

# Chapter 6

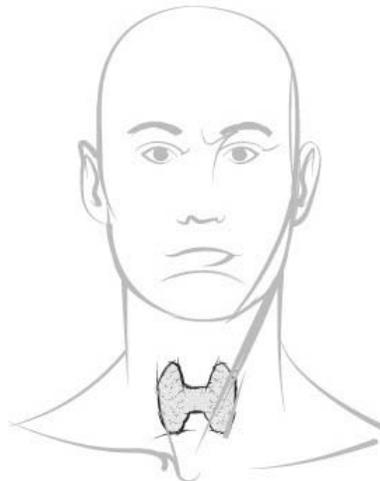
## The Thyroid Type

[Taken from Dr. Berg's book, The 7 Principles of Fat Burning](#)

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### The Thyroid Gland

Located in the lower part of the neck, and approximately 2½ inches wide, the thyroid gland regulates the rate at which the body burns food and controls the production of certain body tissues such as nails and hair. The thyroid gland also regulates body temperature, breakdown of carbohydrates, mental clarity and well-being, energy levels and even vitamin absorption. Cholesterol levels, hair texture, nail strength, suppleness or dryness of the skin and sex drive are all directly influenced by the thyroid.



**The thyroid gland**

The thyroid gland releases a combination of several different hormones. Their names aren't as important as their purpose—to speed up the metabolism of the body.

*Metabolism* refers to the rate or speed at which, or the degree to which, the body breaks down food and changes it into living tissue and energy. *Metabolism* also has a subdefinition of releasing energy (burning fat) from fat cells. And your metabolism is controlled by hormones.

## **THE THYROID TYPE**



**Excess fat more evenly distributed**

### **The Sluggish Thyroid**

The first major consequence of a sluggish thyroid is a slow metabolism. Everything is slower. Brain processes can be suppressed, triggering depression, lethargy and a general apathetic feeling.

A loss of libido (sex drive) can occur with a slow thyroid. It could also cause a complete loss of the menstrual cycle.

Another manifestation is a feeling of being tired all the time, despite sleeping for long hours. This is chronic fatigue. Its distinct feature is feeling more awake in the morning but ready for bed at 8:00 p.m. The thyroid also controls the oil glands and blood flow to the skin. A sluggish thyroid can mean dry skin and dry, brittle hair. With a thyroid problem, a person could attempt to curl her hair and not be able to maintain the curl. The person might even lose the outer third of their eyebrows.



**Loss of the outer eyebrows**

As mentioned above, the thyroid gland controls metabolism; in a non-optimum state, it begins to drive body temperature to well below normal, causing cold hands and feet. Sufferers need to wear extra clothing, even in moderate climates. Some people have to wear socks to bed. What's interesting is I've never met a person with cold feet who didn't have a spouse with warm feet—I guess opposites attract.



**Needs to wear socks to bed at night**

Because everything is slower, the body will demand quick energy as in carbohydrate cravings. The most common cravings I have observed with the Thyroid type are starches, especially bread, and in particular sourdough bread just out of the oven with some butter.



**Cravings for bread**

I had this guy tell me that he didn't eat carbohydrates. I said, "Okay, what did you eat for breakfast?" He replied, "Apple pie from McDonalds." I told him, "That is carbohydrate." He said, "No, it's not; it's apples."

There seems to be some confusion about what a carbohydrate is, so let me define it. A carbohydrate is any of a group of substances made of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen, including the sugars and starches. Breads, pasta, cereals, crackers, pancakes, waffles, donuts, cakes, muffins, rice cakes, cookies, candy, chocolate, juice, alcohol, wine, beer and ice cream are all carbohydrates. Thyroid types can crave any type of carbohydrate, including sweets.



### Cravings for sugary carbohydrates

Have you ever eaten something that you knew you shouldn't have—at least once in your life? What do you normally say to justify it? "I deserve it," "I'll work out twice as hard tomorrow," "You have to die from something; might as well enjoy yourself," "If I eat it up, it won't be in the house to tempt me," "It doesn't count if no one sees me," "It's a holiday," "They wouldn't make it if it wasn't okay to eat," or, my favorite—"Everything in moderation."

