

Myths about underactive thyroid

One of the most common thyroid problems is hypothyroidism, or underactive thyroid.



Hypothyroidism means the thyroid gland isn't making enough thyroid hormones. This can cause a number of symptoms, including:

- Fatigue
- Trouble with learning or remembering
- Dry hair, nails or skin
- Constipation
- Sore muscles
- Weight gain or bloating
- Heavy or irregular menstrual periods

Although hypothyroidism is a common problem, there are many myths about it. Read on to learn about some common myths – and what you should know and hypothyroidism.



MYTH:

You can't lose weight if you have a thyroid problem.

FACT:

Many people can get to a healthy weight with hypothyroidism after getting on the proper dose of thyroid medication. They may need to work with a nutritionist or other health provider and get plenty of exercise. But losing weight is doable.



MYTH:

People with underactive thyroid need to take iodine.

FACT:

People with hypothyroidism should be on a medication that their doctor prescribes. Taking iodine supplements is usually not needed.



MYTH:

You can't get pregnant if you have hypothyroidism.

FACT:

Many women can get pregnant with an underactive thyroid. They should work with their doctor to make sure they are on thyroid medication that is safe and effective. It's important to take thyroid medication consistently and carefully throughout pregnancy.



MYTH:

High doses of thyroid medicine are better.

FACT:

Having too much thyroid hormone can lead to health problems like rapid heart rate, irregular heartbeat, bone loss and can even become life threatening. Work with your doctor to be sure your thyroid blood levels are within a healthy range.



MYTH:

Only older women have hypothyroidism.

FACT:

Thyroid problems can affect anyone, of any age. But women older than 60 years are at an increased risk for hypothyroidism.



MYTH:

I can manage underactive thyroid with a healthy diet.

FACT:

A healthy diet is great for everyone, including people with underactive thyroid. However, even the best food choices cannot replace missing thyroid hormones. A person needs to take their thyroid medication as their doctor prescribes to replace these hormones.

Source: American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists