



Thinking About Your Thyroid

Get to Know This Small but Mighty Gland

You've probably heard of the thyroid gland, but do you know what it does? You might not give it a second thought unless something goes wrong. Thyroid trouble can cause a range of seemingly unrelated problems, including drastic changes to your weight, energy, digestion, or mood. Learn to recognize signs of thyroid disorder, so you can get treatment if needed.

The thyroid is a small but powerful butterfly-shaped gland located at the front of your neck. It controls many of your body's most important functions. The thyroid gland makes hormones that affect your breathing, heart rate, digestion, and body temperature. These systems speed up as thyroid hormone levels rise. But problems occur if the thyroid makes too much hormone or not enough.

Nearly 1 in 20 Americans ages 12 and older has an under-active thyroid, or hypothyroidism. When thyroid glands don't produce enough hormones, many body functions slow down. A smaller number of people—about 1 in 100—has an over-active thyroid, called hyperthyroidism. Their thyroids release too much hormone. Thyroid problems are most likely to occur in women or in people over age 60. Having a family history of thyroid disorders also increases the risk.

Thyroid problems are often caused by autoimmune disorders, in which the immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys the body's own cells. For example, an autoimmune disorder called **Graves' disease** can cause the thyroid to be over-active, while one called **Hashimoto's disease** can make the thyroid under-active. Thyroid disorders can be hard to diagnose, because the symptoms are similar to other conditions. "Hypothyroidism can be very subtle," says NIH's Dr. Monica Skarulis, an expert on the thyroid. If a thyroid disorder is suspected—maybe because of a weight change or fatigue—blood tests can help to confirm the diagnosis and find its cause. Patients with under-active thyroids can be treated with artificial thyroid hormones. Over-active thyroids are often treated with medications that reduce hormone levels.

During pregnancy, thyroid hormones can affect the health of both the mother and the developing baby. Thyroid hormone levels sometimes need to be carefully monitored and adjusted, even if the expectant mother never had thyroid problems before. After pregnancy, some women have abnormal levels of thyroid hormone for a year or more. The thyroid gland also can be affected by cancer. Thyroid cancer usually has no symptoms. It's sometimes first noticed as a lump in the neck—although such bumps are more likely to be harmless nodules.

"Thyroid nodules are extremely common, whereas thyroid cancer is pretty rare," Skarulis says. A doctor can determine if a nodule is cancerous by removing and examining a tiny piece of it. If it shows signs of cancer, the nodule or even the entire thyroid will be removed. If you notice signs of thyroid disease, talk with a health professional. Based on your family history, symptoms, and medical exam, your provider can help you decide if further testing or treatment is needed.

(www.newsinhealth.nih.gov/issue/sep2015/feature2)

Chinese New Year 2016,
Red Fire Monkey



Symptoms of Thyroid Disorder

Hypothyroidism:

- Fatigue
- Depression
- Joint and muscle pain
- Cold intolerance
- Slowed heart rate
- Constipation
- Weight gain

Hyperthyroidism:

- Fatigue
- Nervousness or irritability
- Trouble sleeping
- Muscle weakness
- Heat intolerance or increased sweating
- Rapid and irregular heart-beat
- Frequent bowel movements or diarrhea

Fresh
start!

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MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES TO HELP PREVENT BIRTH DEFECTS

Make a PACT for Prevention

PLAN AHEAD



Get as healthy as you can before you get pregnant



Get 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day



AVOID HARMFUL SUBSTANCES



Avoid smoking



Avoid drinking alcohol



Be careful with harmful exposures at work and home



CHOOSE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



Eat a healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, and lean proteins



Be physically active



Work to get medical conditions like diabetes under control



TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER



Get a medical checkup



Discuss all medications, both prescription and over-the-counter



Talk about your family history



Making a PACT to get healthy before and during pregnancy can help you have a healthy baby.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information, please visit
www.cdc.gov/nceh/dtd/birthdefects/prevention.html
and www.cdc.gov/preconception/showyourlove

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Making Healthy Choices to Help Prevent Birth Defects

Planning ahead encourages women and men to focus on their preconception health, which refers to health during the years they can have a baby. Preconception health involves taking steps now to protect the health of a baby they might have sometime in the future. All women and men can benefit from preconception health, whether or not they plan to have a baby one day. Preconception health is about getting and staying healthy overall, throughout their lives. In addition, no one expects an unplanned pregnancy, half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned. Planning ahead involves taking control, setting goals for the future, choosing healthy habits, and taking the steps needed to get there.

