

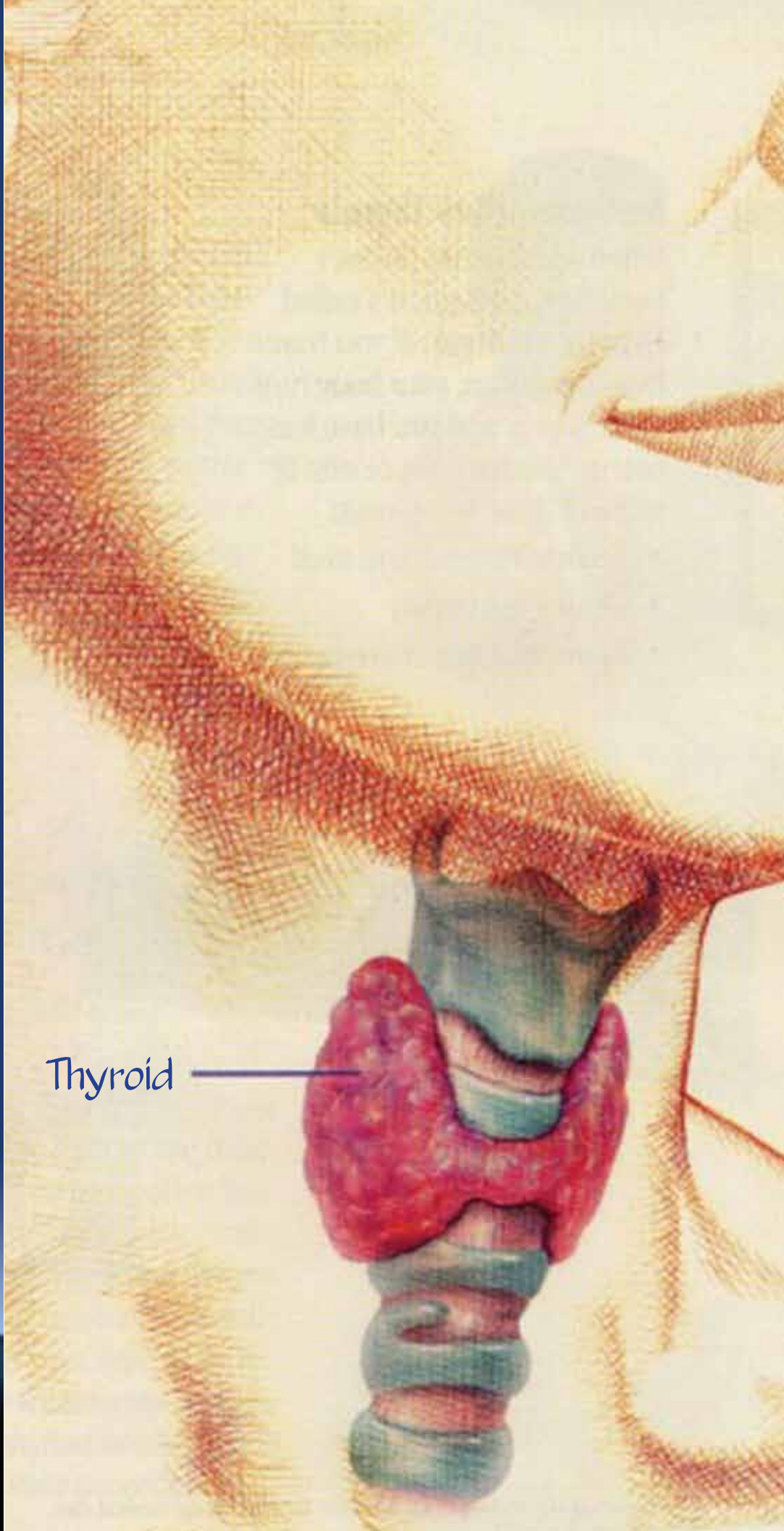
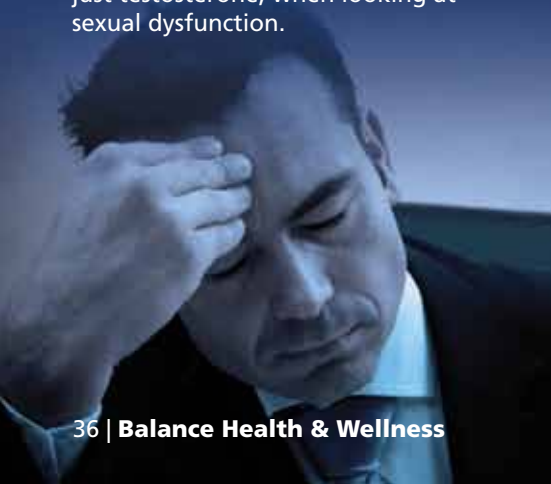
Stress Hormone Linked to Sexual Dysfunction

Cortisol, a hormone that is released by small glands above the kidneys, helps to provide the body with fuel during emergencies or stressful events. Cortisol also helps the tissues of the body heal after injury or normal wear and tear. Prolonged periods of chronic stress lead to tissue destruction, along with weakened immune system function. Elevated cortisol leads to muscle wasting, elevated blood sugar, breakdown of bones, and an increase in fat storage.

