

Success Forum



Cheryl Wisdom Murphy, MS RN FAARFM
Herbalife Independent Distributor
Vol 30 No 4 Year 2025

Is Your Thyroid Really “Fine”?

I wrote my first article about thyroid disease in 2002. This is version number four. I’m still using version three, but I keep saying “I need to update this ...”. So, here it is. I have a lot of personal experience with hypothyroidism. I believe I have been dealing with it since I was a pre-teen, and perhaps even earlier than that. We’re pretty sure our maternal Grandma had hypothyroidism, mom did, my sister does. Genetics can definitely drive this disease.

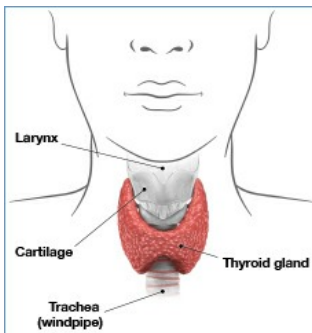
For some reason, traditional medicine has chosen to ignore patient complaints. For decades I was told, “Your thyroid is fine.” Many practitioners were so dismissive, I wanted to scream. NO - my thyroid was NOT fine but if you can’t get anyone to listen, you suffer alone and wonder if you’re crazy.

I have been an Herbalife Distributor for almost 30 years. We do not diagnose, treat, cure or prevent disease with Herbalife products. But, I’ve also been a registered nurse since 1984 and in 2009, completed my training as a Board Certified practitioner of Functional Medicine through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine.

Because of my background, people ask me a lot of medical questions and many of them revolve around thyroid disease symptoms. If you are an Herbalife Distributor, I want to give you a tool to help your clients. If you are a client, I want to give you some assurance and ammunition to effectively deal with your practitioner.

This is what I will cover:

- What is thyroid disease and what are the symptoms?
- My doctor says my thyroid is fine, but I don’t feel well. What can I do about that?
- Are there any “natural” ways to treat thyroid disease?
- What does the research say about foods that are safe for people who have thyroid disease and what about the Herbalife products?

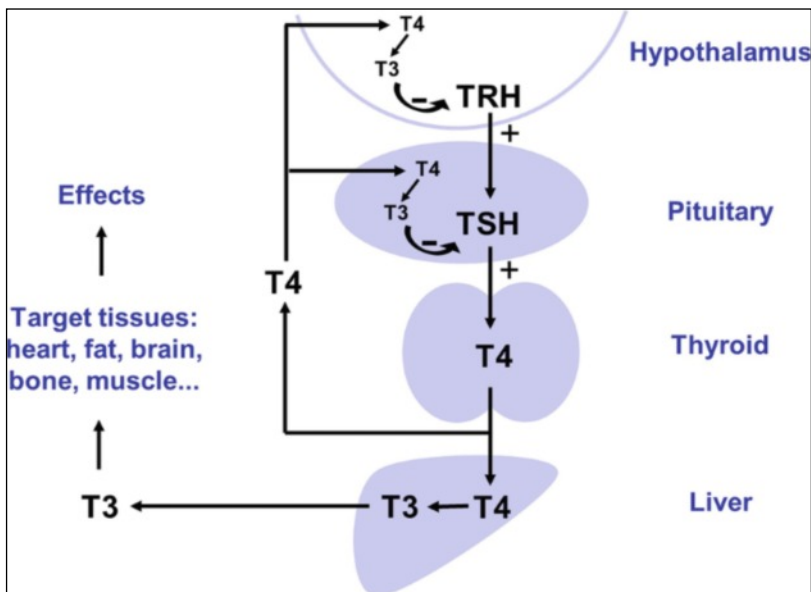


What is thyroid disease? If you Google “what is thyroid disease,” it says a “condition where the thyroid doesn’t produce the right amount of hormones.” It goes well beyond that, but goes on to say that if you have too few hormones, you are HYPO or low thyroid. Too many and you are HYPER thyroid, called Grave’s Disease, which is rare. In this issue, I will focus on HYPOthyroid states. While you cannot definitively diagnose without the correct labs, here are signs and symptoms to look for.

