

12 THINGS YOUR DOCTOR IS NOT TELLING YOU  
ABOUT

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# HYPOTHYROIDISM



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# **Why Are My Thyroid Labs Normal and I Still Feel Horrible?**

You're probably tired of your doctor telling you that your labs are normal but you still feel like CRAP. You're running on low energy, frumpy, grumpy, and the weight won't budge.

What you may not know is that you're not alone. It's estimated that hypothyroidism affects approximately 20 million Americans and up to 60 percent don't even know they have it! Women are five to eight times more likely than men to have thyroid problems.

Unfortunately, most patients are receiving outdated information and treatment for hypothyroidism and can go years or even decades suffering needlessly.

So what are the 12 key points of hypothyroidism that your doctor is missing?



# **1. IT'S NOT ALL IN YOUR HEAD**

Depression, anxiety, brain fog, mood swings, and just not feeling right are common problems associated with hypothyroidism. So, when you present these symptoms to your doctor he or she may tell you're "depressed" and simply prescribe an antidepressant. Really???

If you look at these symptoms from a systems-based approach, you know that INFLAMMATION is very common with hypothyroidism. Therefore, when you are experiencing depression, brain fog, and anxiety it's actually from an inflamed brain, which will impact proper signaling between the brain cells!

Therefore, before you fill your prescription (keep in mind that in some cases it is necessary, especially when experiencing a crisis), you may want to seek a more natural way to reduce inflammation without the side effects of drugs.

In our office, we offer a holistic approach using diet, supplements, and lifestyle strategies that help manage depression and anxiety effectively and safely.



## **2. ARE THYROID MEDS REALLY THE SOLUTION?**

Thyroid medication may not be all you need to feel better. Over 90 percent of hypothyroid patients actually have an autoimmune condition, Hashimoto's. This is not a thyroid gland problem but an immune system problem.

In Hashimoto's, the immune system attacks the thyroid gland, creating havoc and affecting its function. Therefore, it's an immune system problem creating a thyroid problem.

Some of the most common symptoms of hypothyroidism are:

- Fatigue
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Mood swings
- Brain fog
- Difficulty concentrating
- Poor memory recall
- Difficulty losing weight even with low calorie diet
- Easily gain weight
- Constipation



## **2. ARE THYROID MEDS REALLY THE SOLUTION? (con't)**

- Bloating
- Dry skin
- Brittle hair and nails
- Hair falls out easily
- Loss of outer 1/3 of eyebrows
- Difficulty maintaining muscle mass

If your thyroid cannot make enough thyroid hormones, then thyroid hormone replacement may be needed so that your cells get all the hormones needed. EVERY cell in the body has receptors for thyroid hormone, therefore impacting ALL major systems in the body. Hormone replacement will only be part of the solution, but the autoimmune component must be addressed because the thyroid will continue to be attacked.

If you want to get to the root cause of the problem, autoimmunity must be addressed. Simply taking thyroid hormone medication is not going to fix the root cause. Diet, proper supplementation, lifestyle changes, and stress management are going to be the KEY in addressing autoimmunity and its effect on the thyroid.

### **3. LOW THYROID PATIENTS ARE NOT ALWAYS OVERWEIGHT**

Many doctors will dismiss you as hypothyroid based on your appearance. If you don't fall into the typical textbook picture of being overweight, they will usually prescribe antidepressants making you feel like maybe it's all in your head.

Although many hypothyroid patients have challenges with weight and often carry extra weight, there are some exceptions to the medical textbook norm. You can be within your normal weight and still be hypothyroid. It's important to be your own health advocate and be persistent as well as ask for full blood test panels that include antibodies along with TSH, Free T4 & T3, Total T4 & T3, and Reverse T3.





## **4. SIMPLE DIETARY CHANGES CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE**

Most doctor do not address diet with patients. If you are carrying extra weight they may simply tell you to eat less and exercise more. The problem, however, is they don't tell you what to eat. Since most patients I see in the office with low thyroid issues have Hashimoto's, one of the first healing strategies is to REMOVE GLUTEN. Patients with autoimmune conditions (remember, Hashimoto's is an autoimmune condition affecting the thyroid), do amazing with a gluten-free diet and in some cases we see complete remission!

Patients who have removed gluten (wheat, oats, rye, barley) from their diet have found to feel so much better as well as relief from bothersome symptoms such as constipation, digestive issues, bloating, indigestion, diarrhea, weight loss, anxiety, and experience hair regrowth and improved energy levels.