Key Messages:

- Folic Acid:** Folate (folic acid) is a B vitamin that can help prevent major birth defects of the brain and spine. It is important for all women to get 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day. For folic acid to help prevent some major birth defects, a woman needs to start taking it at least one month before she becomes pregnant and while she is pregnant. Every woman needs folic acid every day, whether she's planning to get pregnant or not, for the healthy new cells the body makes daily. There are a couple of easy ways to get folic acid: take a vitamin daily with folic acid in it (such as a women's multivitamin or pre-natal vitamin) and eat foods that have added folic acid, like breakfast cereal. It is also important to eat a diet rich in natural folate, like dark leafy greens, beans, and peanuts.

- Medical checkup:** Get a medical checkup at least once per year. If you have any medical conditions, such as weight control or diabetes, be sure they are in control and being treated. Discuss any medications, both over-the-counter and prescription, with your healthcare provider and make sure you are taking only those that are necessary.

- Family planning:** Use birth control and make a plan for having children – or not having children! This is especially important if you are taking certain medications or using other substances, including alcohol, that increase the risk for birth defects.



A positive lifestyle change is another step in making Florida the Healthiest State in the Nation.



Eat Smart, Move More... Maintain, don't gain!



Eat Breakfast!

By eating breakfast we provide our bodies with proper nutrients and energy to perform at our peak throughout the day. Breakfast lowers risk for diseases, gets you moving, and keeps you focused. It also balances your blood sugar (glucose), which affects your metabolism. This week, the goal is to become better breakfast eaters. If you do not currently eat breakfast, your goal is to eat breakfast at least three times this week. If you are currently a breakfast eater, your goal is to make sure it is balanced breakfast.

Follow these tips for a balanced breakfast:

- Start small and light. Use foods that pack a good punch of nutrients. Items such as a hard-boiled egg, nuts, and whole grains are all good choices.
- Include Protein. Protein is important to keep you satisfied and focused. Eggs or low-fat dairy products are a quick options to get protein into your morning routine.
- Break it up. If you are busy or not hungry in the mornings, break up your breakfast. Grab a banana in the morning and then bring oatmeal with you to eat once you arrive at work. This is about taking small steps.
- Think outside the box. Have you ever had a "nontraditional" food item for breakfast? Eat foods that are appealing to you and easy to pull together. A sandwich or leftovers from the night before can be considered "breakfast".
- Prepare in advance. Hectic mornings? Prep your breakfast the night before so you can grab and go. Try overnight oats or prepare a smoothie and stick it in the fridge to blend in the morning.



Happy New Year 2016!