Hypothyroidism signs and symptoms may include:

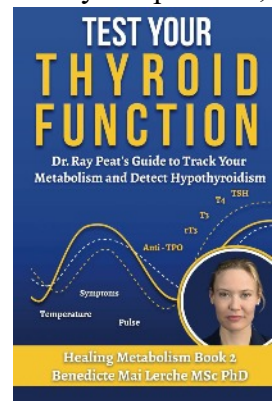
- Fatigue
- Always feeling cold
- Constipation
- Dry skin, brittle or weak nails
- Weight gain
- Puffy face
- Hoarseness
- Itchiness
- Muscle weakness
- Elevated blood cholesterol level
- Muscle aches, tenderness and stiffness
- Pain, stiffness or swelling in your joints
- Heavier than normal or irregular menstrual periods / infertility
- Thinning and/or prematurely gray hair
- Slowed heart rate
- Depression
- Impaired memory
- Enlarged thyroid gland (goiter)

Adapted from mayoclinic.org/diseases/conditions/hypothyroidism/symptoms-causes/syc-20350284



Source: Visser, T.J. (2018). Regulation of Thyroid Function, Synthesis, and Function of Thyroid Hormones. In: Vitti, P., Hegedüs, L. (eds) *Thyroid Diseases. Endocrinology*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-45013-1_1

My doctor says my thyroid is fine, but I don't feel well. Testing thyroid function. Thyroid function drives metabolism. Before modern bloodwork was available, thyroid function was measured by taking your body temperature. You can still do that today! If your body temperature, first thing in the morning, is less than 98 degrees, you may be hypothyroid. And there are other things to look at such as heart rate. Benedicte Mai Lerche's second book (more on her in a minute) takes a very comprehensive look at testing thyroid function.



In 1965, a blood test was developed to measure TSH. How does this all work? Your hypothalamus monitors blood levels of T4, which is made by your thyroid gland. Remember that T4 is a *pre-hormone*. Think of it as the storage form of thyroid hormones. If the T4 levels are low, the hypothalamus secretes TRH. That goes to the pituitary gland, causing it to release TSH which then tells the thyroid gland to make more T4.

The Quest Diagnostics reference range for TSH is 0.40 - 4.50. That's a big range! Think of it this way. The higher the TSH is, the higher the signal is for the thyroid to make more T4. Typically, Functional Medicine folks pay attention if the TSH is greater than 2.0. A TSH of more than 4.0 means the brain is screaming for T4. If your TSH is, let's say, 3.5. You are well within the normal range. But if you have many of the signs and symptoms from the first page and your body temp and pulse are low. Guess what! You would benefit from further testing! (Or a new doctor.)

A synthetic version of T4 called Synthroid, or levothyroxin, has been available since 1927. Now that they can test TSH, it was discovered that if you take enough Synthroid, the TSH comes back into reference range. And then doctor says your thyroid is "fine." But as you can see from the Visser graphic, it's a little more involved than just the TSH. And Dr McDaniel notes that "prescribing T4 without testing the patient's ability to **activate** it might be compared to charitably sending cans of food to starving Third-World children without ensuring they have a can-opener."

What causes hypothyroidism - or what can I do to activate T3? In his article in the Townsend Letter, Dr McDaniel states, "anything that interferes with the enzyme that converts T4 to T3 can create a hypothyroid state." The list is long and includes stress, a protein-

TRH - Thyrotropin Releasing Hormone, regulates TSH
TSH - Thyroid Stimulating Hormone. Tells the thyroid to make more T4.

T4 - created by the thyroid gland. It has 4 iodine atoms and acts as a pre-hormone. It is not an active hormone.

T3 - this is the ACTIVE thyroid hormone, but rarely checked by practitioners. T4 goes into circulation, gets to the liver, one of the iodine atoms is removed. That **activates** it so it can interact with tissues. Without adequate levels of T3, you will never feel good. Ask your doctor to check your **Free T3**. Tell them NOT Total T3 or T3 Uptake. You want a **Free T3 test**.

There is also a Reverse T3 test, but most practitioners wouldn't know what to do with the information.

The TSH assay gives incomplete information and is prone to unreliable values.

T4 is a **pre-hormone** with little genomic effect. The 19th-and-20th-century focus on the thyroid gland only - its ability to produce T4 - is no longer adequate.

Alan McDaniel, MD

Diagnose and Treat Hypothyroidism in 2021: *New Endocrinology (Townsend Letter, May 2021, Issue 454, pp 44 - 49; June 2021, Issue 455, pp 43 - 49)*

If your practitioner will not order the tests you want, I can facilitate it. Send me an email: SupplementalWellness4U@gmail.com

*
**
*

poor diet, inflammation in the gut, many different prescription medications, mineral deficiencies especially selenium and zinc, antibiotic use and a new item that must be added to the list is rancid industrial seed oils. They virtually destroy normal metabolic function.

