Is Your Thyroid Acting Up?

Tips for Talking with Your OB/GYN

Stay Safe Behind the Wheel
Is Your Thyroid Acting Up?

Women, have you had recent changes in your weight, appetite or menstrual periods? These and other vague symptoms often blamed on menopause or stress may signal a problem with your thyroid gland. This butterfly-shaped gland near the collarbone produces hormones that control many activities in your body, including how fast you lose weight or how fast your heart beats.

Women are more likely than men to develop thyroid disorders such as hyperthyroidism (an overactive thyroid), hypothyroidism (an underactive thyroid), thyroid nodules and thyroid cancer. Since more women suffer from thyroid issues, your OB/GYN is the go-to person when it comes to routine checks. Once diagnosed, many thyroid problems can be successfully managed with medication. An underactive thyroid usually is treated with a daily thyroid hormone medication. An overactive thyroid is usually treated with medication that blocks the thyroid’s ability to produce excess thyroid hormone or by treatment with radioactive iodine, which will destroy the thyroid tissue. In that case, a person will take a small, daily thyroid hormone replacement pill.

Certain thyroid problems may also be corrected with surgery. At Touro Infirmary, our surgeons are trained to perform minimally invasive thyroid surgery. Depending on the severity of your thyroid disorder, the surgeon could either perform thyroid removal

How Much Do You Know About Thyroid Disorders?

1. Which of the following is true of the thyroid?
   a. It’s located at the base of the neck
   b. It produces two important hormones
   c. It controls your metabolism
   d. All the above

2. Who is most likely to develop a thyroid disorder?
   a. Women
   b. Men
   c. Women and men are equally susceptible
   d. Children of either sex

3. Which of the following is a symptom of hyperthyroidism (an overactive thyroid)?
   a. Weight loss
   b. Irregular heartbeat
   c. Anxiety, irritability and trouble sleeping
   d. All the above

4. Which of the following is not a cause of hyperthyroidism?
   a. An inflamed thyroid
   b. An autoimmune disorder called Graves’ disease
   c. Losing weight
   d. Overfunctioning thyroid nodules

5. Which of the following is not true about hypothyroidism (low thyroid activity)?
   a. It occurs mostly in women ages 50 and older
   b. The disease doesn’t affect children
   c. Radiation and thyroid surgery can cause the condition
   d. It’s commonly caused by an autoimmune disease called Hashimoto’s thyroiditis

6. Which of the following is a symptom of hypothyroidism in adults?
   a. Sensitivity to cold
   b. Unexpected weight gain
   c. Pale, dry skin
   d. All the above

7. Which of the following increases the risk for thyroid cancer?
   a. Exposure to radiation
   b. Family history of the disease
   c. Personal history of goiters with multiple thyroid nodules
   d. All the above

8. Which of the following is not true regarding thyroid cancer?
   a. Children have an increased risk
   b. Pain when swallowing is a possible symptom
   c. Some people have no symptoms
   d. Thyroid cancer is rare
surgery without any neck incisions, or could make a small incision at the base of your throat and operate as needed.

Be sure to schedule annual visits with your OB/GYN and your primary care physician and get your thyroid checked out.

Have More Questions About Thyroid Disorders?
For more information about minimally invasive thyroid surgery at Touro, call the Head and Neck Center at 504-412-1122 or visit www.touro.com/headandneck.

Answers
1. D—ALL THE ABOVE. Hormones made by the thyroid control how fast you burn calories and how fast your heart beats.
2. A—WOMEN.
3. D—ALL THE ABOVE. Other symptoms include increased sweating, trembling in the hands and fingers and muscle weakness.
4. C—LOSING WEIGHT. Graves’ disease, which causes more than 70 percent of hyperthyroidism, is most common in young women.
5. B—THE DISEASE DOESN’T AFFECT CHILDREN. People of any age can develop hypothyroidism. Children with the condition may grow very slowly.
6. D—ALL THE ABOVE. Other symptoms include a puffy face, hoarse voice, muscle aches, cramps and tenderness.
7. D—ALL THE ABOVE. Women are also at higher risk, and the disease is more common in people ages 40 and older.
8. A—CHILDREN HAVE AN INCREASED RISK. People older than age 40 are more likely to develop thyroid cancer.
9. D—B AND C. They can be treated with surgery or with thyroid hormone suppression therapy.
10. D—ALL THE ABOVE.

