



Are You Thyroid Deficient?

“When hypothyroid symptoms are present, even though lab tests are normal, the thyroid hormones may not be active at the cellular level.”

I went to a summer pool party and I couldn't help but notice the mixed edema or puffiness in the face of one of my friends. I didn't want to start pool party diagnostics so I decided to wait for a private moment at a later date. But later, she casually mentioned that her cholesterol was elevated and that she was always tired. She's in her late 50s and overweight. In conversations I overheard her telling the other ladies that her hair and skin were different than before she had her children. By observing and listening to her, I could see the clinical picture. She is hypothyroid.

Traditionally, hypothyroidism is defined as "a condition in which the thyroid gland does not make enough thyroid hormone." The thyroid gland is located in the front of the neck just below the voice box or larynx. The thyroid releases hormones that control metabolism. Interestingly, researchers are discovering



new ways to look at thyroid malfunctions.

Dr. Mark Starr in his fascinating book Hypothyroidism Type 2 compares Type 2 Diabetes to what he calls Type 2 Hypothyroidism. Many Type 2 diabetics have enough insulin to maintain blood sugar equilibrium. Yet somehow their cells are not responding to their existing insulin levels and thus additional insulin is prescribed. Similarly, if someone displays hypothyroid symptoms, Dr. Starr suggests that their

thyroid hormones may not be active at the cellular level. Thyroid tests are normal and yet patients have hypothyroid symptoms.

He spends 20 pages discussing the limitations of thyroid testing even the highly accepted TSH. According to Dr. Mark Starr, better indicators for thyroid function are patient histories, physical exams and the results of a clinical trial. In other words, the Wellness approach to hypothyroidism is to treat the person not the number on the lab test.

Here are some of the physiological functions of the thyroid.

Thyroid hormones increase the function of a large number of genes, increase cellular metabolic activity and stimulate carbohydrate and fat metabolism. Some of the effects of healthy thyroid function on the cardiovascular system include increased blood flow and cardiac output, increased heart rate, increased heart strength, normal arterial blood pressure, increased respiration, increased GI motility, healthy muscle tone and healthy libido.

Thyroid symptoms are ubiquitous.

The lack of thyroid hormones is correlated with increased concentrations of cholesterol and triglycerides in blood. Low thyroid has also been associated with fatty deposits in the liver, depression, low energy states and menstrual irregularities. Low thyroid hormones also mean a low metabolic rate.

How can the deficiency of one hormone have so many different symptoms associated with it? I think it is because healthy thyroid function is related to healthy mitochondrial function. Mitochondria are the cell's power producers. They convert energy into forms that are usable by the cell. Healthy mitochondrial function means more energy for cells.

When thyroid hormones are given to animals, trillions of mitochondria increase in size and number. Guyton's Textbook of Medical Physiology 2000 edition states that "it seems almost to be an obvious deduction that the principal func-

tion of thyroxine (thyroid hormone) might be simply to increase the number and activity of mitochondria."

You can take thyroid medication but unless you have enough iron, magnesium, iodine/iodide and selenium, your hypothyroid symptoms may remain unchanged. Also, healthy adrenal glands are essential for healthy thyroid function. If adrenal function is over stimulated, it will shut down the thyroid as the body is trying to slow down the destructive fight or flight reaction. You may need adrenal support along with thyroid supplements.

Your Wellness clinician understands thyroid function and offers treatments that take a comprehensive and completely natural approach. If you have a deficiency of thyroid hormone, see your Wellness clinician. Supplements can be taken safely and effectively that support healthy endocrine function and balance your metabolism naturally. I've seen many patients who come to me with symptoms of a thyroid deficiency, particularly difficulty losing weight. They've had their thyroid checked and the results came back normal.

As you've seen here, it may take more than a test to uncover a thyroid deficiency. But don't give up. Talk to your Wellness clinician about thyroid function and how to increase your body's metabolism. It's time to get started so you can have more energy... lose weight and feel younger.

