



Lorraine Maita, MD

## Thyroid Hormone

The thyroid gland controls metabolism. It regulates entry of oxygen into the cells, thus controlling metabolic rate, body temperature, heart rate, hair growth, ovulation, skin turnover, tissue repair, protein synthesis, digestion, hormone excretion, oxygen utilization, growth and development.

### Side Effects of Thyroid Replacement

#### Thyroid Excess

If you experience any of these symptoms, stop your medication and call me. For severe symptoms, go to the Emergency room

- Rapid Heart beat >100 beats per minute
- Sleep disturbance
- Headaches
- Excitability
- Sweating
- Increased hunger and thirst
- Fine trembling of the fingers
- Anxiety
- Increased metabolism

**YOU MUST NEVER STOP THYROID HORMONE ABRUPTLY WITHOUT CONSULTING A PHYSICIAN. IF YOU EXPERIENCE THESE SYMPTOMS YOUR DOSE MUST BE ADJUSTED. IF SHORTNESS OF BREATH, CHEST PAIN, LIGHTHEADEDNESS GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM**

#### How to take

- Best to take 1 hr before breakfast on empty stomach with full glass of water.
- Or take 1 hour before or 2 hours after a meal or food
- Notify if pregnant/nursing or planning to become pregnant.
- Notify if taking any other drugs.
- Do not discontinue or change dose without consulting physician. Report any signs/symptoms of thyroid toxicity.

If you are taking calcium, antacids, sucralfate, iron or cholestyramine, wait 4 hours  
If you miss a dose in the morning, you may take it later in the day.

#### Blood Tests

Have blood drawn 4-5 hours after morning dose

Be consistent with timing – take blood at the same time every time

#### Other Precautions



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- Notify your physician if you are allergic to any foods or medicines, are pregnant or intend to become pregnant, are breast-feeding or are taking any other medications, including prescription and over-the-counter preparations.
- Notify your physician of any other medical conditions you may have, particularly heart disease, diabetes, clotting disorders, and adrenal or pituitary gland problems. Your dose of medications used to control these other conditions may need to be adjusted while you are taking thyroid hormone. If you have diabetes, monitor your blood and/or urinary glucose levels as directed by your physician and immediately report any changes to your physician. If you are taking anticoagulants (blood thinners), your clotting status should be checked frequently.
- Use thyroid hormone only as prescribed by your physician. Do not discontinue or change the amount you take or how often you take it, unless directed to do so by your physician.
- The thyroid hormone is intended to replace a hormone that is normally produced by your thyroid gland. Generally, replacement therapy is to be taken for life, except in cases of transient hypothyroidism, which is usually associated with an inflammation of the thyroid gland (thyroiditis).
- Take thyroid hormone as a single dose, preferably on an empty stomach, one-half to one hour before breakfast. Thyroid hormone absorption is increased on an empty stomach.
- It may take several weeks before you notice an improvement in your symptoms.
- Notify your physician if you experience any of the following symptoms: rapid or irregular heartbeat, chest pain, shortness of breath, leg cramps, headache, nervousness, irritability, sleeplessness, tremors, change in appetite, weight gain or loss, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive sweating, heat intolerance, fever, changes in menstrual periods, hives or skin rash, or any other unusual medical event.
- Notify your physician if you become pregnant while taking thyroid hormone. It is likely that your dose of thyroid hormone will need to be increased while you are pregnant.
- Notify your physician or dentist that you are taking SYNTHROID prior to any surgery.
- Partial hair loss may occur rarely during the first few months of thyroid hormone therapy, but this is usually temporary
- Thyroid hormone should not be used as a primary or adjunctive therapy in a weight control program.
- Keep thyroid hormone out of the reach of children. Store thyroid hormone away from heat, moisture, and light.
- Agents such as iron and calcium supplements and antacids can decrease the absorption of thyroid hormone. Therefore, do not take them within 4 hours of these agents.