9. Which of the following is true regarding thyroid nodules?
   a. They cannot be treated
   b. Less than 10 percent are cancerous
   c. They are lumps on the thyroid
   d. B and C

10. Which of the following is true of a goiter (an abnormally enlarged thyroid gland)?
   a. Iodine deficiency can cause it
   b. A swollen neck can be a symptom
   c. It can be treated with iodine supplements or surgery
   d. All the above

For more information, visit the American Thyroid Association at www.thyroid.org.
Bounce Back After Baby

Your postpartum weight-loss plan

Is that baby weight bringing you down? Don’t worry, it’s normal. Several of the pounds you gained during pregnancy were lost at birth, including the weight of the baby, placenta and amniotic fluid. But many women find that the remaining pounds tend to stick around, and their body takes a while to regain its shape. That’s where regular exercise and good nutrition come in.

Your Postbaby Workout Plan

Starting or resuming an exercise program after giving birth offers several benefits:

• Helps you lose pregnancy weight and return to your prepregnancy shape

• Tones muscles that may have been weakened in childbirth

• Gives you more energy, helps you sleep and helps you manage stress

• Improves how you feel about yourself and your body image

There’s no set guideline for when to begin working out again. Start when your doctor says it’s safe and go at the pace he or she recommends. Keep in mind that your body needs to recover from pregnancy and heal from childbirth. Also, the relaxation of ligaments due to hormones may increase the risk for injury. So begin with simple exercises and build to a more active routine. Walking is one of the best ways to get your heart rate up and tone your body.

Many women enjoy the commitment and camaraderie of a postpartum exercise class at a gym. Others prefer to work out at home with their own equipment. Wherever you exercise, drink lots of water, especially if you’re breastfeeding. You may want to schedule your workouts for after a breastfeeding session if your breasts are very full.

Eat Well for Both You and Baby

After birth, good nutrition helps you to be healthy and active—and enables you to care for your baby.

Whether you breast-feed or formula-feed, a healthy, balanced diet is important. Most lactation experts recommend that breastfeeding mothers should eat when they’re hungry. But many new moms may be so tired or busy that food gets forgotten. So, it’s essential to plan simple and healthy meals that include choices from all the recommended groups from www.ChooseMyPlate.gov.

Extreme dieting and rapid weight loss can be a health hazard for you and your baby if you’re breast-feeding. It can take several months to lose the weight you gained during pregnancy. Focus on cutting out high-fat snacks and eat meals with plenty of fresh vegetables and fruits that are balanced with proteins and carbohydrates.

Breast-feeding women should also increase fluids. Many moms find they become very thirsty when the baby is nursing. Try keeping a pitcher of water and even some healthy snacks beside your bed or breast-feeding chair.

Support Before, During and After Childbirth

Touro offers childbirth education classes, prenatal and postnatal consultations and a complimentary monthly breastfeeding class. For more information on the Family Birthing Center at Touro or to register for breastfeeding classes, call 504-897-8130.
Doctors sometimes seem to speak a language all their own. But to communicate with yours, you don’t have to learn “doctor-speak.” Just try to be as clear and honest as you can. And don’t be concerned about bringing up embarrassing topics—your doctor discusses sensitive issues every day.

“Visits to the gynecologist may cause anxiety for some patients. Come prepared with a list of your concerns and questions so you can be sure that all of your interests are addressed,” says Janet Ross, M.D.

