

# Common Thyroid Disorder: Know Ways To Prevent Them

Check the list of common thyroid diseases and tips for prevention



The thyroid is a little butterfly-shaped gland in the neck vital to maintaining general health. The thyroid gland produces hormones that control a wide range of bodily processes, and any imbalance in these hormones can lead to several health issues. The thyroid gland produces hormones, mainly thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3).

Hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism are two ailments that result from the gland producing too much or too little of these hormones, which are known as thyroid disorders. They affect energy levels, metabolism, and organ function.

In India, thyroid diseases are common and affect people of all ages and socioeconomic statuses. According to *Indus Health Plus*, 13% of females and 6%

of males have elevated TSH levels. Approximately 10% of Indian families had at least one member with a thyroid condition, according to the National Family Health Survey-4. According to a study published by *Lancet*, Hypothyroidism is the most common form of thyroid that affects every 11% of the Indian population.

Moreover, dietary practices, stress, and heredity all play a part in the increased prevalence of thyroid problems in India. This is especially true for women as they are more vulnerable to thyroid diseases and frequently associated with hormonal changes that occur during menopause and pregnancy.

## **Common Thyroid Diseases**

There are various thyroid diseases, some of which include:

**Hypothyroidism, also known as underactive thyroid:** Underactive thyroid causes the thyroid gland to generate insufficient thyroid hormones, which slows down the body's metabolism. It may result in exhaustion, weight gain, and cold intolerance among other symptoms.

**Hyperthyroidism:** Hyperthyroidism is a disorder in which the thyroid gland secretes more thyroid hormone than is typical, which speeds up the body's metabolism. Symptoms include perspiration, rapid heartbeat, weight loss, anxiety, and irritability.

**Goitre:** Goitre is a swelling at the base of the neck indicative of an enlargement of the thyroid gland. Thyroid issues, iodine shortages, and other causes may be to blame.

**Thyroid nodules:** Growths within the thyroid gland are known as thyroid nodules. Though rare, most are benign; a tiny percentage can develop into malignancy. Large nodules may cause discomfort or difficulty swallowing; however, symptoms are rare.

**Thyroid cancer:** Thyroid cancer is usually diagnosed as a lump or nodule in the neck, and it starts in the thyroid gland. It's generally curable and not too prevalent, especially if caught early. Surgery, radioactive iodine, thyroid hormone therapy, or a mix of these may be used as treatments.

**Graves' disease:** Graves' disease is an autoimmune condition that causes hyperthyroidism or an overactive thyroid gland. It happens when the thyroid produces excessive amounts of thyroid hormone because the immune system

accidentally attacks it. This leads to symptoms such as heat intolerance, anxiety, restlessness, weight loss, fast heartbeat, and enlarged eyes (Graves' ophthalmopathy). Radioactive iodine therapy, antithyroid drugs, and occasionally surgery are possible treatment options. In most cases, reducing thyroid hormone production and treating symptoms are the main goals of managing Graves' illness.

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### **Detection: Thyroid Disorders Tests**

According to Mr. Amol Naikawadi, Preventive Healthcare Specialist, *Indus Health Plus*, Adequate care and awareness about thyroid problems are needed to detect the condition early. To do so, regular blood tests that measure T4, T3, and thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH) aid in diagnosing abnormalities. TSH levels that are elevated frequently signify hypothyroidism, while those that are lowered may indicate hyperthyroidism. In short, timely diagnosis depends on regular health check-ups and consultations with medical professionals.

### **How Can You Prevent Thyroid Problems?**

**Promoting Thyroid Wellness:** Adopting a comprehensive approach to general well-being is necessary to maintain thyroid function. The following lifestyle choices may support thyroid health:

**Balanced Diet:** A well-balanced diet should contain plenty of zinc, selenium, and iodine—critical to thyroid function. Incorporate whole grains, dairy, nuts, and seafood into your diet. At the same time, restrict your consumption of processed meals and too much iodized salt.

**Frequent Exercise:** To increase metabolism and support general health, exercise regularly. Exercise can lower the risk of thyroid problems and assist in regulating thyroid function.

**Handling Stress:** Extended periods of stress might affect thyroid function. To support physical and emotional well-being, include stress-relieving practices, such as yoga, meditation, and deep breathing exercises.

**Enough Sleep:** Get enough good sleep, as it's essential for thyroid hormone balance and other hormone balance.

**Regular Check-ups:** Make time for routine medical examinations, particularly if you suffer from symptoms like weariness, mood swings, or weight fluctuations or if thyroid issues run in your family.