


National Thyroid Awareness Month

January is National Thyroid Awareness Month. According to the American Thyroid Association, one in ten people suffer from a thyroid disorder and one in eight women will develop a thyroid disorder in their lifetime. More than half of the people with a thyroid disorder in America are undiagnosed.

The thyroid gland is butterfly-shaped and located at the base of your neck, just below your Adam's Apple. The thyroid makes hormones that are secreted in the blood and carried to every tissue in your body. These hormones help the body use energy, stay warm and keep the brain, heart, muscles and all other organs working as they should. Sometimes the thyroid gland doesn't work properly, and it makes less thyroid hormone than normal—this is called hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid). Or sometimes it makes too much—this is called hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid). When diagnosing thyroid diseases, your primary care provider will review your medical history, perform a physical exam, and order specialized blood tests. The good news is that most thyroid disorders can be managed or even cured with medication or treatment.

Participate in the following activities to learn more:



#1 Test Your Knowledge
#2 Watch Move with a Doc: Thyroid Health & Metabolism
#3 Matching Game
#4 Fact Sheet

**Every year, about
12,000 men and
33,000 women get
thyroid cancer.**
(Source: [CDC](#))



Questions? Email wellness@wellfirstbenefits.com

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Health Disparities

Cancer does not always affect all groups of people equally. There are differences in risk among different groups of people due to differences in genetics, hormones, environmental exposure and other factors. In addition, lack of access to health care, socioeconomic status, cultural attitudes/behaviors can be barriers to screening for thyroid cancer and treatment.

Use the following resources to learn more:

- [American Cancer Society: Thyroid Cancer](#)
- [CDC: Thyroid Cancer](#)
- [NIH: Thyroid Cancer](#)

Activity 1: Test Your Knowledge

How much do you know about the thyroid gland and the important role it plays in your body?

[Start the Quiz](#)

Activity 2: Watch Move with a Doc: Thyroid Health & Metabolism

“Is your metabolism working for you?” This webinar covers one of the biggest influences on our metabolism – our thyroid gland. Learn how to detect if your thyroid gland is altering your metabolism and if so, what you can do about it. As you watch, you’re encouraged to be active while listening.

[Watch Here](#)

Activity 3: Matching Game

After completing activities 1 and 2, see if you can match the different signs, symptoms and causes to the correct type of thyroid disorder. (Hint: Some signs/symptoms are present with both.)

Sign/Symptom/Cause	HyPERthyroidism	HyPOthyroidism
Fatigue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Weight gain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unintentional weight loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feeling down/depressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nervousness, anxiety, irritability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impaired memory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased sweating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased sensitivity to heat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased sensitivity to cold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased bowel movements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increased constipation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rapid or irregular heartbeat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tremor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muscle weakness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pain, stiffness, and swelling in joints	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enlarged thyroid gland (goiter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes to skin and/or hair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elevated blood cholesterol level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hoarseness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes in menstrual patterns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graves' Disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Autoimmune Disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, talk with your primary care provider.

Answer key on Page 5

Activity 4: Fact Sheet

Read through the thyroid cancer fact sheet to learn more about thyroid cancer and be aware of the signs or symptoms for a proactive approach to thyroid health.



- Unlike most other adult cancers, thyroid cancer is typically diagnosed at a younger age, and nearly three out of every four diagnoses are in women.
- There is no routine screening test for thyroid cancer—providers do testing based on your symptoms and things that they find when they examine you
- Thyroid cancer is detectable at an early stage and can be successfully treated.
- There are four types of thyroid cancer:
 - Papillary: The most common type of thyroid cancer, grows slowly, develops from follicular cells, and is typically found in one lobe.
 - Follicular: Less common, develops from follicular cells, and grows slowly.
 - Medullary: Develops in C cells, frequently part of a genetic syndrome of multiple endocrine neoplasia (MEN), and accounts for 5-10% of thyroid cancers.
 - Anaplastic: Is rare, fast-growing, and difficult to treat.
- Surgical removal of the affected area is the most common treatment for thyroid cancer.
- Thyroid cancer can cause any of the following signs or symptoms:
 - A lump in the neck, typically near the Adam's apple
 - Loss of voice or hoarseness
 - Enlarged or swollen glands in the neck
 - Trouble swallowing
 - Trouble with breathing
 - Discomfort or pain in the neck or throat
 - Persistent, unexplained coughing
- While many other conditions can cause the same signs or symptoms, it is important to discuss your symptoms with your provider promptly for a more proactive approach to potential thyroid problems and to get the care that you need.

[Learn more](#) about Thyroid Cancer: Symptoms & Treatment.

Sources:

- <https://www.thyroid.org/january-thyroid-awareness/>
- <https://thesurgicalclinics.com/national-thyroid-awareness-month/>
- <https://www.thyroid.org/thyroid-information/>

Answer Key – Matching Game

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