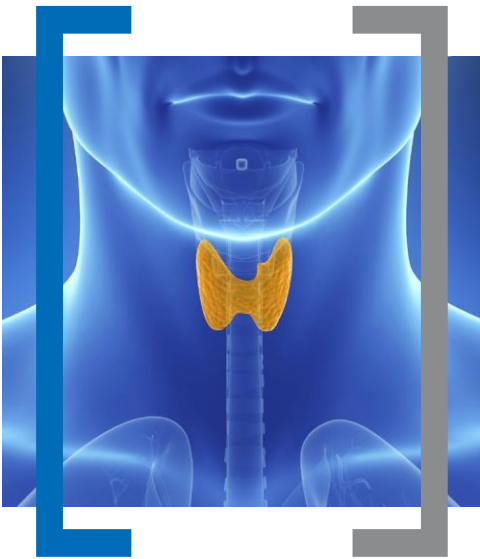




HYPERTHYROIDISM

What you need to know

Did you know that the thyroid gland secretes thyroid hormones, which control many of the body's functions?

They play a role in reproduction, sleep, growth, hunger, and metabolism.

What is hyperthyroidism?

Hyperthyroidism is a condition that causes the thyroid gland to produce abnormally high amounts of hormones.

The thyroid is a small gland located in your neck, just below the Adam's apple. Its main role is to regulate cell metabolism in our body.

At rest, the body uses a certain amount of energy to maintain vital functions, such as blood circulation, brain function, breathing, digestion, temperature regulation, etc. This is called the basal metabolic rate, which is partly controlled by the thyroid hormones.

The amount of energy used varies from person to person, depending on their height, weight, age, sex, and thyroid gland activity.

Hyperthyroidism causes the metabolism to speed up, burning more energy. If left untreated, hyperthyroidism leads to an increased risk of osteoporosis since it affects the bones' ability to absorb calcium. The risk of developing a type of heart arrhythmia called atrial fibrillation also increases.

What are the symptoms of hyperthyroidism?

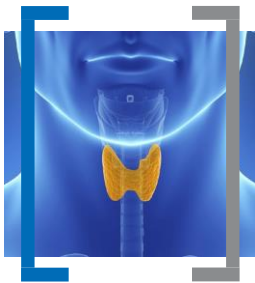
Mild hyperthyroidism may go unnoticed.

- Rapid pulse or palpitations;
- Appearance of a lump in the neck (goiter);
- Abnormal or irregular periods in women;
- Increased appetite but usually accompanied by weight loss;
- Increased activity level, even if the person is tired and weak;
- Increased body temperature that causes hot flashes even in a cold room;
- Nervous hyperactivity that causes a feeling of nervousness or mild hand tremors;
- Sleep disruptions;
- Clammy skin;
- Frequent stools, sometimes accompanied by diarrhea;
- Puffy, watery eyes or sensitivity to light.

It's important to note that the symptoms are milder in older individuals, who instead experience an irregular heartbeat, fainting, weakness, heart failure, or depression.

Go to the Emergency department immediately if you develop these symptoms:

- Heartbeat faster than 120 beats per minute;
- Fever above 38.5 °C (101.3 °F) or chills;
- Difficulty breathing;
- Chest pain;
- Significant nausea and vomiting;
- Agitation;
- Confusion.



HYPERTHYROIDISM

What you need to know

How can the medical team be sure you have hyperthyroidism?

If the medical team suspects hyperthyroidism, they may Order blood tests and an electrocardiogram.

They will also request a consultation with an internal medicine specialist, who may order more tests and recommend treatment.

You may be prescribed a medication called a beta-blocker to control some of the hyperthyroidism symptoms, such as the rapid heart rate, tremors, or nervousness. It's important you take your medication as prescribed.

Can hyperthyroidism be prevented?

There is no way to prevent hyperthyroidism. Early diagnosis helps to prevent the symptoms from getting worse and complications from developing.

However, there are things you can do to reduce the risk of complications, such as:

- Get enough sleep/rest;
- Eat a proper diet;
- Avoid caffeine;
- Exercise regularly;
- Avoid smoking.

If hyperthyroidism is not treated properly, a potentially life-threatening complication can develop called thyroid crisis (or thyroid storm).

Resources

You can call **Info-Santé (811)** at any time.

Clinical intake department
(from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday, except holidays):

- **Hôpital Anna-Laberge**
450-699-2425, ext. 4383
- **Hôpital du Suroît**
450-371-9920, ext. 2835

References:

- Thyroid Foundation of Canada
- Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal
Faculty of Medicine, Université de Montréal,
Endocrinology unit

Our mission

Maintain, improve, and restore the health and well-being of the Québec population by providing access to a set of quality, integrated health and social services, thereby contributing to the social and economic development of Québec.

Our vision

Accessible, efficient health care and services that are adapted to the needs of Quebecers.

Our goals

The CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest achieves its goals through its innovative approaches and stands apart through:

- The excellence of its local, integrated care and services focused on interdisciplinarity, accessibility, and adaptation to the needs of the population;
- Its courage to question and improve its professional, clinical, and management practices;
- Recognition for the contribution of its staff and implementation of human resources management practices;
- The strength of its relationships with its partners.

Our values

Our actions are guided by five interdependent, cohesive values: compassion, collaboration, confidence, commitment, and consistency.