

Thyroid

What is the Thyroid?

Thyroid hormones are crucial chemical messengers produced by the thyroid gland, a butterfly-shaped gland located at the base of the neck. These hormones play a key role in regulating the body's metabolism, growth, and energy levels. The primary thyroid hormones are:

1. Thyroxine (T4): This is the most abundant thyroid hormone in the bloodstream. T4 is relatively inactive on its own but is converted into the more active form, T3, in various tissues of the body.
2. Triiodothyronine (T3): T3 is the more active thyroid hormone and is responsible for most of the biological effects attributed to thyroid hormones. It regulates the speed of metabolism and affects how cells use energy.

Functions of the thyroid hormone:

- Metabolism Regulation: Thyroid hormones help control how quickly the body converts food into energy. This affects your basal metabolic rate (BMR), which determines how many calories you burn at rest.
- Growth and Development: They are essential for normal growth and development, particularly in children. Inadequate thyroid hormone levels during development can lead to growth delays and developmental issues.
- Body Temperature: Thyroid hormones help regulate body temperature by influencing metabolic heat production.
- Heart Function: They affect heart rate and cardiac output, contributing to overall cardiovascular health.
- Brain Function: Thyroid hormones impact cognitive function, mood, and overall mental health.

Thyroid Medication:

There are a variety of NP thyroid medications. Here at Axis Health, we use NP thyroid. NP thyroid is a type of desiccated thyroid extract. It is made from the dried thyroid glands of pigs, which naturally contain both T4 and T3 in a ratio similar to that of human thyroid hormones. This natural preparation provides a combination of both hormones in a balanced form.

You may be wondering, but isn't NP thyroid just Armour Thyroid? Although both of these medications support T3 and T4 function, Armour Thyroid tends to have more "filler" product in it making NP thyroid a "cleaner" product. It also tends to be less expensive.

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How to take thyroid medication?

Timing:

- **Take NP Thyroid on an Empty Stomach:** It is generally recommended to take NP Thyroid first thing in the morning, at least 30 minutes to an hour before eating or drinking anything other than water. This helps ensure optimal absorption of the medication.

Swallowing the Medication:

- **Do Not Crush or Chew:** Swallow the NP Thyroid tablets whole. Crushing or chewing the tablets can affect how the medication is absorbed and may lead to inconsistent dosing.

Consistency:

- **Take It at the Same Time Every Day:** Try to take NP Thyroid at the same time each day to help you remember and maintain stable thyroid hormone levels in your blood.

Avoid Certain Foods and Supplements:

- **Interactions:** Certain foods and supplements can interfere with the absorption of NP Thyroid. Common examples include foods high in fiber, soy products, biotin, and calcium supplements. It's generally advised to wait at least 4 hours after taking NP Thyroid before consuming these types of foods or supplements.

Do Not Stop Abruptly:

- **Discontinuation:** Do not stop taking NP Thyroid suddenly without consulting your healthcare provider, as this can lead to a return of hypothyroid symptoms or other complications.

Side Effects

- Rapid heartbeat, heart palpitations, tremors/shaking, sweating, and rash are common side effects that usually subside within a week.

Benefits:

- Boosted energy levels
- Improved weight management
- Improved mood (reduced depression and anxiety)
- Better cognitive performance (such as memory, concentration, and overall mental clarity, for example reduced "brain fog".)
- Improved heart function
- Better blood circulation
- Increased heat production
 - Can help in maintaining normal body temperature and increasing thermogenesis
- Enhanced digestive processes
 - Supports gastrointestinal motility and function which can improve digestion and alleviate constipation

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Typical Timeframe for Noticing Improvements:

Initial Response:

- Days to Weeks: Some individuals may begin to notice initial improvements within a few days to a couple of weeks. This can include increased energy levels, improved mood, and reduced symptoms of hypothyroidism.

Significant Changes:

- 4 to 6 Weeks: More noticeable and significant changes, such as improved cognitive function, weight management, and overall well-being, often become apparent within 4 to 6 weeks of starting T3 therapy. This timeframe allows for the body to adjust to the new hormone levels and for the medication to reach a stable state in the bloodstream.

Full Effects:

- 3 to 6 Months: For many individuals, the full benefits of T3 therapy, including optimal metabolic adjustments and resolution of symptoms like muscle weakness or constipation, may take 3 to 6 months to manifest. This period allows for fine-tuning of the dosage and monitoring of long-term effects

General Factors Affecting Improvement Timeframe:

1. Dosage and Adjustments:

- Initial Dosage: The initial dose of T3 and how quickly it is adjusted based on your response will affect how soon you notice improvements. Regular follow-ups with your healthcare provider help ensure the correct dosage is maintained.

2. Individual Variability:

- Personal Response: Each person's response to T3 therapy can be different. Some may experience rapid improvements, while others might need more time to notice significant changes.

3. Baseline Thyroid Function:

- Existing Thyroid Levels: The severity of the initial thyroid dysfunction and how much T3 is needed to correct it can influence how quickly you experience improvements.

4. Lifestyle and Diet:

- Overall Health: Other factors such as diet, stress levels, and overall health can also impact how quickly you see benefits from T3 therapy.