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"On the other side of a storm is the strength that comes from having navigated through it. Raise your sail and begin."

— Gregory S. Williams



Understanding Thyroid

Memory Function in Seniors

Body Agility

Focus on Mental Health



Understanding Thyroid

The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland in the neck. It produces the hormones that regulate metabolism. Low levels of thyroid hormone can cause a range of symptoms, including fatigue, constipation, dry skin, brittle nails, hair changes, aches and pains, and feeling down. Untreated, an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) can increase the chances of developing high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

Women are more likely than men to have problems with their thyroid, particularly as they get older. In some women, the onset of thyroid trouble is so gradual that it's hardly noticeable; in others, symptoms come on abruptly over the course of a few weeks or months. These include:

Fatigue.

You may feel unusually tired and have less energy.



Cold intolerance.

You may feel chilly even when others around you are comfortable.



Appetite loss, weight

When metabolism is dragging, you need fewer calories so your appetite may decrease — at the same time, you are using fewer of the calories you do eat, so more are stored as fat.



Cardiovascular effects.

Low levels of thyroid hormone can lead to high blood pressure as well as elevated levels of total and LDL cholesterol. Over time, an underactive thyroid can compromise the ability of the heart to pump blood effectively.



Mental effects.

Hypothyroidism and depression share many of the same symptoms, including trouble concentrating, memory problems, and loss of interest in things that are normally important to you.



Other signs and symptoms.

Hypothyroidism can cause symptoms throughout the body, from constipation to muscle aches and pain around the joints. Skin, hair, and nails may become dry and thin.



If you have any of these symptoms, see your doctor. She or he will examine you for signs of hypothyroidism, and may recommend blood tests to check thyroid function.

Hypothyroidism is usually treated with a daily dose of synthetic thyroid hormone, which is taken as a pill. This medication works exactly like your body's natural thyroid hormone. It may take some time to find the right dose for you. Once you do, symptoms usually improve dramatically. Your doctor will check your thyroid function usually once or twice a year to be sure that your dose of medication remains optimal.

Do not ignore depression:

Signs to look out for:

If you experience several of the following symptoms most days for at least two weeks, you may have depression and should seek help:

- Loss of enjoyment in favorite activities
- Persistent sad or "empty" mood
- Increased boredom and apathy
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Restlessness or irritability
- Insomnia or spending too much time in bed
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Unintentional weight gain or loss



According to WHO, this is the state of mental health in India:

1. WHO states that the mental health workforce in India is not upto the mark and there is a huge shortage of psychiatrists and psychologists in the country as compared to the number of people suffering from mental health issues. WHO states that in India, (per 100,000 population) there are psychiatrists (0.3), nurses (0.12), psychologists (0.07) and social workers (0.07), while the desirable number is anything above 3 psychiatrists and psychologists per 100,000 population.

2. WHO also estimates that about 7.5 per cent Indians suffer from some mental disorder and predicts that by end of this year roughly 20 per cent of India will suffer from mental illnesses. According to the numbers, 56 million Indians suffer from depression and another 38 million Indians suffer from anxiety disorders.

3. Did you know India also accounts for 36.6 per cent of suicides globally, and that suicide has surpassed maternal mortality as the leading cause of death among women and teenage girls aged 15-19 years? Lancet studies suggest that India's contribution to global suicide deaths increased from 25.3% in 1990 to 36.6% in 2016 among women, and from 18.7% to 24.3% among men. As per the National Mental Health Survey 2015-16, conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru, under the purview of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, it was revealed that 9.8 million teenagers in the age group 13-17 years suffer depression and other mental health disorders and are "in need of active intervention". Whereas, according to a study by the Lancet, suicide deaths ranked first among all causes of death in women aged 15-29 years in 26 of the 31 states, and in women aged 15-39 years in 24 states in the country.

4. According to World Health Organisation, the burden of mental health problems is of the tune of 2,443 disability-adjusted life years per 100,000 population, and the age-adjusted suicide rate per 100,000 population is 21.1.

5. According to the burden of mental disorders across the states of India: The Global Burden of Disease Study 1990-2017 - One in seven Indians were affected by mental disorders of varying severity in 2017 and the proportional contribution of mental disorders to the total disease burden in India has almost doubled since 1990.

6. WHO also estimates that, in India, the economic loss, due to mental health conditions, between 2012-2030, is 1.03 trillions of 2010 dollars.

(*as reported by NDTV)

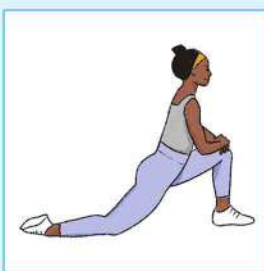
Regular stretching is important to keep the muscles and the joints functioning properly without much pain. Stretching keeps the muscles flexible, strong, and healthy, and we need that flexibility to maintain a range of motion in the joints. Without these stretches the muscles become short and tight, making it difficult to maintain this range of motion. That puts you at risk for joint pain, strains, and muscle damage.

Some stretches to try:



1. Quad Stretch

1. Stand upright and bend one leg back, grabbing the top of that foot.
2. Bring your foot as close to your butt as possible while keeping your bent knee inline with your other knee.
3. Push your hips forward for a deepened stretch.
4. Hold onto a wall for balance if needed and repeat on the other leg.



2. Hamstring Stretch

1. Stand upright, bending one knee and extending the other out straight in front of you about 6 inches.
2. Make sure you are bending at the hips and keeping your back straight.
3. Lower your chest down until you feel a stretch in the back of the extended leg.



3. Thigh Stretch

1. Sit up straight on the ground with knees bent and soles of your feet touching one another.
2. Grasp your feet with your hands.
3. Gently push down on your knees with your elbows to deepen the stretch.



4. Hip Stretch

1. Lie on your back and bend both knees with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Bring your left knee closer to your chest and bend it at 90 degrees so your calf crosses over your body.
3. Bring your right knee towards your chest, making contact with the ankle or shin of your left leg.
4. Wrap your hands around your right leg and pull it closer to your body, deepening the stretch.



5. Chest and Shoulder Stretch

1. Stand up straight or sit on a surface so that your legs are at a 90 degree angle.
2. Clasp your hands together behind your back so that your arms are extended behind you.
3. Lift your hands to the ceiling to stretch your chest and shoulders.

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