

Hypothyroid and Autoimmune Disease

Lucy already knows she has a low thyroid (hypothyroid) and she is taking a medication - Synthroid or Levothyroid but she is still overweight and nothing she does seems to help. Lucy is tired, she can't think clearly; it's like her brain is in a fog. She is constipated, feels depressed, and is having trouble remembering things. She has had heavy menstrual bleeding and has been unable to get pregnant. Her muscles and joints are stiff and sore.

Lucy's doctor orders another thyroid test - which comes back normal - so of course, her problem can't be a malfunctioning thyroid. Well, yes it can. With these symptoms it is very likely that Lucy's thyroid is still not being managed.

Thyroid disorders are becoming epidemic. Modern stresses and environmental contaminants make people more prone than ever to dysfunction and disease. Genetically modified foods also contribute to the problem because the body may target the molecules of these foods as foreign invaders.

Standard lab tests are often just not adequate for diagnosing thyroid problems. Most doctors only test levels of TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone). An elevated TSH may be diagnostic of a hypothyroid condition, but unfortunately, a normal TSH level, by itself, is not a guarantee that all is well. If you are experiencing thyroid symptoms it is important to test for several thyroid markers, including Total T3, Total T4, T3 uptake, plus TPO and TGB antibodies.

If the TSH is normal but you have symptoms of hypothyroid and also experience difficulty sleeping, have an irregular or pounding heartbeat, have a swelling in your throat or neck, experience nervousness, or are troubled by alternating constipation and diarrhea you could have a condition called Hashimoto's Thyroiditis. A vast majority of all hypothyroid cases are Hashimoto's.

Hashimoto's is an autoimmune disorder in which the immune system attacks the thyroid gland. Over time, this will result in destruction of the thyroid. In addition, whenever Hashimoto's is present it is more likely that other types of autoimmune disease will develop. These may include rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, Crohn's disease, psoriasis and Type I Diabetes. With autoimmune disease, any part of the body may be under attack, including brain tissue and hormones.

Note: Some indications that you may be autoimmune are 1) you have symptoms that come and go, 2) You have tried many treatments, including herbal and nutritional without success, or 3) your health problems began after a pregnancy or an illness.

Autoimmune disease is a complex health problem. If a doctor is not well trained to recognize the diagnostic intricacies of this illness, it will be missed.

Traditional Treatment

There is no cure for Hashimoto's thyroid disease. A synthetic thyroid hormone is generally prescribed to treat either Hashimoto's or regular hypothyroid. This will lower the TSH making it appear that the problem is under control, but it does nothing to alter the attack of the immune system on the thyroid

gland nor does it prevent the autoimmune problem from spreading to other parts of the body. Under a traditional medical approach, steroids may also be prescribed to inhibit the destructive inflammation that is part of the disease. Steroids are risky and have serious side effects, and again, they do nothing to stop the spread of the disease. Other traditional treatments focus on the symptoms that Hashimoto's creates, such as antidepressants for depression and pain killers for muscle and joint pain.

A Better Way

There is another, better treatment. I recommend the book ***Why Do I Still Have Thyroid Symptoms When My Lab Tests Are Normal?*** by Dr. Datis Kharrazian. We carry this at our office, or you may order it through www.amazon.com. I was taught by Dr. Kharrazian and I use his program in my clinic. I routinely check for thyroid conditions with a thorough examination, lab evaluation, and personal and family health history. Our treatment methods address total body health rather than focusing only on the thyroid gland.

Hashimoto's thyroid, and other autoimmune diseases can be managed well through a natural approach. It is possible to return to a higher quality of life. If you would like more information, please call my office. I am happy to answer any of your questions and there is no charge or obligation for a consultation. Autoimmune disease is a major problem with devastating consequences if not brought under control. If you think you might have Hashimoto's, please **call our office for a consultation at 888-6138**

Copyright 2011 – Dr. Vernon S. Redd