An obstetrician-gynecologist, or OB/GYN, is a physician who specializes in the care of women of all ages. They provide a wide range of services, including:

- Prenatal, pregnancy and postnatal care
- Screenings, such as Pap tests, mammograms and pelvic exams
- Postmenopausal care
- Surgery, including procedures to treat conditions of the urinary tract and pelvic organs

While OB/GYNs are specialists, many women choose them as their primary care physicians. When you see your OB/GYN, it’s important to share information about the following:

- Whether you are or might be pregnant, as well as detailed information about any previous pregnancies
- Your history of menstrual periods
- Your sexual habits
- Unusual symptoms—such as nipple discharge, genital itching, painful urination or severe pelvic pain—including when they started and what, if anything, triggers them
- What medicines you take
- Any other health care specialists you see

Tips for Talking with Your OB/GYN

Janet Ross, M.D.
Touro OB/GYN

Need a Doctor?

To find contact information for a trusted OB/GYN or other doctor, surgeon or specialist, use our online physician referral system at www.touro.com/findadoc.
The number of Americans killed in motor vehicle crashes has fallen in recent years. Still, fatalities top **30,000 a year**. Learning the main causes of motor vehicle accidents and deaths can help keep you and your loved ones alive and well.

**STAY AWAKE**

Drivers who are fatigued or sleep deprived are responsible for nearly four percent of deadly crashes. These surprising statistics tell the story:

100 million Americans drive while drowsy each year; 100,000 accidents are caused each year by drivers falling asleep at the wheel.

**SLOW DOWN**

Driving over the speed limit or too fast for road or visibility conditions is one of the most common causes of traffic accidents. It’s a factor in close to one-third of all fatal crashes. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the probability of death, disfigurement and disability increases with higher speed at impact. In fact, for every 10 mph increase in speed beyond 50 mph, the risk for such tragedies doubles.

**STAY SAFE AS YOU AGE**

The risk of being injured or killed in a motor vehicle accident rises with age. These tips can help you maintain the ability to drive safely as you age:

- Ask your doctor to make sure none of your prescription or nonprescription medications could harm your driving ability. Some medications affect your sight or make you drowsy, for instance.
- Have your vision checked each year. Always wear your prescribed glasses or contact lenses.
- Drive mostly during daylight or on routes with less traffic.
- Don’t follow other vehicles too closely. Following at a greater distance will make it easier to avoid an accident.
STAY FOCUSED

In 2009, 5,474 Americans were killed and 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle accidents that involved distracted driving. Distracted driving occurs when people behind the wheel do anything that has the potential to distract them from the primary task of driving. That can include texting, using a cellphone, eating, drinking, grooming, reading, using a PDA or navigation system, watching a video, talking with passengers or changing the radio station.

Remember: Most traffic accidents unfold within two seconds, and most are preventable. Making sure you’re fit to drive could save a life.

Visit This Website!
For more information, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at www.nhtsa.gov.

Are You a Good Fit for Your Car?
Stop by Touro Infirmary Saturday, April 13 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. to learn how to adjust your car so that it is safe and comfortable for you! For more information or to register, call 504-897-8500 or visit www.touro.com/events.

Learn to Drive Safely with a Disability
Driving can be a key to independence for people with disabilities. Touro’s Driver Assessment and Rehabilitation program provides evaluation and training to help people achieve that goal. For more information or to make a referral, call 504-897-8557 or email Judy Otto at judy.otto@touro.com.
Events Calendar

Reading and Understanding Food Labels
Healthy Lifestyles Seminar
• April 4, 5 to 6 p.m.
• April 17, noon to 1 p.m.
Refreshments will be provided.

Parkinson’s Disease: LSVT Seminar
• April 9, noon to 1 p.m.
Learn more about Parkinson’s disease and LSVT, an innovative therapy used to help persons living with Parkinson’s disease.

Adult Car Fit Event
• April 13, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Learn how to adjust your car so that it is safe and comfortable for you.

Head and Neck Cancer Screening Event
• April 18, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Get screened and learn your risk for head and neck conditions. Registration is required.

Vitamins and Nutritional Supplements
Healthy Lifestyles Seminar
• May 2, 5 to 6 p.m.
• May 15, noon to 1 p.m.

Events are FREE and hosted at Touro Infirmary, 1401 Foucher St., New Orleans, in the second floor meeting rooms. To register for any of these events, please call 504-897-8500 or visit www.touro.com/events.

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