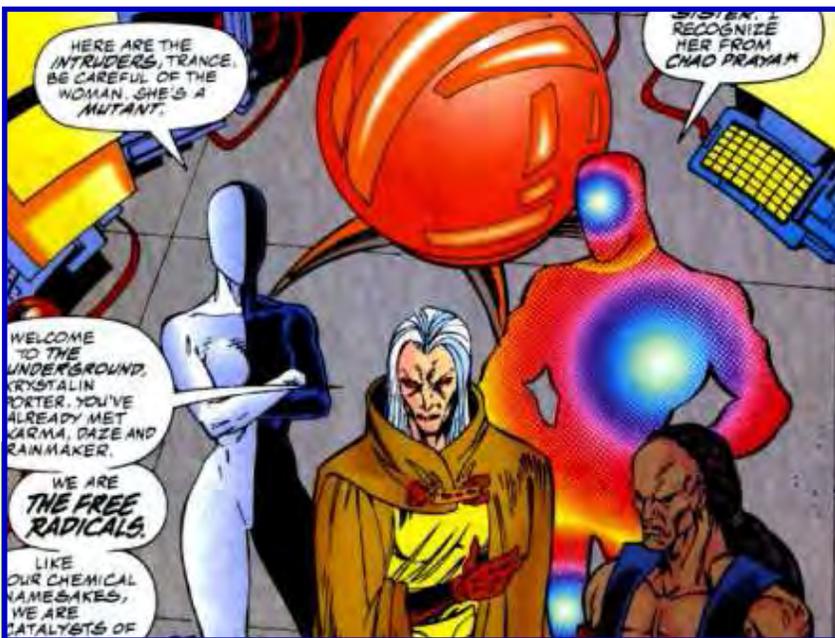


New Year's Eve and New Year's Day has always been a favorite time of the year for me. Besides celebrating with family and friends, it's a time to reflect on the past year, on the good times and the bad. Some years have been so rotten you just can't wait for them to be done! Good bye and good riddance! It's also a good time to plan ahead, welcome new beginnings what ever they might be. It's a good time to improve on yourself, make a change.

My recommendation this year is for each and every one of us to make a promise of improving our health. Don't over promise. Small goals. You can write it on a note and have it where you can see it every day if you like, or not. Choose one very specific goal for your health. For example, make a promise to yourself to exercise 30 minutes five times a week. You don't have to start off with that, it could be 10 minutes of walking (anywhere) three times a week and gradually add to it. Don't stress over it, just little by little. This applies to any goal, as they say: "Many small steps lead to a big goal." Small goals are easier to achieve. If you hit a bump in the road, just keep on going. One foot in front of the other!

**Every Body
WALK!**





What are Free Radicals?



About Free Radicals, Oxidative Stress and Antioxidants

Free radicals are highly unstable molecules that are naturally formed when you exercise and when your body converts food into energy. Your body can also be exposed to free radicals from a variety of environmental sources, such as cigarette smoke, air pollution, and sunlight. Free radicals can cause “oxidative stress,” a process that can trigger cell damage. Oxidative stress is thought to play a role in a variety of diseases including cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and eye diseases such as cataracts and age-related macular degeneration.

Antioxidant molecules have been shown to counteract oxidative stress in laboratory experiments (for example, in cells or animal studies). However, there is debate as to whether consuming large amounts of antioxidants in supplement form actually benefits health. There is also some concern that consuming antioxidant supplements in excessive doses may be harmful.

Vegetables and fruits are healthy foods and rich sources of antioxidants. Official U.S. Government policy urges people to eat more vegetables and fruits. Concerns have not been raised about the safety of any amounts of antioxidants in food. For more information on antioxidants in foods, visit the U.S. Department of Agriculture Web page on antioxidants and phytonutrients. *To read the full article go to: <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/antioxidants/introduction.htm>*



Healthy Eats

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1/2 small red onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup drained, rinsed canned black beans, preferably low-sodium
- 1/4 teaspoon chili flakes
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 eggs and 4 egg whites
- 1/3 cup (about 1 1/2-ounce) shredded pepper Jack cheese
- Cooking spray
- 4 (10-inch) whole-wheat tortillas (burrito-size)
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/4 cup salsa
- 1 large tomato, (4 ounces) seeded and diced
- 1 small avocado (4 ounces), cubed

Hot sauce



Good-for-You Breakfast Burrito

Directions:

Heat the canola oil in a large nonstick skillet over a medium-high heat. Cook the onions and peppers until onions are softened and peppers are slightly charred, about 8 minutes. Add black beans and red pepper flakes and cook until warmed through, another 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and transfer to a dish.

