

Thyroid – The Diesel

The thyroid is a vital foundation to the hormonal control system of the body, while also providing the primary control of metabolism. In this stressful world there are many tendencies for thyroidal imbalance and thus metabolic abnormalities. Thyroid disease effects eight times more women than men due to the tendency for estrogen to suppress thyroidal activity, and in turn thyroidal depression skews estrogen balance by reducing the liver clearance of conjugated hormones. This we must pay attention closely to women and their tendency to thyroidal imbalance.

The thyroid hormones promote the metabolism of carbohydrate, protein, fat, vitamin utilization, energy, digestion, muscle and nerve activity, blood flow, reproduction, and sexuality. Estimates are that 13 million Americans suffer from thyroid disorder, but only half are aware of this condition. Recently there has been the discovery that even normal thyroidal blood values may mask a deeper tissue level of thyroid hormone resistance which has now been called Hypo-Metabolic Syndrome.

To assist in assessing the thyroidal status early morning temperature study may reveal depression. Dr. Broda Barnes studied and discovered that first morning basal temperature of less than 97.6 degrees F. suggests reduced thyroidal activity. Laboratory blood testing can also reveal tendencies in the thyroid that are hyper or hypo. The iodine patch test can also reveal subtle and severe iodine deficiencies that may contribute to thyroid irregularity. Certain foods in the brassica family of vegetables, flax, soy and walnuts can interfere with thyroidal function. These are called goitrogens because they cause the thyroid to over develop (goiter) in an attempt to make up for the block to its function.

Specific nutrients can promote normal thyroid function and can often totally normalize imbalances that otherwise must be managed with medication chronically throughout life. While most people understand that iodine is essential to thyroidal production of thyroid hormone, it is also known that the mineral selenium is also vital to the conversion of thyroid hormone to its more active form resulting in energy and heat. It should also be noted that depressed thyroidal activity creates sleep with no renewal and leads to depression which is so widespread in modern America.

Certain drugs impair the breakdown of thyroid hormone creating mood alteration. It is known that antidepressants depress the pituitary and thyroidal activity, and as well that Vitamin A usage is reduced thus resulting in carotenoid skin deposits and yellow palms of soles. Although medication may be required in certain cases the functional medicine approaches are daily learning more about normalizing the imbalanced thyroid gland. With proper support the thyroid is designed to work steadily and reliably, like a diesel, all the years of our lives.