The main problem with burning fat is this: in the presence of carbohydrates (especially sugar), your body cannot burn fat. I'm sorry! And to top it off, the excess carbohydrate is converted into fat and cholesterol.<sup>1</sup>

## **High Cholesterol:**

### **Are you sure it's really genetics or eating fatty foods?**

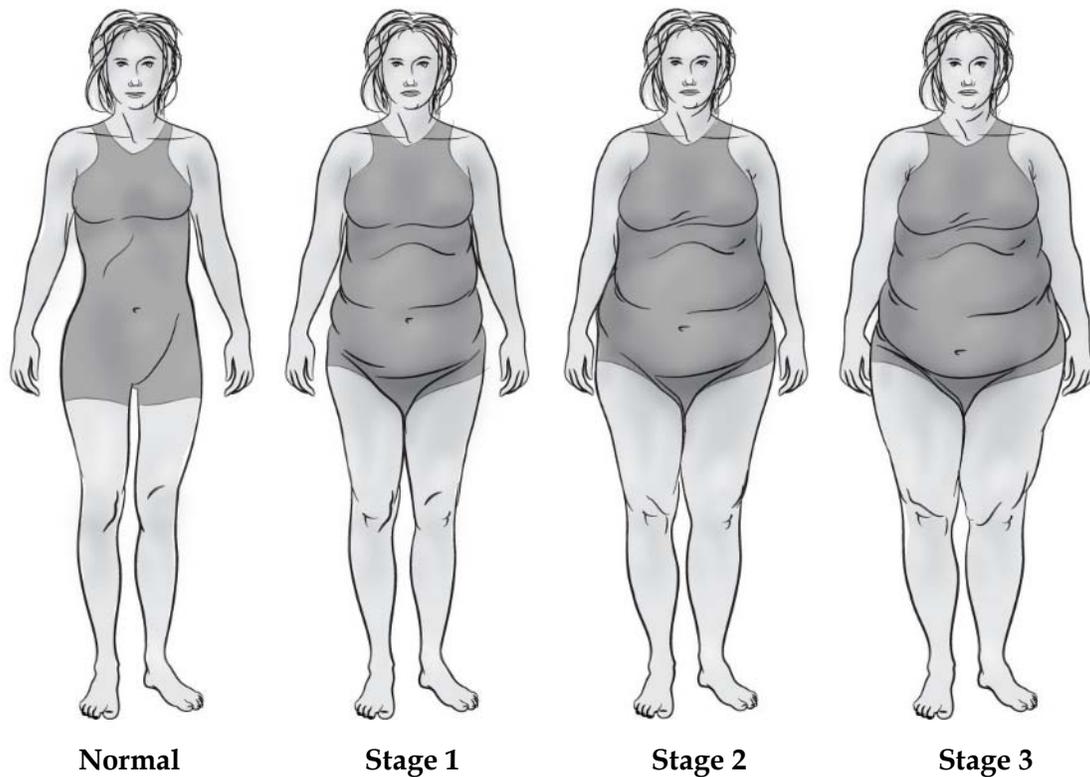
There are rare genetic disorders characterized by an accumulation of large quantities of fat in the blood. If they're rare, how do you explain the millions of people who have high cholesterol? Some people will even tell you it's bad genes and you should have picked your parents more wisely. Good luck! And what about eating fat—does that cause high cholesterol? If that is true, then how do you explain why a person still needs cholesterol medication despite having cut all the fat out of their diet? There is another condition called familial hypercholesterolemia, which shows up in seven out of a thousand people. So, rather than accept someone's opinion on whether you have a genetic cholesterol problem, get evaluated to find out the facts. The point is if your thyroid is not working, your cholesterol could be high in spite of what you are eating.