In addition, Dr McDaniel states “adverse chemicals (perchlorates, thiocyanates) worsen the problem.” A version of perchlorate is a dry cleaning chemical and perchlorate is used to control static electricity in food packaging. (Yikes! Those darn plastics.) Glycosinolates are naturally occurring thioglycosides that are found in cruciferous vegetables of the Brassica family, including cabbage, bamboo shoots, kale, sprouts, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, turnips, and mustard greens. All of these so-called healthy vegetables have a real dark side and are referred to generally as goitrogens. A goiter is an enlarged, dysfunctional thyroid gland. This happens when iodine is lacking or blocked by goitrogenic foods. Check out this graphic. Eating too much of any of these can block iodine

availability and destroy your natural thyroid function. Not kidding. The food items with the * means they are high in goitrogens.

Iodine deficiency is a classic cause of hypothyroidism. French chemist Adolphe Chatin (1813–1901) was the first to propose that goiter might be caused by iodine deficiency. Iodine is a halogen. Do you remember the periodic table of elements? Bromine, chlorine and flourine (fluoride) are strong halogens and can displace iodine in the body. Chlorine and fluoride are in our water and many food products. Iodine has been taken out of the food preparation process and has been replaced by bromine. It’s a long, complicated story, but now, nearly all flour is brominated. Anything like bread, bagels, pastries, etc. contain bromine. All of these halogens compete with iodine. Many people have a relative iodine deficiency. Combining that with a lot of goitrogenic foods in your diet is a recipe for disaster. Testing for iodine deficiency is not done in part because it is challenging. So, it’s ignored.

Foods to Avoid/Reduce for Optimal Thyroid Health

Goitrogenic Foods

Foods rich in sulfur are generally goitrogenic.

Vegetables	
Arugula	Kohlrabi
Broccoli*	Leeks
Brussels Sprouts*	Mustard Greens*
Cabbage*	Okra
Cassava Root	Radish*
Cauliflower*	Spinach
Collard Greens*	Squash
Eggplant	Sweet Potato
Horseradish	Tomato
Kale*	Turnips*

Fruits
Figs*
Grapes
Peaches
Pears
Plums
Strawberries
Nuts
Almonds*/Cashews
Peanuts*/Pine Nuts*
Walnuts

Seeds
Flaxseeds*
Hemp
Millet*
Pumpkin Seeds
Beans/Grains
Garbanzo Beans*
Soy Beans*
Wheat*/Kamut
Barley*/Spelt
Bulgur/Rye*

JeevaLifestyle.com
* high on goitrogen

Is there a natural way to fix my thyroid?

Traditional medicine (if they do ever diagnose it) says no. You're stuck with it. Here's your prescription (which will likely be inadequate). We will watch it and retest in 6 months. There are so many people who stuck in this terrible situation.

I ran across a series of books by Benedicte Mai Lerche MSc PhD, as I mentioned earlier. She fixed her hypothyroid state, which began with black mold exposure. She used the Dr Ray Peat philosophy of metabolic and hormonal regeneration. It's a good read. I have changed my approach to diet and supplements based on her work and experience.

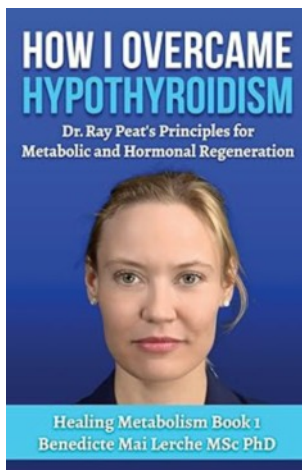
What does she recommend? Many of the basics that I teach in our Nutrition Workshops: healthy fats, clean carbs, high quality protein. In addition to dietary changes, clean up your environment: decrease plastics, consume clean water, mitigate EMF exposure, and the list goes on.

Since I have incorporated those changes, I have lowered my daily thyroid medicine dose. I do still take desiccated thyroid medicine daily, along with iodine supplementation, in addition to my other regular supplements. I still have health challenges, but overall, I'm better.

All three of her books are available on Amazon. If you're new in your thyroid journey, her books would be helpful.

What does the research say about foods that are safe for people who have thyroid disease and what about the Herbalife products? What food is safe for people with thyroid disease? There are no blanket restrictions, just be cautious with the goitergenic foods previously discussed.

