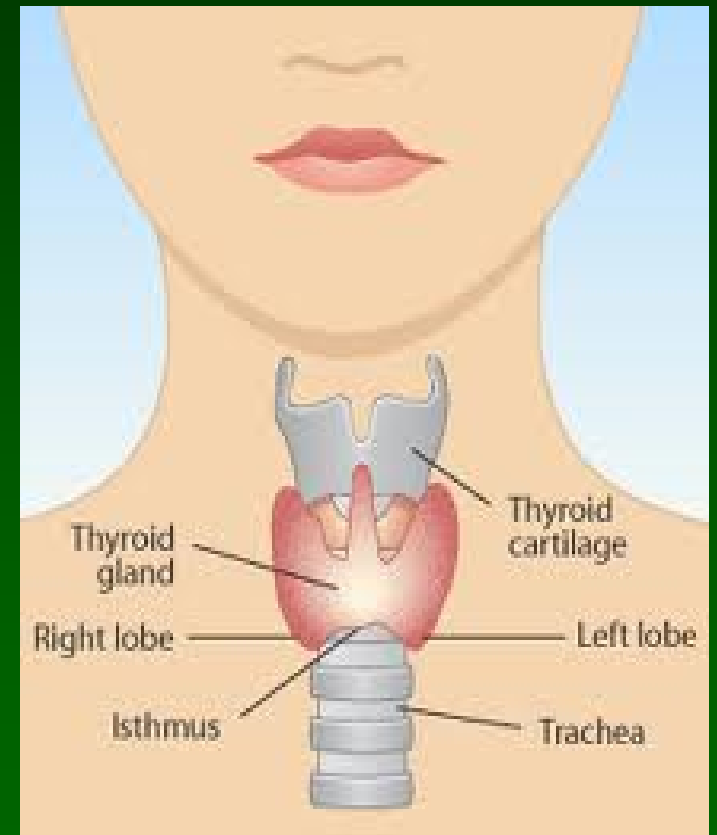
# What is the main thing the thyroid gland does for us?

- Controls our body's metabolism - this means how we use energy



# Thyroid Gland

- Gland makes hormones to regulate body and organs
- \*Hormones are chemical messengers to tell the body what to do
  - ◆ Help control body temperature
  - ◆ Helps body make energy
  - ◆ Helps control organ function
- Weighs one ounce!



Picture: abc.net.au



# Thyroid Gland

- Makes thyroid hormones that help regulate body's metabolism
- Needs iodine to make hormones



# Iodine: A Necessary Mineral for the Thyroid

- Iodine is required by the thyroid gland to function and make thyroid hormones
  - ◆ Naturally occurs in soil and ocean
  - ◆ 40% of people in world are deficient in iodine!\*
  - ◆ Can cause a goiter



\*[http://www.thyroid.org/patients/faqs/iodine\\_deficiency.html](http://www.thyroid.org/patients/faqs/iodine_deficiency.html)



# Americans Get the Most Iodine from what food source?

- A. Broccoli
- B. Milk
- C. Salt
- D. Water

- ◆ Most Americans get enough iodine from iodized table salt and certain foods (eggs, dairy, meat, seafood)





# How common is thyroid issues?

- Hypothyroidism (“Slow Thyroid”)
  - ◆ 3.7% of Americans have this <sup>(1)</sup>
    - ◆ More common in women and in whites
    - ◆ Most common in older people
- Hyperthyroidism (“Fast Thyroid”)
  - ◆ Less than 1% of Americans have this <sup>(2)</sup>
    - ◆ Slightly more common in women and whites
    - ◆ Usually younger and middle aged people



1. <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/122393-overview>
2. <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/767130-overview>



# What is the most common cause of hypothyroidism (“slow thyroid”) in the world?

- A. Infection
- B. Autoimmune- body attacks itself on the thyroid
- C. Radiation exposure
- D. Lack of iodine
- E. Alien snatching our thyroid glands



# What is the most common cause of hypothyroidism (“slow thyroid”) in the USA?

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# Symptoms of Hypothyroidism ("Slow Thyroid")

