



# THYROID AWARENESS FACT SHEET

[www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org)



## QUICK FACTS ABOUT THYROID DISEASE

An estimated 20 million Americans have some form of thyroid disease.

- A large amount of people with thyroid disease are unaware of their condition.
- More than 12% of the U.S. population will develop a thyroid condition during their lifetime.



Thyroid problems can occur at any age but become more common after age 35.

- Women are 5-8 times more likely than men to have thyroid problems.
- 1 in 8 women will develop a thyroid disorder during her lifetime.

Undiagnosed thyroid disease may put patients at risk for serious conditions including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and infertility.

# What is the Thyroid?

The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland located at the base of the neck, just below the Adam's apple. Despite its small size (approximately 2 inches long), it produces hormones that regulate:

- Metabolism and weight
- Energy levels
- Body temperature
- Heart rate
- Mood and mental clarity
- Digestive function
- Muscle strength

## Risk Factors

Individuals at higher risk for thyroid disease include:

- Women, especially over age 35
- People with family history of thyroid disease
- Those with other autoimmune disorders (Type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus)
- Pregnant women or those who recently gave birth
- People who have received radiation therapy to neck or chest
- Those with iodine deficiency or excess

## Screening and Diagnosis

**Primary Test:** TSH (Thyroid-Stimulating Hormone) blood test

- Simple, affordable screening tool
- Can be done at regular doctor visits
- Additional tests (T3, T4, thyroid antibodies) if indicated may be ordered for complete assessment

**Physical Examination:** Doctor checks for thyroid enlargement or nodules

**Imaging:** Ultrasound or radioactive iodine uptake test if abnormalities detected

**Biopsy:** Fine needle aspiration for suspicious nodules

# Common Thyroid Conditions

Hypothyroidism	Hyperthyroidism	Thyroid Nodules
Thyroid doesn't produce enough hormone  Symptoms: Fatigue, weight gain, cold sensitivity, depression, dry skin, hair loss  Treatment options include hormone replacement medication	Thyroid produces too much hormone  Symptoms: weight loss, rapid heartbeat, anxiety, tremors, heat sensitivity, insomnia  Treatment options include medication, radioactive iodine, or surgery	Lumps in the thyroid gland—very common and most are benign.  May require monitoring or biopsy
Thyroid Cancer	Hashimoto's Thyroiditis	Graves' Disease
Highly treatable with high survival rates when detected early.	Autoimmune condition that causes hypothyroidism	Autoimmune condition causing hyperthyroidism

## Symptoms to Watch For

Hypothyroidism	Hyperthyroidism
Fatigue • Weight gain • Cold intolerance • Constipation • Dry skin • Hair loss • Depression • Memory problems • Muscle weakness • Slow heart rate	Weight loss • Rapid heartbeat • Anxiety • Tremors • Sweating • Heat intolerance • Frequent bowel movements • Difficulty sleeping • Irritability • Bulging eyes (in Graves' disease)

*This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. Always consult with a qualified healthcare provider for diagnosis and treatment of thyroid conditions. For more thyroid resources, visit [www.thyroid.org](http://www.thyroid.org).*