Researchers in Japan have recently found that cortisol may also lead to sexual problems. Saliva and blood samples were gathered to observe for relationships between testosterone and cortisol levels to sexual dysfunction. It was determined that elevated cortisol levels were associated with lower levels of sexual desire, decreased erections, and decreased sexual satisfaction. Researchers noted relationships, however concluded that future studies are needed to determine clinical significance. (*International Journal of Impotence Research*, 21: 207-212, 2009)

This study illustrates the importance of looking at several factors to determine the cause of sexual dysfunction. Other studies have shown that other hormones that may lead to sexual dysfunction. Those include thyroid hormones, testosterone, growth hormone, DHEA, and dihydrotestosterone. Doctors are now considering other hormones, and not just testosterone, when looking at sexual dysfunction.

Thyroid



Hypothyroidism

Sluggish, Weak, Cold and Depressed

A thyroid gland is a butterfly shaped gland located just above the sternum but below the larynx, or voice box. It functions to regulate your metabolism. If it does not properly function, a person may develop hypothyroidism. Symptoms of hypothyroidism, or low thyroid function is a common reason that people present to physician's offices. Most of the time those patients who have the symptoms do not realize that the thyroid is causing symptoms, and are often frustrated when trying to find answers to explain their symptoms. Fatigue, weight gain, depression, memory loss, cholesterol problems, hair loss, sexual dysfunction, infertility, cold fingers or toes, and problems with blood sugar elevation are a few symptoms. Many people who have hypothyroidism may also have coexisting conditions, such as diabetes, migraines, irritable bowel syndrome, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, adrenal fatigue and growth hormone deficiency.

Studies continue to show that low thyroid hormone is a strong predictor of death from heart related disease. Thyroid hormone levels have been found to be low in patients in cardiac intensive care units. People have a higher chance of developing a life-threatening arrhythmia with an untreated low thyroid hormone than those with thyroid hormone in optimal range. Homocysteine is a protein produced by the liver. As it rises there is a higher incidence of heart attacks and strokes. Low thyroid hormone leads to higher homocysteine. Thyroid hormone aids vessel health and promotes blood flow, hence improved blood pressure. Thyroid hormone reduces artery stiffness, therefore reducing the incidence of blood flow dysfunction to the heart and from the heart.

Relationship Between Estrogen and Thyroid Hormone

Elevated levels of estrogens in proportion to some other hormones lead to thyroid dysfunction. An article found The Journal of Epidemiology in 2001 reported as much as 26 percent of menopausal women were suffering from hypothyroidism, which made symptoms during menopause worse. Women taking oral birth control have hypothyroidism for a number of reasons. The main reason is that estrogen, as in birth control, increases protein production that binds to thyroid hormone in the blood stream. As a result, protein bound thyroid hormone is unable to function, and blood tests to screen may reveal "normal" thyroid function. Another is that birth control leads to elevated "stress" hormone, cortisol. The elevation of cortisol in turn leads to hypothyroidism.

Diagnosis

Many patients present with symptoms suggesting hypothyroidism and are discouraged to learn that

they are "normal". The reason for under diagnosis of low thyroid function is often because of either partial diagnosis or improper determination of what thyroid hormone values should be. Many providers are also guilty of treating laboratory results and not listening to patients. The combination of a complete workup and listening to the symptoms you feel should be the way you are treated.

Symptoms of Hypothyroidism

If you have low thyroid function, know that something is just not right with your body. If you have an inactive thyroid you might feel that it is especially hard to muster enough energy to get out of bed in the morning and hard to find enough energy and interest to complete the day's activities. It is difficult to enjoy life because nothing is worth the energy it takes to do them. Low thyroid will lead to a feeling that you can't get warm, from toes to fingers to the very core temperature of your body. Muscles in your arms and legs may cramp, even when you are resting. Your joints ache when your thyroid is low. You can't concentrate, focus or remember. You may infrequent bowel movements or constipation. Your hair may become brittle or fall out easily. Some do not have all of the symptoms but may have just a few.

Treatment

Treatment for low thyroid function must be complete. First, insulin resistance needs to be addressed. Foods containing sugars that do not raise blood sugar quickly is very important. All carbohydrates are not created equal. For example, a piece of white bread has the same amount of carbohydrates as bread made from whole grain sprouts. The difference is how quickly the sugar is digested and enters the blood stream. White bread leads to very high spikes in blood sugar.

Insulin, a hormone that aids the use of sugar by the body, is secreted from the pancreas in response to this rise in blood sugar. Therefore, those with thyroid dysfunction need to have insulin and blood sugars monitored, in addition to just having their thyroid monitored.