- Fatigue (feel tired)
- Depressed
- Constipation (unable to poop)
- Weight gain and obesity
- Leg swelling (edema)
- Dry skin
- Muscle cramps
- Very sensitive to cold
- Hair loss
- Poor concentration



# Symptoms of Hyperthyroidism ("Fast Thyroid")

- Fast heart rate
- Irregular heart rate
- Unable to sleep
- Palpitations
- Bone loss
- "Bulging eyes"
- Weight loss
- Nervous and anxious
- Very sensitive to cold
- Easily upset
- Muscle weakness



# Goiter

- Enlargement of thyroid gland
- Rarely cancer
- Can be from iodine deficiency
- Doctors will check for large nodules
- Can be seen with both hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism



# Grave's Disease

- Causes hyperthyroidism (“fast thyroid”)
- Body accidentally makes the thyroid gland work faster
- Thyroid stare (eyes get pushed forward)
- Treated with anti-thyroid medications



# Treatment of Hyperthyroidism

- Radioactive iodine
  - ◆ Most Common Treatment
- Medications
  - ◆ Tapazole (methimazole)
  - ◆ PTU (propylthiouracil)
- Surgery





# Common Types of Hypothyroidism

## ■ Hashimoto's Thyroiditis

- ◆ Body attacks the thyroid gland- makes it fail (autoimmune)

## ■ Iodine Deficiency

- ◆ Thyroid unable to make hormones which require iodine to “build”



# Treatment of Hypothyroidism

- Replace thyroid hormone
  - ◆ Synthetic (Man made)
    - Synthroid
    - Levoxyl
    - Levothyroid
    - Levothyroxine
  - ◆ Animal thyroid
    - Most are from pigs or cows



# Thyroid Replacement

- Doctor will gradually increase dose until lab values are normal
  - ◆ Thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) will be checked 6-8 weeks after a change in the dose or medication
  - ◆ May require multiple changes



# How do doctors know if you have thyroid issues?

- History is key!
- Physical exam
  - ◆ Front of neck mass (bump)- goiter
  - ◆ Bulging eyes
  - ◆ Fine Hair
  - ◆ Brittle nails
  - ◆ Heart rate
  - ◆ Skin texture



# Thyroid Testing

- Blood Lab testing
  - ◆ TSH is most common screening test
- Ultrasound of thyroid
- Thyroid Scan
- Thyroid fine needle biopsy (gets a small tissue to look under microscope)



# Prevention and Management

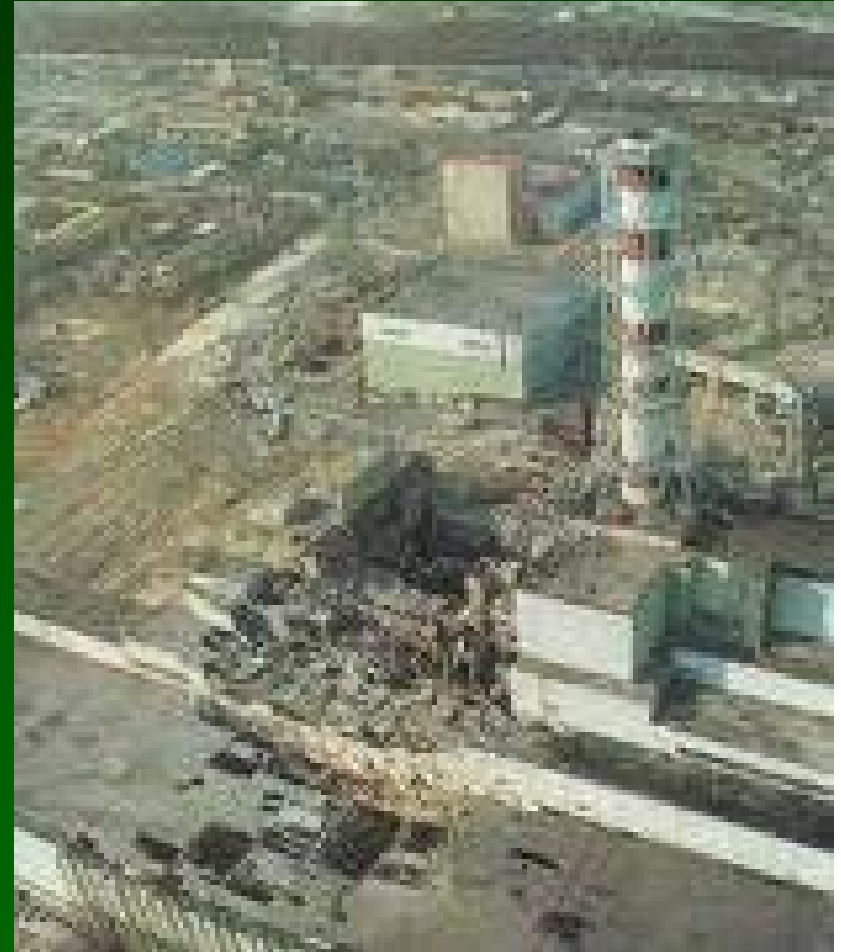
- Avoid radiation treatments or exposure if able
- Caution with certain medications
  - ◆ Lithium (used for bipolar)
  - ◆ Amiodarone (used for heart)
    - \*Both can make it easier for you to have hypothyroidism
- Follow directions on thyroid replacement medications can avoid overtreating or undertreating your thyroid disease
  - ◆ No skipping doses!



