



Information for
patients and
carers

Hyperthyroidism

The thyroid gland is situated at the front of the neck. It makes two hormones thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3), which are necessary for all the cells in your body to work normally.

What is Hyperthyroidism?

Hyperthyroidism (thyrotoxicosis) is a condition caused by excess production of thyroid hormones. This affects the whole body.

What causes Hyperthyroidism?

- Graves disease (autoimmune disease of the thyroid gland)
- A toxic nodular goitre (a goitre is an enlarged thyroid gland)
- Toxic thyroid adenoma (a benign lump on the thyroid gland)
- Thyroiditis (infection or inflammation of the thyroid gland)

What are the common symptoms?

Symptoms include weight loss, palpitations, trembling hands, sweating, feeling unusually hot, fatigue, anxiety, difficulty sleeping, looseness of the bowels, thirst, itchiness, and an enlarged thyroid gland.

How is Hyperthyroidism diagnosed?

A simple blood test measuring levels of the thyroid hormones will confirm hyperthyroidism. A physical examination of the thyroid gland may also be carried out and sometimes a thyroid scan is required.

What is the treatment for Hyperthyroidism?

Your doctor will make a decision with you about what the appropriate treatment for your thyroid should be. The most common treatment is anti-thyroid medications such as **Carbimazole** which inhibits the production of thyroid hormones. **Propylthiouracil (PTU)** is an alternative treatment and is often given during pregnancy or breast-

feeding. These drugs work by reducing the amount of thyroid hormone released into the blood. Alternative treatments such as radio-iodine, which destroys some of the thyroid tissue, or surgery to remove all or part of the gland may also be considered.

Are there any side effects of the medication?

The most common side effects include skin rashes, joint pains. Very rarely a lowering of the white blood count (agranulocytosis) can occur. This usually presents as a sore throat, unexplained fever or mouth ulcers. If you experience any of these symptoms you should stop the carbimazole (propylthiouracil (PTU)) and get a blood test (full blood count) straight away normally at your GP surgery. You will be advised when it is suitable to re-start your medication.

Very occasionally PTU can alter liver function however this is rare. If you notice any symptoms of upper right abdominal pain then you should stop the medication and seek further advice from your GP.

How long will I need treatment?

The most common treatment is medication which is usually continued for approximately 18 months. After this you will continue to have blood tests to monitor your thyroid activity. If your symptoms return you may need to be restarted on the anti-thyroid medication and alternative treatments will be discussed with you as mentioned above.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact

The British Thyroid Foundation: 01423 709707

Endocrine Specialist Nurse: 01772 523533

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.btf-thyroid.org

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking you can also contact the Quit Squad Freephone 0800 328 6297.

Please ask if you would like help in understanding this information. This information can be made available in large print and in other languages.

Gujarati:

આ માહિતીને સમજવામાં સહાયતા જોઈતી હોય તો કૃપાકરીને પૂછો. આ માહિતી મોટા છપાણામાં અને અન્ય ભાષામાં ઉપલબ્ધ કરી શકાય છે.

Romanian:

Vă rugăm să întrebați dacă aveți nevoie de ajutor pentru înțelegerea acestor informații. Aceste informații pot fi puse la dispoziție în format mare și în alte limbi.”

Polish:

Poinformuj nas, jeśli potrzebna jest ci pomoc w zrozumieniu tych informacji. Informacje te można również udostępnić dużym drukiem oraz w innych językach

Punjabi:

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਸਮਝਣ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮਦਦ ਲੈਣੀ ਚਾਹੋਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੁੱਛੋ। ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੁਹੱਈਆ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

Urdu:

دو سر ی زبانوں او ر بڑی اگر آپ کو ہی معلومات سمجھنے کے لیے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو یی چھپا یں ییہ ابی دست بو یسکت ہے برا ے مہر یان پو ے یچھہ ی۔ معلومات

Arabic:

مطبوعة بأحرف كبيرة و بلغات إذا كنت تريد مساعدة في فهم هذه المعلومات يُرجى أن تطلب أخرى يمكن تو فسير هذه المعلومات

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