

THYROID SELF ASSESSMENT TEST

The following is a list of symptoms, conditions, and signs that could be indicators of low thyroid. Take this self assessment to see if you should receive further testing, or a trial of thyroid hormone, regardless of test results.

I. **Additional Symptoms:** Give yourself 5 points for significant fatigue, and 1 point for each additional 'yes' answer.

Significant fatigue, lethargy, sluggishness, or history of low thyroid at an earlier age (5 points)

- _hoarseness for no particular reason
- _chronic recurrent infection(s)
- _decreased sweating even with mild exercise
- _depression, to the point of being a bothersome problem
- _a tendency to be slow to heat up, even in a sauna
- _constipation despite adequate fiber and liquids in diet
- _brittle nails that crack or peel easily
- _high cholesterol despite good diet
- _frequent headaches (especially migraines)
- _irregular menses, PMS, ovarian cysts, endometriosis
- _unusually low sex drive
- _red face with exercise
- _accelerated worsening of eyesight or hearing
- _palpitations or uncomfortably noticeable heartbeat
- _difficulty in drawing a full breath, for no apparent reason
- _mood swings, especially anxiety, panic, or phobia
- _gum problems
- _mild choking sensation or difficulty swallowing
- _excessive menopause symptoms, not well relieved with estrogen
- _major weight gain
- _aches and pains of limbs, unrelated to exertion
- _skin problems of adult acne, eczema, or severe dry skin
- _vague and mildly annoying chest discomfort, unrelated to exercise
- _feeling off balance
- _infertility
- _annoying burning or tingling sensations that come and go
- _the experience of being colder than other people around you
- _difficulty maintaining standard weight with a sensible food intake
- _problems with memory, focus, or concentration
- _more than normal amounts of hair come out in the brush or shower
- _difficulty maintaining stamina throughout the day

II. **Related Conditions:** Give yourself 5 points for autoimmune illness, and one point for each additional 'yes' answer.

Have you ever had:

_any of these autoimmune disorders: rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, sarcoidosis, scleroderma, Sjogren's syndrome, biliary cirrhosis, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, thrombocytopenia (decreased blood platelets) 5 points

- _prematurely gray hair
- _anemia, especially the B-12 deficiency type
- _dyslexia
- _persistent unusual visual changes
- _rapid cycle bipolar disorder (manic-depressive illness)
- _Raynaud's syndrome (white or blue discoloration of fingers or toes when cold)
- _mitral valve prolapse
- _carpal tunnel syndrome
- _persistent tendonitis or bursitis
- _atrial fibrillation
- _alopecia (losing hair, especially in discrete patches)
- _calcium deficiency
- _attention deficit disorder (ADD)
- _vitiligo (persistent large white patches on skin)
- _neck injury, such as whiplash or blunt trauma

III. **Family History:** give yourself 5 points for blood relatives ever having a thyroid problem, and 1 point for each additional 'yes' answer.

Have any of your blood relatives ever had:

_high or low thyroid, or thyroid goiter (5 points)

- _prematurely gray hair
- _complete or partial left-handedness
- _diabetes
- _rheumatoid arthritis
- _lupus
- _sarcoidosis
- _scleroderma
- _Sjogren's syndrome
- _biliary cirrhosis
- _myasthenia gravis
- _multiple sclerosis
- _Crohn's disease
- _ulcerative colitis
- _thrombocytopenia (decreased blood platelets)

IV. **Physical Signs:** give yourself 5 points for low basal temperature, and 1 point for each additional 'yes' answer.

Have you or your doctor observed any of the following:

_low basal temperature in early morning (average of less than 97.6 degrees over 7 days)

- _slow movements, slow speech, slow reaction time
- _muscle weakness

- _thick tongue (seemingly too big for mouth)
- _swelling of feet
- _swelling of eyelids or bags under eyes
- _decreased color of lips or yellowing of skin
- _swelling at base of neck (enlarged thyroid gland)
- _asymmetry, lumpiness, or other irregularity of thyroid gland
- _swelling of face
- _excess ear wax
- _dry mouth and/or dry eyes
- _noticeably cool skin
- _excessively dry or excessively coarse skin
- _especially low blood pressure
- _decreased ankle reflexes or normal reflexes with slow recovery phase
- _noticeably slow pulse rate without having exercised regularly
- _loss of outer one-third of eyebrows

Score interpretation: Add up your grand total of points from all four categories above.

5 points: only mildly indicative of low thyroid

10 points: somewhat suspicious for low thyroid. Possible actions: obtain TSH level as first screening test.

15 points: very suspicious for low thyroid. Possible actions: obtain additional tests if TSH is normal

20 points: likely to be low thyroid. Possible action: obtain all possible blood testing to help confirm a diagnosis.

25 or more points: very likely to be low thyroid. Possible actions: obtain a trial of thyroid medicine, regardless of blood test results.

From the book **Thyroid Power** by Dr Richard L Shames, M.D. and Dr. Karilee Halo Shames, R.N., Ph.D.