Other inflammatory foods that patients with Hashimoto's remove from their diet include dairy and eggs.

In our office, we provide our patients with an anti-inflammatory eating plan to help optimize thyroid function and manage the autoimmunity.





## 5. CAN IODINE BE HELPFUL?

In order to have a properly functioning thyroid you need adequate amounts of iodine. Iodine deficiency has been the common cause of hypothyroid. Initially, iodine was added to table salt in the 1920s in an effort to help prevent goiter (an enlargement of the thyroid gland), and resulting in an increase in the rates of autoimmune thyroid disease. However, for many thyroid patients who were not iodine deficient, this has done more damage than good.

Taking iodine can be dangerous and should only be done under the supervision of a qualified health care practitioner. There can be an increase risk of attack on the thyroid, especially with Hashimoto's patients. If your doctor does prescribe iodine, starting with a low dosage of about 325 mcg and slowly increasing to find your dose may be the best approach.

Testing is important if you choose to supplement with iodine and should include selenium (about 200 mcg) as well. It's important to test thyroid antibodies (you don't want an increase in these) and iodine levels. Unfortunately, most conventional doctors won't test iodine levels and if they do, the blood test for iodine is not very accurate. A superior option is a 24 hour urine iodine loading testing. Labs that can do this include Doctor's Data and Hakala.



## **6. CAN SELENIUM BE THE MISSING LINK FOR HYPOTHYROIDISM?**

Although selenium is not a common deficiency in most healthy adults, it is often found in patients with digestive issues and poor nutrient absorption; quite common in inflammatory bowel diseases, Crohn's and Celiac disease.

Selenium is important in thyroid hormone synthesis and in a healthy immune response. It is essential for T4 to T3 conversion, which is selenium-dependent. If you are supplementing with iodine, studies have shown that supplementing with selenium can protect from iodine toxicity. Several studies have found that supplementing with selenium reduced thyroid peroxidase antibody levels.

Since selenium is important in healthy thyroid function, make sure your selenium intake is adequate. A healthy keto or paleo diet should provide adequate amounts of selenium since the diets include eggs, chicken, cod, shrimp, salmon, halibut, turkey, Brazil nuts and cremini mushrooms, which are all selenium rich foods.

Therefore, it doesn't take too much to get adequate amount of selenium in your diet. Wondering if you are getting enough? Studies show that two Brazil nuts per day is an effective way to improve selenium status.



