

Sukhi Lalli

What is a Thyroid and What Does it Do?

The thyroid is a butterfly shaped gland which wraps around the front part of the windpipe just below the Adam's apple. It produces hormones that regulate the body's metabolism and organ function. Thyroid hormone influences essentially every organ, every tissue and every cell in the body.

What is Hyperthyroidism?

Hyperthyroidism means too much thyroid hormone and is a relatively common problem. . Although there are several different causes of hyperthyroidism, most of the symptoms that patients experience are the same regardless of the cause (see the list of symptoms below).

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Hyperthyroidism?

In general, the symptoms of hyperthyroidism are:

Palpitations	Fast heart rate
Heat intolerance	Trembling hands
Nervousness	Weight loss
Insomnia	Muscle weakness
Breathlessness	Warm moist skin
Increased bowel movements	Hair loss
Light or absent menstrual periods	Staring gaze
Fatigue	

How is Hyperthyroidism Treated?

Some of the symptoms of hyperthyroidism can be improved within quickly by medications called beta-blockers. These drugs block the effect of the thyroid hormone but don't have an effect on the thyroid itself, thus Beta-blockers do not cure the hyperthyroidism and do not decrease the amount of thyroid hormone being produced, they just prevent some of the symptoms. Once the symptoms resolve, the patient can be taken off of these drugs.

Things to Remember:

- Within a few weeks of beginning therapy your symptoms should subside. Don't stop taking your medication because you feel better.
- Talk with your doctor and pharmacist about how you are reacting to treatment.
- Tell your doctor if you are, or may be, pregnant.
- Tell your doctor if you are taking any other medications.

This material is intended for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for the medical advice of your doctor or any other health care professional. Always consult with your physician if you are in any way concerned about your health.

Sukhi Lalli

Pharmaceutical Care Clinic

1139 Yates St. Victoria, BC. V8V 3N2

(250) 386-5100

www.slpn.ca