Whisk together the eggs and egg whites then stir in the cheese. Spray the skillet with cooking spray, and reheat the skillet over a medium heat. Reduce heat to low and add eggs, scrambling until cooked through, about 3 minutes. Spread each tortilla with 1 tablespoon each sour cream and salsa, then layer with 1/4 of the black bean mixture, 1/4 of the scrambled eggs, some diced tomato and 1/4 of the avocado. Season, to taste, with hot sauce. Roll up burrito-style and serve.

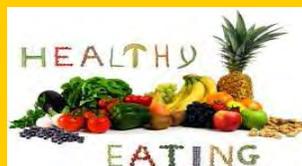
Per Serving: Calories 460; Total Fat 20 g; (Sat Fat 6 g, Mono Fat 4 g, Poly Fat 1 g); Protein 23 g; Carb 51 g; Fiber 12 g; Cholesterol 235 mg; Sodium 860 mg.

Excellent source of: Protein, Fiber, Vitamin A, Vitamin C.

Good source of: Riboflavin, Vitamin B6, Folate, Vitamin K, Calcium, Iodine, Iron, Potassium, Selenium. 2008, Ellie Krieger, All Rights Reserved

What's in Season?

Avocado, Bell Pepper, Carambola (star fruit), Cucumber, Eggplant, Grapefruit, Guava, Mushroom, Orange, Passion Fruit, Peanuts, Radish, Snap Bean, Squash, Sweet Corn, Tangerine, Tomato, Cabbage, Lettuce, Strawberries, Cauliflower and Celery.



Our Person of Change: Paula K. Averill

How simple changes can make a BIG difference!



Recently, I was asked to share how I lost thirty-two pounds. First, a little history about me. I have been overweight my entire adult life. Approximately five years ago, I had lap band surgery. Following that surgery, I lost eighty pounds. Though I did not gain the weight back, the weight loss stopped. I was stuck in a plateau. I decided as I wanted to lose more weight. I had to make some changes.

At the end of April, my sister Maggie and I decided to make a contest of our weight-loss goals. We helped each other. We both changed our eating habits. The changes were really simple to follow and what most people already know: "Eat healthy and watch your portion sizes." Eating healthy is a balanced diet of ALL the food groups following to the nutritional pyramid guide, including recommended portion size. I eat three fruit portions and four vegetable portions every day. I have two proteins (white meat chicken or turkey, seafood, and/or eggs) each day. I used one teaspoon of butter or mayonnaise daily. I increased the amount of water I drink to at least 80 ounces daily. If I eat red meat, I limit it to two times per week – never two days in a row. I eat no more than two very thin slices of bread (40 cal. per slice) per day. Every morning I start my day with a protein drink (I also take a multi-vitamin and an Omega 3 oil supplement). During the contest, I did not eat any pasta, rice, or cereal. That was hard as I love carbohydrates, but I managed to lose those 32 pounds in three 3 months. To help me stay on track, I searched for healthy recipes and/or got creative and altered recipes. When I wandered off course, and I did, I immediately went right back to eating correctly. I did not let that stop my weight loss progress.

When my father died last year, I inherited his (over-weight) dog Deezill. I walk him every day. That helped him lose weight too, he went from 44 to 23 pounds! I have taken advantage of the DOH–Broward sponsored exercise classes; Zumba, Yoga, and Line-Dancing. I really enjoy those activities and would like to see them offered more often. Our little support group, my sister Maggie and my dog Deezill, we keep on our program of a healthy diet and increased exercise and little by little it's adding up to making a big difference in all of our lives.

Thanks Paula, for sharing your story with us and inspiring all of us to make changes in our lifestyle for better health.

WELLNESS TUESDAY

Employee **YOGA**

Tuesday's at 12.15-12.45PM Admin Auditorium.
Starting January 5th through February 23rd, 2016.



DOH-Broward Employee Wellness



The Walking Club,
meets at noon in front of
the Administration Building every
Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
Mark your calendars!

Please consult your
healthcare provider before
starting any diet or exercise
program.



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