Maintaining low levels of stress is very important for healthy thyroid function. Other hormones, such as estrogen, testosterone, progesterone, cortisol, growth hormone and pregnenolone, must also be balanced to ensure proper complete treatment of thyroid dysfunction. Hormones can be thought of as a perfect symphony. All instruments must play together to achieve breathtaking sounds. If even one instrument is off it is enough to cause a problem.

Antibodies need to be checked to determine if low inflammatory treatment is required to maintain thyroid function and prevent further accelerated thyroid dysfunction. If there is thyroid disease in your family then your thyroid antibodies should be checked. Antibodies, if present in high levels, will attack and destroy normal thyroid tissue. In other words, your immune system attacks you. There are many supplements that calm thyroiditis and reduce the inflammation, the immune system's destruction of thyroid tissue. There are several supplements that in combination will effectively reduce inflammation. EPA/DHA, fatty acids found in fish oil, should be taken at dosages at 1,000 to 5,000 mg per week. Five grams of glutamine, 400 grams of reactive magnesium, 240 mg of GLA, 1,000 mg flax seed oil, 400 mcg of selenium, probiotics, 2,000 mg vitamin C, 400 IU of vitamin E, 2 capsules of olive leaf extract, 100mg of Siberian ginseng, and 2 capsules of borage oil are such anti-inflammatory supplements.

Nutritional support

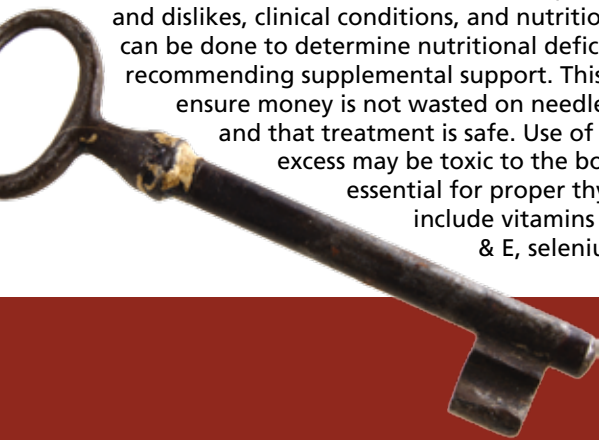
The best approach to lower inflammation and support thyroid function is to tailor a diet to an individual, based on likes and dislikes, clinical conditions, and nutritional needs. Tests can be done to determine nutritional deficiencies before recommending supplemental support. This is important to ensure money is not wasted on needless supplements and that treatment is safe. Use of supplements in excess may be toxic to the body. Nutrients essential for proper thyroid function include vitamins A, B3, B6, C, D3 & E, selenium, zinc, iodine,

tyrosine, chromium, milk thistle, co q10, L-carnitine, copper, magnesium, GLA, and fish oil.

Thyroid Hormone Treatment

Research continues to show that the best approach to successful thyroid treatment, meaning symptoms are gone and there is marked prevention of disease related to low thyroid function, is achieved with more than one hormone. There are hormones produced by the brain that stimulate others to be produced by the thyroid. The hormones produced by the thyroid are mostly known as T4. T4 is mostly converted to a smaller, more active, and short-acting hormone known as T3. "Keyholes" or receptor sites on cells require a "key" or smaller active thyroid hormone to have an increase in metabolism. A combination of the long acting T4 and the short acting T3 has been shown to be the best treatment approach for people with complex hypothyroidism.

It is clear that obtaining optimal thyroid function is not only safe it is beneficial to health and quality of life. If you have symptoms of hypothyroidism and a doctor who understands optimal ranges for thyroid function and is willing to do an entire thyroid work up then ask to have it done. There are such providers at Rejuv-a-nation center if you do not have one or yours does not understand how to effectively treat your condition. There is no charge for consultation.



James Porter, COO
Rejuvanation, LLC

Symptoms and signs may include:

- Coarse and thinning hair.
- Dry skin.
- Brittle nails.
- A yellowish tint to the skin.
- Slow body movements.
- Cold skin.
- Inability to tolerate cold.
- Feeling tired, sluggish, or weak.
- Memory problems, depression, or difficulty concentrating.
- Constipation.
- Heavy or irregular menstrual periods that may last longer than 5 to 7 days.

Other, less common symptoms may include:

- An enlarged thyroid gland (goiter).
- Modest weight gain, often 10lb or less.
- Swelling of the arms, hands, legs, and feet, and facial puffiness, particularly around the eyes.
- Hoarseness.
- Muscle aches and cramps.

In general, how bad your symptoms are depends on your age, how long you have had hypothyroidism, and the seriousness of the condition. The symptoms may be so mild and happen so slowly that they go unnoticed for years. The older you are, the more likely you are to notice symptoms.

Symptoms

Symptoms of hypothyroidism usually appear slowly over months or years.

These symptoms and more can be found at:
www.webmd.com/a-to-z-guides/hypothyroidism-symptoms