# Nuclear Radiation

## Chernobyl Disaster

- Thyroid cancer is biggest concern in the short term
  - ◆ Potassium iodine can help reduce risk
  - ◆ Department of health will let you know if you need to take it
  - ◆ Young people and children are at higher risk (over 40 years old usually don't need it)



Picture: citizented.com



# Preparing for your appointment

## Who to call?

- Primary Care Physician (PCP)
  - ◆ Family Medicine (Family Physician)
  - ◆ Internal Medicine (Internist)
- Specialist
  - ◆ Endocrinologist





# Preparing for your appointment

## Be prepared! Time is limited!

- Pre-appointment restrictions?
- Write down any symptoms
- Write down personal information
- Make a list of all medications
  - ◆ Name, dosage, frequency
- Bring a family member or friend
- Write down questions to ask



# Questions for the Doctor

- What causes my symptoms?
- What kinds of tests needed?
- Is my condition temporary or chronic?
- What's do-do best?
- I have other health problems. How can I manage all at same time?
- Any restrictions?
- Should I see a specialist? How much? Insurance covered?
- Any generic medication?
- Any brochures or other printed information I can take home with?



# Questions from the Doctor

- When did symptoms start?
- Symptoms once a while or continuous?
- How severe?
- What seem to improve your symptoms?
- What seem to make your symptoms worse?



# Lifestyle and Home Remedies For Hyperthyroidism

- Excessive weight loss: Improve diet
  - ◆ Add more calories and protein
  - ◆ Seek help of Dietitian
  - ◆ Temporary
  
- Excessive weight gain: Healthy eating
  - ◆ Watch sodium and calcium
  
- Thinning of bones: Get enough Calcium
  - ◆ Prevent Osteoporosis
  - ◆ Dosage depends on your age
  - ◆ Ask Doctor about Vitamin D



# Lifestyle and Home Remedies For Graves' Disease

- Apply cool towels to your eyes
- Wear sunglasses
- Eye drops
- Keep your head higher than body
- OTC creams for swollen skin
  - ◆ Talk to Pharmacist



# Coping & Support For Hyperthyroidism

- Other ways to take care of you during treatment
- Get regular exercise
  - ◆ Feel better
  - ◆ Improves muscle tone and cardiovascular system
  - ◆ Weight-bearing exercise important for Graves' disease
  - ◆ Increase your energy level
- Learn relaxation techniques
  - ◆ Gain positive outlook (even living with disease)
  - ◆ Graves' disease is stress-related



# Questions???

- Thank you!
- Next Deaf Health Talk Thursday, November 18 at 7 pm
- Rochester Recreation Club for the Deaf