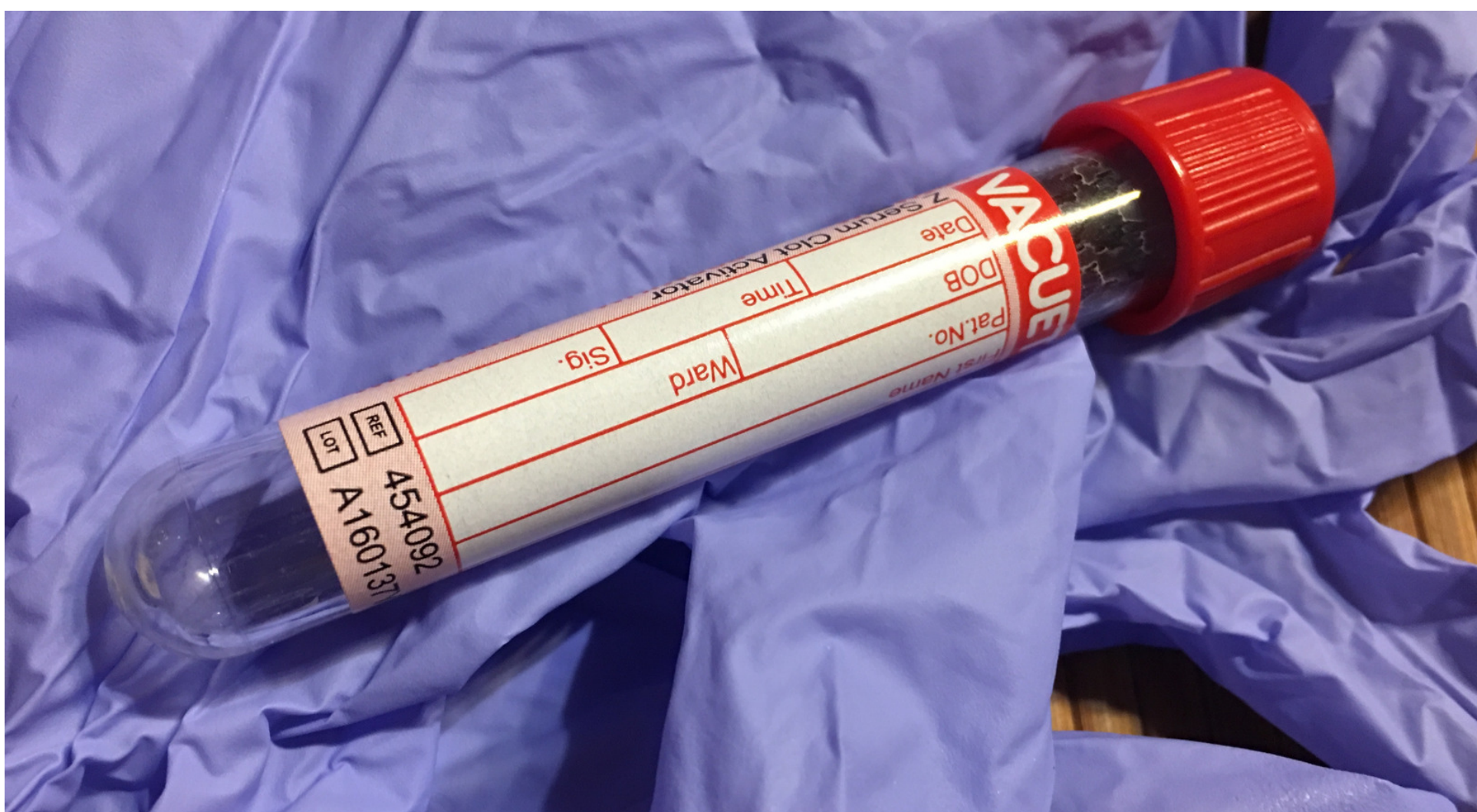


## 7. WHY TESTING TSH IS NOT ENOUGH?

How many times have you heard, “Your labs tests are normal,” or “We ran all your thyroid markers and they look great?” Unfortunately, TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone) is not a thyroid hormone marker. In fact, it measures pituitary gland function. The TSH test is simply measuring the communication between the pituitary gland and the thyroid gland, which is not directly measuring thyroid function.

If you really want to know how your thyroid is functioning, additional tests aside from TSH should be run. Additional labs we order for our patients include:

- Free T4 & Free T3
- Total T4 & Total T3
- Thyroid Peroxidase Antibodies
- Thyroglobulin Antibodies
- Reverse T3





## **7. WHY TESTING TSH IS NOT ENOUGH? (con't)**

What most doctors don't take into consideration is how the patient feels. So blood tests alone can not rule out whether you have thyroid issues or not.

In our office, we have seen patients with what looks like normal labs (more like borderline results) feel like CRAP and are dismissed by their doctors. That's where the detective in a doctor should be prompted; to dig a little deeper. There could be underlying problems such as adrenal dysfunction, low vitamin D, low vitamin B12, anemia, other autoimmune conditions, and other disease processes that are being missed.





## 8. DOCTORS ARE USING OUTDATED LAB RANGES

One of the challenges that most patients face is that most doctors are using outdated thyroid lab ranges that are too broad. There has been some suggestion to lowering the limit of normal TSH from 5.0 to 3.0 or even 2.5 mIU/L, but has been met with some resistance. Normal and healthy TSH levels are 0.40-4.50 mIU/L. However, many patients still feel horrible even with levels above 2.

Functional medicine practitioners use lab ranges that are narrower and a more accurate reflection of a healthy thyroid. These are known as “functional lab ranges.”

Functional lab ranges for thyroid are:

TSH: 1-2 mIU/L

FT4: >1.1 NG/DL

FT3: >3.2 PG/ML

RT3: less than 10:1 ratio RT3:FT3

TPO and Tg Ab: <4 IU/ML or negative



## **9. WHAT IF I HAVE NEGATIVE ANTIBODIES? CAN I STILL HAVE HASHIMOTO'S?**

In functional medicine, testing for TPO and TgAb antibodies have been the gold standard when checking for Hashimoto's. However, when the immune system is so weakened, as often seen in many autoimmune patients, the body will not produce enough antibodies that are detectable in blood tests. So, the labs can show normal ranges but you may feel horrible.