As for the Herbalife products, our Cellular Nutrition Products are Formula 1 Healthy Meal shake, Formula 2 Multivitamin Complex and Formula 3 Cell Activator. I was introduced to Herbalife at the end of 1995. I was not yet being treated for my hypothyroid symptoms. While medicine wasn't yet using these terms yet, today I would be diagnosed with "chronic fatigue syndrome" and "fibromyalgia." I felt terrible and had muscle aches and pain all the time. I slept constantly but never felt refreshed. I had about four functional hours each day. Otherwise I was in bed or on the couch. One of the things I often said was, "I am so sick."



My Herbalife kit arrived and initially, I made my shakes in full-fat cow's milk. I loved the taste and the products literally changed my life. Within just 24 hours, I felt better than I had in years in spite of taking lots of other supplements. Many of my symptoms just melted away. That was a clear sign to me that not all supplements are created equal.

I've learned a lot about this condition that is called fibromyalgia. In my personal and professional experience, fibromyalgia is either a dietary deficiency and/or a T3 deficiency. At that time, I had both. I corrected the majority of my dietary deficiencies with the core Herbalife products.

Formula 2 Multivitamin is a broad spectrum vitamin/ mineral product. In addition to selenium 17 mcg and zinc 5 mg, each tablet also contains 50 micrograms of iodine. If you have a lot of symptoms of hypothyroidism, you would do well to find a practitioner who can guide you to an iodine supplement. My doc, Dr Brownstein, has me taking 12.5 milligrams every day. In addition to thyroid health, iodine is also very important for breast and prostate health. Our Formula 2 Multi also has lots of other micronutrients that are missing from the diet of the average American. I've compared multivitamins over the years, and Formula 2 always comes out great. I was taking multivitamins when Herbalife found me. They did not make any difference in my overall health.



Formula 3 Cell Activator is an often overlooked product. The Herbalife website says, "Formula 3 Cell Activator® provides mitochondrial and nutrient absorption support with alpha-lipoic acid. Mitochondria are known as the "powerhouse" of the cell and produce energy for numerous biological processes." You want to make sure your mitochondria are healthy! And what's that about absorption? This product is formulated with aloe so it will help to heal your gut and allow you to absorb nutrients more effectively. I believe that this product was a key piece for helping me actually absorb the nutrition I was eating.



* *
*

Now let's circle back to Formula 1 Healthy Meal and get into the topic of soy protein. You saw that vegetables and fruits can contain substances called goitrogens. Notice that some nuts, seeds, grains and beans also contain significant goitrogen. Soy is one of those beans and always gets blamed for being high in goitrogens. What they don't tell you is that if you ferment soy - make it into miso, tempeh, tamari, or natto - the fermentation process inactivates the goitrogens. Some tofu is fermented, others are not. You will have to read the label. Also, you can REMOVE the goitrogens and you end up with isolated soy protein. That is exactly what Herbalife uses as the base for most of our Formula 1 Healthy Meal shakes. Isolated soy protein - no goitrogens. But what are you mixing it with??



I had been using the Herbalife products for about eight years. About that time, I was introduced to Silk soy milk. Hey, how about that? The Herbalife shakes are soy based. This is soy milk. I'll try that! I loved it, and then about 3 days later, I found myself on the couch wondering what the heck happened! Was I coming down with something? I better drink more shakes! Oh, no! That made me feel even worse! Then it finally clicked. Adding the soy milk was the only thing that changed. I got rid of ALL soy for a couple of days and felt better immediately. I started adding back the shakes made in cow's milk. No problem. Switch to back to using soy milk? Big Problem!



These days we encourage folks to use Protein Drink Mix (PDM) as the "milk" in shakes. Tastes great, 15 grams of isolated soy protein, 52 mcg iodine, 25 mcg of selenium and 5.3 mg of zinc. Formula 1 Healthy Meal has 9 grams of isolated soy protein, no iodine, but it does have 10 mcg of selenium, and 3.3 mg of zinc.

Back in the 1990's, I knew so little about health and nutrition. I got very little nutrition education in nursing school and the Internet had not yet been invented. Yes, young people, we had to go to the library to do research!!

Unfortunately, the information available on soy is still very confusing. I surveyed about a dozen different websites and articles. Some of the articles would be considered "scholarly" in some circles. Here's a reminder that you can't always believe what you find on the Internet!! And now we have AI to "help" us. Here's the "help" I just got a minute ago. I did a search on soy and goitrogens. One of the options was "Does soy mess with your thyroid?" The answer? "While moderate soy consumption is generally considered safe for most individuals, including those with thyroid conditions, excessive soy intake can potentially impact thyroid hormone levels and interfere with thyroid medication absorption."

