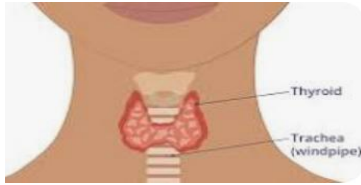




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January is Thyroid Disease Observant Month

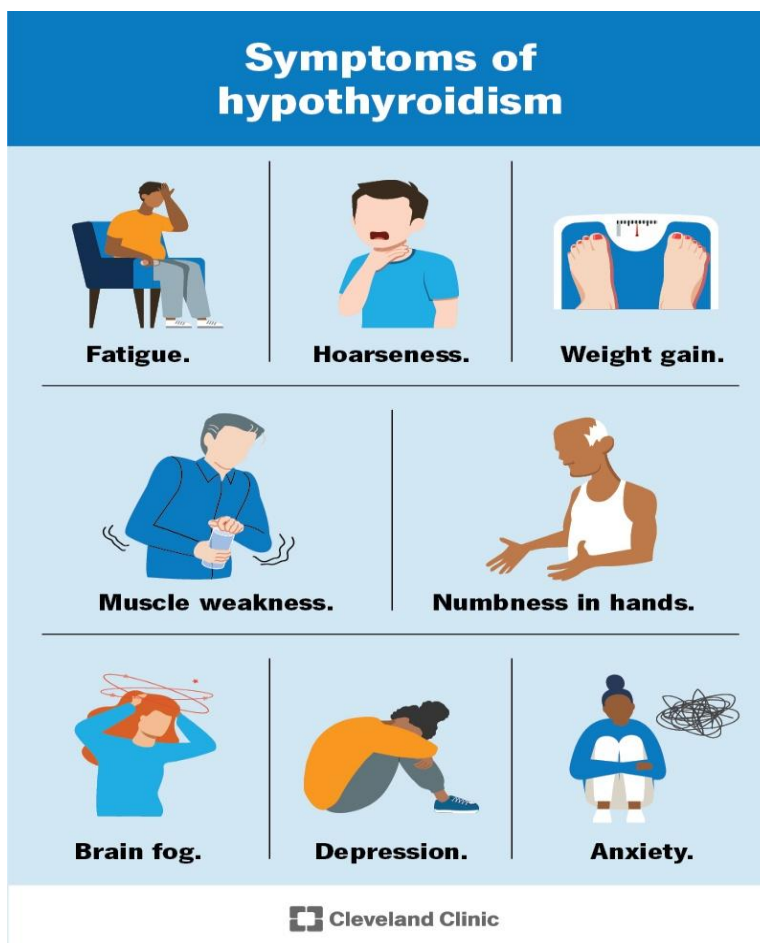
The **thyroid** is a **hormone-producing gland** that regulates the body's metabolism—the rate at which the body produces energy from nutrients and oxygen—and helps the body use energy, stay warm and keep the brain, heart, muscles, and other organs working normally.



The thyroid gland is located in the middle of the lower neck. More than 12 percent of the U.S. population will develop a thyroid condition during their lifetime.

- The causes of thyroid problems are largely unknown.
- Undiagnosed thyroid disease may put patients at risk for certain serious conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases, osteoporosis and infertility.
- Most thyroid diseases are life-long conditions that can be managed with medical attention.

Major thyroid disease conditions are **Hypothyroidism and Hyperthyroidism**



Hypothyroidism refers to any condition in which the thyroid gland produces **too little** thyroid hormone.

Symptoms may include feeling run down, slow, depressed, sluggish, cold, or tired and having dry skin and hair, constipation, muscle cramps, or weight gain.

Women may have an increased menstrual flow.

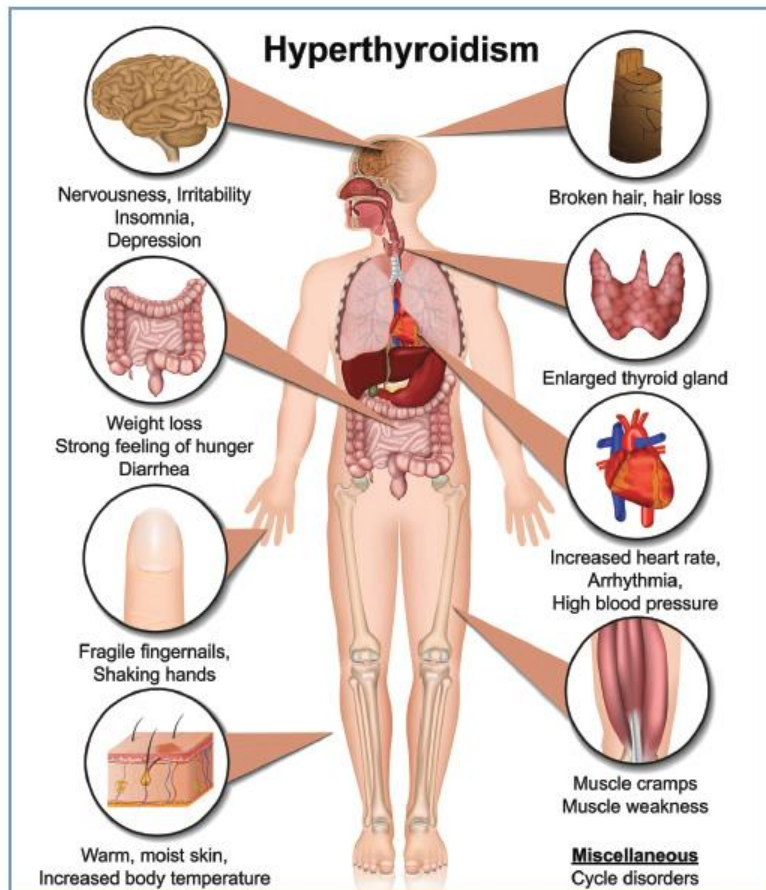
Some patients have a swelling in the front of the neck due to thyroid enlargement (a goiter).

Bless the LORD, my soul; and do not forget all his gifts, Who pardons all your sins, and heals all your ills... Psalms 103:2-3



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Hyperthyroidism means that your thyroid gland is making *too much* thyroid hormone.

If there is too much thyroid hormone, your body speeds up and this can cause symptoms such as those illustrated

Everyone is different and you may not have all the symptoms. Symptoms can start suddenly or come on slowly over time.

How is the diagnosis made? A physical examination and laboratory tests that measure the amount of thyroid hormone (thyroxine, or T4) and thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH) in your blood are necessary.

How is hypothyroidism treated? Medicine, Synthetic thyroxine. Pure synthetic thyroxine (T4), taken once daily by mouth, fully replaces the thyroid gland and successfully treats the symptoms of hypothyroidism in most patients.

How is hyperthyroidism treated? Medicine that stops the thyroid from producing too much of the thyroid hormones; **radioiodine treatment** – where a type of [radiotherapy](#) is used to destroy cells in the thyroid, reducing its ability to produce thyroid hormones; **surgery** to remove some or all of the thyroid, so that it no longer produces thyroid hormones.

If you have thyroid disease see your doctor for follow-up at least once a year so that your thyroid hormone and TSH levels can be checked.

- Thyroid disease often runs in families. Encourage your family members to get examined

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