Incidentally, did you know that 75 percent of the cholesterol in your body is made by your body? Cholesterol is required by your body to make hormones. But if the thyroid is not working correctly, your cholesterol could stay high despite all efforts to keep it low.

The need for vitamins greatly increases with a thyroid weakness. The weakness means the vitamins are just not absorbed. The body dumps them through the urine—expensive urine because these vitamins are wasted. Such people are usually taking vitamins and not feeling any different.

By the way, what was the first vitamin that was ever discovered? Was it C? No. How about D? No. The answer is A. Then came B, then C, then D and then E.

The body-fat pattern resulting from a sluggish thyroid is an overall fat distribution. The pictures below show the changes from a normal body shape through the progressive stages of the Thyroid type.



As a side note, a person with a true sluggish thyroid problem is not solely retaining fat. They have a great deal of waste-like fluid weight that contributes to the appearance of having an overall excess weight problem. As mentioned in chapter 2, this condition is called myxedema and is the result of a thyroid that is not working to full capacity.

Many people think they have Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) when in fact they may have a weak thyroid. Have you ever known people who walked into a room and forgot why? Have you ever talked to someone you could tell was a bit checked out? This type of lethargy can be attributed to poor thyroid function. And without really spending the time to evaluate and find the true cause, a person could be put on Ritalin by mistake. I really think the problem with our healthcare system is the lack of evaluation. High blood pressure?—pill. High cholesterol?—pill. ADD?—pill. This is what I call duct-tape therapy. But what is the *cause*?

The skin, hair and nails are all made up of body protein, which becomes altered when the thyroid can no longer do its job. A person with a thyroid problem can have trouble with hair loss or thinning hair.



### **Hair loss or thinning hair**

Sagging skin under the arms, chin or midsection can occur because the body protein that holds the skin firm is breaking down faster than it is building up. Have you ever met someone with these symptoms – friends, neighbors, relatives or co-workers?



### **Loose skin under upper arms**

Your nails especially are made from protein, and because the person's body protein is breaking down faster than it can be built up, brittle nails and prominent vertical (up-and-down) ridges can develop.



### **Vertical ridges on the nails**

A poorly functioning thyroid gland produces puffiness around the eyes and sagging of the eyelids. If it's bad enough, the tongue even thickens, causing a slight slurring of speech, and the voice can become deeper and rougher in sound. The tongue can develop little dished indentations on the sides; it is getting bigger and is being shaped by the inside of the teeth.

