



Cumbria Advisory Thyroid Service



INFORMATION SHEET

METABOLISM / DIET

THE THYROID HORMONE PLAYS A MAJOR ROLE IN REGULATING EATING BEHAVIOUR. IT AFFECTS AND INTERACTS WITH SOME OF THE CHEMICAL TRANSMITTERS INVOLVED IN EATING BEHAVIOUR. HENCE WHY THE HYPERTHYROID PATIENT WILL EAT MORE, AND THE HYPOTHYROID PATIENT WILL EAT LESS.

The recently discovered hormone leptin, which is produced by fat tissue, appears to be the most important chemical that regulates our metabolic rate. When you do not eat for a long period leptin levels decrease and lead to changes in the endocrine system, which in turn result in slowed metabolism – thus a tougher time in losing weight. When the thyroid hormone T3 is not delivered in sufficient amounts, leptin becomes inefficient in enhancing metabolism. This in turn can increase the cravings for high calorie foods and with the decreased serotonin levels in the brain, depression can also lead to eating the wrong foods or even overeating for comfort. Most hypothyroid patients complain of low blood sugar levels – this again is a result of the vicious circle of hormone dysfunction but can be regulated by eating smaller meals at regular intervals – ensuring no processed sugars and extra fats are being taken. Additives are also to be watched carefully, including tea, coffee and alcohol. Exercise is vitally important to keep the body moving and the fats dispersing.

A high protein, low-fat diet benefits the immune system – it helps to reduce cholesterol and blood pressure.

HINTS

- ✓ Don't go to bed on a full stomach
- ✓ Drink at least 8 glasses of water per day
- ✓ Chew your food slowly
- ✓ Don't drink tea or coffee with your meals
- ✓ Stop eating before it becomes uncomfortable
- ✓ Don't talk whilst eating – lay down your knife and fork and finish eating before talking
- ✓ Use smaller plates and smaller portions
- ✓ Eat smaller and more often, six times, rather than three times per day
- ✓ Sit down at a dining table – don't eat slouched in front of the T.V.
- ✓ Reduce alcohol – use at one meal, or in social conditions only, NEVER drink it alone
- ✓ Always break your fast – eat about 20 to 30 minutes after taking your Thyroxine
- ✓ Use food as a fuel to keep you moving
- ✓ Aging means less protein – but you still need some to stimulate metabolism

- ✓ Increase your Omega 3 oils from such sources as tuna, mackerel and salmon
- ✓ Avoid eating raw goitrogens such as turnips, cabbage, mustard and peanuts. Cooking these will usually neutralize the effects on the thyroid – take them in moderate portions.

METABOLISM/DIET

Foods that are rich in essential nutrients for thyroid patients are as follows:

SELENIUM <i>Whole grains</i> <i>Tuna</i> <i>Organ meats</i> <i>Mushrooms</i> <i>Egg noodles</i> <i>Halibut</i> <i>Beef (no fat)</i> <i>Soybeans</i> <i>Oatmeal</i> <i>Wheat germ</i> <i>Sunflower seeds</i>	BETACAROTENE <i>Kale</i> <i>Sweet potatoes</i> <i>Carrots</i> <i>Butternut squash</i> <i>Spinach</i> <i>Cantaloupe</i> <i>Broccoli</i> <i>Asparagus</i> <i>Pumpkin</i> <i>Liver</i> <i>Lettuce</i>	
VITAMIN C <i>Citrus fruits</i> <i>Red peppers</i> <i>Orange juice</i> <i>Broccoli</i> <i>Cantaloupe</i> <i>Melons</i> <i>Green peppers</i> <i>Cauliflower</i> <i>Strawberries</i>	VITAMIN E <i>Whole grains</i> <i>Almonds</i> <i>Soybeans</i> <i>Sunflower seeds</i> <i>Beans</i> <i>Liver</i> <i>Cereals</i> <i>Vegetable oil</i> <i>Leafy green vegetables</i> <i>Asparagus</i>	ZINC <i>Fish</i> <i>Lean beef</i> <i>Herring</i> <i>Maple syrup</i> <i>Soybeans</i> <i>Turkey</i> <i>Wheat bran</i> <i>Whole grains</i> <i>Sunflower seeds</i>

Once established on a thyroid hormone replacement extra vitamin supplements can be taken:

General Hints:

✓ Foods – Good

Fresh vegetables
Fresh fruit
Wholemeal bread
Unsaturated oils/spreads
Natural yoghurts
Skimmed milk
White meats
Fish – oily

X Foods – Bad

All processed meats
All tinned foods
Processed sugars
Salt
Fats – animal
Fats – in confectionary

! Supplements

Calcium & Vit D
Iron
Vit B complex
Vit A
Vit C
Vit E
Selenium
Zinc

A varied diet rich in vitamins and minerals, with fruit and vegetables as part of the daily intake encourages the metabolism to work. Natural carbohydrates will increase the rate – these include pasta, bread and potatoes without the fats.

C.A.T.S RECOMMENDS YOU ALWAYS SEEK YOUR DOCTORS ADVICE

Disclaimer

The purpose of this information leaflet is to help those suffering with thyroid disease. Whilst every effort is made to provide accurate information, it is impossible to ensure that the information given is relevant to every individual. No responsibility is accepted by CATS and it is recommended and essential, that if in any doubt about your condition, that you should always contact your doctor, specialist physician or surgeon to seek medical advice.