When working with patients, it's important to consider the patient's symptoms and lab findings. Even if the labs are normal yet the patient is still feeling horrible, the root cause of the patient's symptoms should be investigated.





## **10. THE BEST EXERCISE ISN'T WHAT YOU THINK IT IS**

One of the biggest complaints with low thyroid patients is they can't lose weight regardless of how much they work out. They think adding more cardio workouts is better, yet most of them feel exhausted and frustrated, especially when the scale doesn't budge. One of the major reasons this happens is adrenal fatigue.

Many low thyroid patients also experience adrenal fatigue so a cardio workout could be making them feel even worse. The most effective exercise for fat burning is high intensity interval training, which is a short, intense workout, done in less than 30 minutes most of the time. Other forms of exercise that low thyroid patients do well with are Pilates and yoga.





## **11. YOUR GUT-THYROID-ADRENAL CONNECTION**

More than 2,000 years ago, Hippocrates suggested that, “All disease begins in the gut.”

In my clinical experience I can say that he was pretty close. Most of the immune system (at least 60 percent) is found in the digestive tract. And with over 70 million Americans suffering from gastrointestinal disorders today, it’s no surprise there is a rise in autoimmune conditions.

When there is gut dysfunction, one of the first symptoms is poor digestion function. Twenty percent of healthy thyroid activity depends on healthy gut bacteria. Poor digestion function will deplete the body of nutrients essential for a healthy thyroid such as selenium, tyrosine, zinc, and vitamin A and D. This usually leads to immune dysfunction and poor gut health, which is a trigger for autoimmune conditions such as Hashimoto’s and functional hypothyroidism.





## **11. YOUR GUT-THYROID-ADRENAL CONNECTION (con')**

An inflamed GI tract and parasitic infections will also exhaust the adrenal glands in turn, slowing down thyroid function. This can also lead to constipation, which makes it difficult for the body to eliminate hormones that can be toxic to the body, estrogen being one of them. The accumulation of estrogen will also slow down thyroid function.

The adrenal glands are often overlooked in hypothyroid patients. The adrenals buffer stress and continuous stimulation can lead to adrenal dysfunction, particularly adrenal fatigue. Adrenal stress will reduce the conversion of T4 to T3. Think of T3 as the useable form of thyroid and every single cell in the body has receptors for the thyroid hormone. So you don't want overworked adrenals.





## **12. AN ANTI-INFLAMMATORY EATING PLAN**

One of the biggest challenges when working with thyroid patients that suffer from an autoimmune condition is the inflammatory cascade to other tissues in the body. It's common to see the inflammatory response in the brain, gut, and joints.

When the thyroid is under attack, it's almost always necessary for hormone replacement to help with a damaged gland. If you can imagine the thyroid under attack as chunks of the thyroid being destroyed, that visual can help you understand why most do better with hormone replacement. But the key will be to minimize or stop the inflammatory response, in which case, an anti-inflammatory diet can reduce or stop the thyroid destruction and thyroid symptoms. We have seen many patients resolve thyroid issues with diet alone.

Talk to your doctor about the autoimmune protocol diet AKA the AIP diet. We have seen this to be very effective in our office with patients and has helped with inflammation, leaky gut, and discovering food sensitivities.

Ready to take your health to the next level? Contact us and let us know how we can help.

## **Resources:**

<https://www.thyroid.org/media-main/press-room/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/7477223>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20517655?dopt=AbstractPlus>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15387978>

<https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089%2F105072503322021151>

<https://academic.oup.com/ajcn/article/87/2/379/4633360>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18384097>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20453397?dopt=AbstractPlus>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16837619?dopt=Abstract>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2664572/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1856434/?tool=pubmed>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17002934>

## **About Dr. Linda Marquez**

Linda Marquez Goodine is an author, speaker, holistic nutritionist and holds a doctorate degree in Chiropractic Medicine. Dr. Linda provides a holistic, drugless, and whole body approach to wellness helping her patients live life to the fullest. She graduated in 1992 from Southern California University of Health Sciences (former Los Angeles College of Chiropractic). Her post graduate studies have extended in Functional Medicine, Obesity Related Issues, Digestive Health, Brain Health, Thyroid Health, Chronic Fatigue, Chronic Pain and Women's Wellness. Dr. Linda has been interviewed on television, radio, and has contributed to a national health column, in addition to workshops at churches, Fortune 100 companies, and women's organizations and associations. Dr. Linda is married to her high school sweetheart, has three children, and enjoys spending time with her family.