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**THE HEDON GROUP PRACTICE**



***Further help and  
information:***

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*At*

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*And*

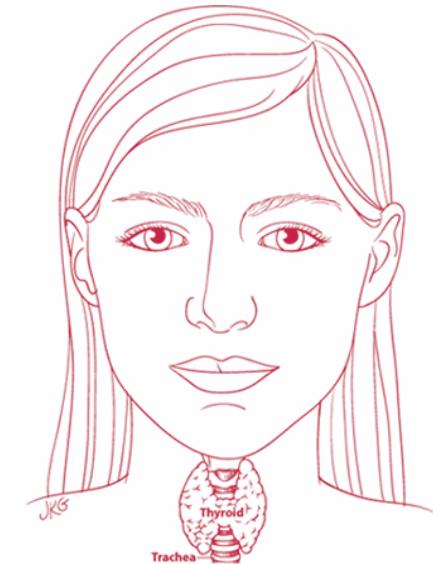
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THE HEDON GROUP PRACTICE

*A BRIEF GUIDE TO*

**HYPOTHYROIDISM**



*This leaflet has been produced  
for the patients of The Hedon  
Group Practice*

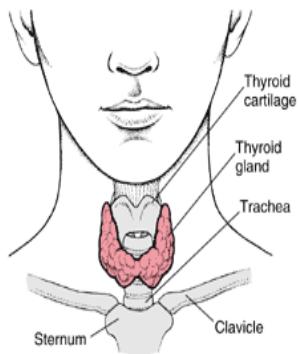


## What is Hypothyroidism?

Hypothyroidism means a reduced level of thyroid hormone. This can cause various symptoms. Treatment is usually easy and effective.

Hypothyroidism is also known as an underactive thyroid.

It occurs when the thyroid gland does not make enough thyroxine. This causes many of the body's functions to slow down (in contrast, if you have hyperthyroidism, you make too much thyroxine. This causes many of the body's functions to speed up).



### How is Hypothyroidism diagnosed?

A blood test can diagnose hypothyroidism. A normal blood test will also rule it out if symptoms suggest that it may be a possible diagnosis.

### Who gets Hypothyroidism?

About 1 in 50 women and about 1 in 1000 men develop hypothyroidism at some time in their life.

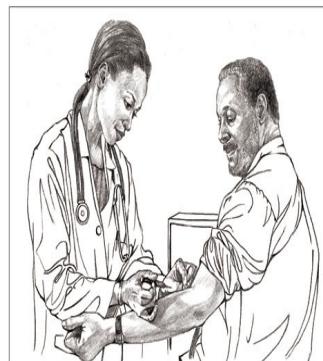
It most commonly develops in adult women, and becomes more common with increasing age. However, it can occur at any age and can affect anyone.

### How is hypothyroidism treated?

Treatment involves taking medication to replace the deficient thyroid hormone.

This medication requires regular monitoring with a blood test, so that treatment can be adjusted to suit each individual.

When **starting** treatment your Doctor will advise you when to have the first blood test (usually 8 weeks after starting treatment). Following this you will be advised of any changes in treatment (usually by a member of the Dispensary staff), and when to have your next blood test



**If no change in treatment is required** you will need a blood test only **once a year**. It is important to have this regular check, as occasionally your medication may need adjustment.

If you are having regular blood tests for any

other reason (e.g. high blood pressure, angina, diabetes), your thyroid check can be done at the same time to avoid unnecessary blood tests. Please mention this to the Nurse before she takes your blood test.

You may find it useful to keep this information, and make a note of when your next test is due, below.

DATE	NEXT TEST DUE

### Free Prescriptions

If you have hypothyroidism you are entitled to free prescriptions. This is for all your medications, whether related to the hypothyroidism or not. Ask your pharmacist for details and for a form to fill in to claim this benefit.

### In Summary

- Hypothyroidism is common.
- Symptoms develop gradually. They may be confused with other conditions.
- Treatment with thyroxine tablets is usually easy and effective.
- Treatment is usually for life.