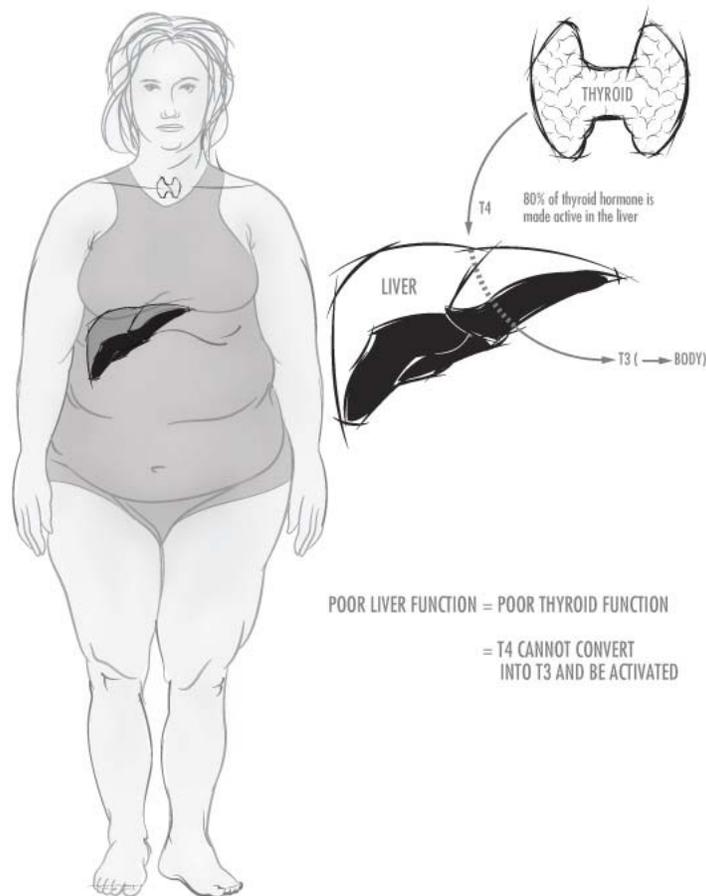


### **Indentations on sides of tongue**

## **Glands Work Together with Each Other**

To complicate things, all the glands interact with one another, and we earlier looked at some of these relationships. In regard to the thyroid gland, if the ovaries overproduce estrogen, the thyroid will decrease in function as a secondary problem. This is why women notice weight gain and even a sluggish thyroid after pregnancy, or after taking birth control pills or being on hormone

replacement therapy. Thyroid hormones can even interfere with the adrenal hormones. Their inactivation can then signal the brain to produce more adrenal hormones through its feedback mechanism.<sup>2</sup> And since eighty percent of thyroid hormones are dependent on the liver for their function, without the liver working well a good portion of the thyroid hormone activation can be inhibited. In fact, if the liver is damaged, thyroid hormones will not be broken down, leading to excessive thyroid hormones in the blood. These are two reasons why you will begin this program with the Liver Enhancement Plan.



## Causes of the Thyroid Body Type

In some medical journals, it says that the fundamental cause of a sluggish thyroid is a *deficiency* of thyroid hormones, which control metabolism. But the question that should be asked is, WHY is there a deficiency of these hormones in the first place?

There is accumulating information today that toxic environmental factors like estrogen can be linked to thyroid deficiencies. Scientists who study poisons in the environment are finding this connection. The following are a couple of examples of what is being discovered.

In his book *What Your Doctor May Not Tell You about Menopause*, Dr. John Lee states, "My hypothesis is that estrogen inhibits thyroid action in the cells, probably interfering with the binding of thyroid to its receptor" [part of the cell that connects with hormones].<sup>3</sup>

Mary Shomon writes in her book *Living Well with Hypothyroidism*, ". . . hypothyroidism [low thyroid] is sometimes considered a symptom of estrogen dominance."<sup>4</sup>

Another factor with the Thyroid type is past infections. The virus that causes Mono (kissing disease), also known as Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), can affect thyroid function later in life. Other viruses and even bacteria can influence the thyroid.

Injuries to the thyroid from being hit in the neck—an example being a seat belt injury from an auto accident—can influence thyroid function. I knew of a patient who had played baseball and a ball had hit her in the lower throat. Several years later, she ended up with a thyroid problem.

I had another patient who was exposed to radiation develop thyroid disease. This was the 1986 Chernobyl accident (radioactive fallout) in Ukraine.

Your own ovaries could be causing your thyroid problem (unless you're a man, of course). A cyst or fibroid on the ovary can produce excessive estrogen in the body. This includes polycystic ovarian disease (PCOD). In this case we have primary ovarian problems causing a secondary thyroid problem. You could then develop thyroid symptoms, yet the true problem would be the ovaries.

FYI: If you have PCOD, I would recommend avoiding all estrogen triggers—hormones in our food supply, soy products, and foods that have been sprayed with pesticides; consume organic produce as much as possible. One of my female patients always had a flair-up of cysts when she consumed commercial ice cream, which contained extra hormones and

chemicals.

## **Cruciferous Vegetables**

Cruciferous vegetables, which belong to the cabbage family, include kale, radishes, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, bok choy, etc.—you know, the foods that people normally never eat. Cruciferous vegetables are anti-iodine, meaning they tend to deplete iodine, which the thyroid needs in order to function.<sup>5</sup> When I say “tend to deplete iodine,” I mean very slightly. You would have to eat ALL cruciferous and nothing else to create this effect. Most of the other foods you eat put the iodine right back, so I wouldn’t be too concerned. But if you feel unsure about this and want to eat cruciferous vegetables, just take some extra iodine—sea kelp or alfalfa—and go ahead and receive the benefits of these vegetables, because they are also anti-estrogen foods. I believe their benefits far outweigh any liability.