Once again - **there was NO differentiation between whole soy, fermented soy and isolated soy protein. None.** It leaves people with the impression that *all* soy acts the same in the body, and nothing could be further from the truth. Whole soy beans have goitrogens. This would include soy milk as I experienced, texturized vegetable protein and edemame. All of the soy-based Herbalife shakes use isolated soy protein. No goitrogens. Our shake products - NO goitrogens. Our shakes are fine!

(Take a deep breath, Cheryl)

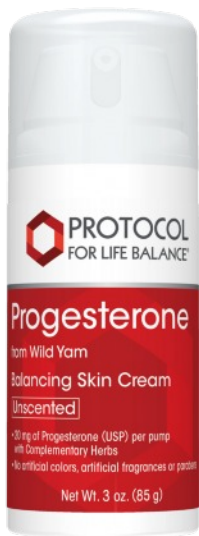


Speaking of fine, have you met Schizandra? It is a fine product indeed. Selenium is singled out as an important micronutrient for those of us with thyroid disease. Do you take Schizandra Plus? The "Plus" is selenium! Each tablet contains 35 mcg. Schizandra is known in traditional medicine as an adaptogen. Adaptogens are compounds that are believed to help the body adapt to physical, emotional, and environmental stressors, supporting sustained energy levels and stress resilience. The schizandra berries act as a powerful antioxidant. Even if you can't pronounce it, it's a great product!

Okay, you might be thinking, "how much is too much?" Dr Google says that the Tolerable Upper Intake Level for selenium is 400 mcg per day. However, the Merck Manual (a medical school bible of sorts) says more than 900 mcg per day can be a problem. Here's another problem! Who do you believe? I just know that I've been taking all of these Herbalife products for almost 30 years, I feel good, don't look (or act) my age and can't image my life without them. Let me know how I can help!

The Problem With Pain Part 4: Natural Progesterone

If you remember my last Success Forum, I talked about the pain in my hands and how getting back to my 6 capsules a day of our Herbalifeline fish oil helped a great deal. And I mean probably a 50% reduction in pain. Then I saw Dr Brownstein in the middle of July for something else but said, “What do you know about hand pain, especially right here?” I pointed to the base of my right thumb. He shrugged and said, “Woman thumb.” I was like “What?? Woman thumb??” He chuckled and said, “That’s just what I call it.” He sees a lot of post-menopausal women in his practice and this “woman thumb” thing comes up a lot. He recommended topical natural progesterone.



I no longer use traditional bio-identical replacement hormones. I took myself off that stuff almost two years ago. All that estrogen was making me nervous. I use a hormone precursor for a little gentle support. I am in my 70’s and don’t need the estrogen levels of a teenager. Dr B said that a lot of typical aches and pains that get written off as old-age or arthritis and are actually just a local lack of hormones. I said that I would give it a try.

I bought the product his office carries, but I also just started carrying the product you see to the left. I started playing with them. Sure enough! Within a week, my hands were better again. I’m not 100%, but between the fish oil and this, I’m about 85% back to what I would consider normal.

If it worked on my hands, what about that pesky elbow that’s been bothering me? Sure enough, a couple of days and that was feeling better as well. Want to give it a try? This is a bioidentical product made from wild yams. Progesterone is definitely the safest of all hormones - and just might help you sleep better. \$20. Shoot me an email!

Can’t find that Success Forum you thought you saved? No worries!!
The past two years worth of Success Forum’s are now online!!
Log on here, and feel free to share with a friend or downline:

www.SupplementalWellness.com/learning

Nicotine update! I was listening to another Dr Bryan Ardis podcast the other day. He’s the one who introduced me to the idea of using nicotine for pain relief. I do continue to use nicotine patches intermittently for oxalate dumping pain challenges. Dr Ardis talked about his favorite patch, as seen here. They make a clear patch, but also this fabric one. I have some challenges with the adhesive. These fabric patches are very different and I like them a lot more. I got them on Amazon. Look for Tolevita.



Michael had this weird growth on his side, just above his belt line. It was poking out about ¼ inch and became very painful to touch. Even wearing a shirt was painful from the fabric rubbing on it. I said, “Let’s try a nicotine patch to see if it will go away.” Guess what! It’s been a couple of weeks but it’s about a quarter of the size of what it was originally and NO pain!! Amazing.

Give nicotine patches a try for whatever ails you. For my original article, look on my website for this Success Forum issue: www.SupplementalWellness.com/learning then look for Best Defense / NRG Select / Pain: Nicotine 2025