

Hypothyroidism Assessment (OLD VERSION)

Hypothyroidism occurs as a result of a decreased level of thyroid hormone, which occurs following thyroidectomy, radioactive iodine (RAI) ablation, and in some geographic areas in the world where the soil is lacking in iodine leading to iodine deficiency and goiter. Overall clinical symptoms of hypothyroidism relate to decreased metabolism.



PLAY PICMONIC

Assessment

Weight Gain - Edema

[Up-arrow Scale Edamame](#)

The slower metabolic process does not allow the body to burn fat adequately. This results in the patient experiencing weight gain and edema, even with dieting.

Lethargy

[Leather-jacket](#)

Lethargy or feeling extremely fatigued is a common symptom of hypothyroidism. Patients still feel lethargic even after a full night's rest. Individuals may describe sleep as unrefreshing, because they wake up tired.

Cold Intolerance

[Ice-cube Shivering](#)

Patients with hypothyroidism become hypersensitive to cold environments or temperature. This is caused by the slower metabolism and the body's inability to produce enough heat to tolerate the cold environment.

Bradycardia

[Snail-heart](#)

Patients with hypothyroidism will have a slower heart rate. The body is not working as hard because of the slower metabolic process.

Hypotension

[Hippo-BP](#)

Similar to bradycardia, hypotension may occur as the body's oxygen demand is decreased. This results in the heart slowing down and not pumping as hard as normal. This may lead to low exercise tolerance and shortness of breath on exertion.

Brittle Nails and Dry Skin

[Broken Nails and Dry Skin-suit-man](#)

Skin becomes dry and thick from the decrease in sweat and oil secretion. Hair becomes coarse and hair loss can occur. Fingernails also become dry and brittle.

Constipation

[Corked Con-toilet](#)

The slower digestive tract can cause constipation.

Goiter

[Goiter-goat](#)

Goiter is defined as having an enlarged thyroid gland. On examination patients will have an enlarged neck, which can cause breathing issues if the swelling pushes against the trachea. The presence of a goiter indicates a problem with thyroid function but does not indicate whether it is hypersecretion or hyposecretion of thyroid hormone, as goiter can be seen with both hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism.

Prolonged Menses (Prolonged Menstruation)

[Prolonged Man-Z's](#)

Women that develop hypothyroidism can experience menstrual problems such as prolonged irregular and heavy periods or amenorrhea.

Slow Thinking

[Gummed-mental-gears](#)

Patients with hypothyroidism will become forgetful and can have memory losses.

Diagnostic Tests

Decreased Free T4

[Down-arrow Tea \(4\) Fork](#)

Blood tests are performed to confirm the diagnosis of hypothyroidism. A decreased level of T4 suggests hypothyroidism.

Increased TSH

[Up-arrow Tissue-box](#)

When the thyroid is not functioning properly and produces too little thyroid hormone, the thyroid cannot respond normally to TSH by producing thyroid hormone. As a result, the pituitary keeps making TSH, trying to get the thyroid to respond. Thus, individuals with hypothyroidism will have elevated TSH levels.