## **Estrogen**

Estrogen inhibits thyroid function.

Some women develop thyroid problems after pregnancy due to the high levels of estrogen produced; and if a woman who has a thyroid weakness goes through pregnancy, her thyroid medication will usually need to be increased.

These statements raise two key questions: If estrogen inhibits thyroid function, then how are we being exposed to increased amounts of estrogen? And how much estrogen exposure does an average person get on a daily basis?

Estrogen is the number one hormone added to the feed of animals we consume. It is fed to cattle, turkey, chicken and farm-raised fish. This hormone makes these animals grow faster and plumper. It is more costly, for example, to grow hormone-free chickens for twenty-two weeks than to grow hormone-fed chickens for only six weeks. I believe out of all the things that go into your body, commercial milk contains the highest amount of estrogen. Always drink organic milk, if you’re going to drink it at all.

Most European countries do not use growth hormones on their animals and some refuse to buy American hormone-fed meats. Could this be why Americans are fatter?

A common argument against this concept is that the hormone amounts given to animals are so minute they have no effect upon the body. But there is far too

much evidence available that supports the effects of estrogen. It takes very minute amounts of estrogen in the body to create effects.<sup>6</sup> And pesticides, insecticides, DDT and many other chemicals mimic estrogen in the body, adversely affecting the thyroid.

Another common argument is, if these chemicals are this damaging to our hormones, why doesn't the Environmental Protection Agency advise the public of the thyroid-chemical connection? The reason is that there is a long delay time between exposure and showing symptoms, which makes it hard to pinpoint the actual cause. It could take more than thirty years.

If you have a Thyroid body type, I highly recommend you reduce your dietary food exposure to estrogen by eliminating foods that contain growth hormones. It would also help to reduce the consumption of chemicals (pesticides, insecticides, DDT, etc.) that mimic this hormone, by either introducing organic foods into your diet or at least scrubbing your fruits and vegetables before eating them. To make a natural cleaning fluid for vegetables, mix one-third of a cup of apple cider vinegar in a gallon of water.

Red wine unfortunately has estrogen-like compounds. I would advise cutting back to no more than two bottles a night – I'm just kidding. You need to avoid all alcohol on this program. Come on, we need to give your liver a break! I know what you are saying – you drink it for health reasons, right?

Another activity that inhibits thyroid hormones is low-calorie diets. When you fast or cut calories, your thyroid compensates by lowering the metabolic rate. This is a survival way of adapting to less food. That is why it's crucial to never again restrict calories and to not let yourself get hungry.

Below is a list of symptoms people can experience from a poorly working thyroid gland. Take a pencil and check off those that you experience in greater or lesser degree.

## **Thyroid Type Symptoms**

- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Lethargy
- Sleepiness
- Need for midafternoon naps
- Generalized weight gain
- Sagging skin under arms, chin or midsection
- Low/poor appetite

- Craving bread, pasta, chocolate, sweets
- High cholesterol
- Brittle nails and vertical ridges (could be thick)
- Hair stiff and dry
- Hair loss or thinning hair
- Dry skin
- Puffiness around eyes
- Sagging eyelids
- Outer eyebrows thinning or absent
- Slight rosiness or reddening of the face
- Poor short-term memory and focus
- Depression
- Apathetic (loss of hope)
- Difficulty making decisions
- Low body temperature
- Cold intolerance (need to put on a sweater or more covers while sleeping)
- Cold feet and/or hands
- Loss of libido
- Loss of menstrual cycle
- Indentations on sides of tongue
- Thickening of tongue
- Voice deeper and rougher in sound

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