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## Nutrition in Hyperthyroidism

Hyperthyroidism is the term for overactive tissue within the thyroid gland causing an overproduction of thyroid hormones- thyroxine or "T4" and/or triiodothyronine or "T3". Thyroid hormone functions as a controller of the pace of all of the processes in the body. This pace is called metabolism. If there is too much of thyroid hormone, every function of the body tends to speed up.

It is therefore not surprising that some of the **symptoms** of hyperthyroidism are weight loss often accompanied by an increased appetite, nervousness, anxiety, irritability, increased perspiration, intolerance to heat, fatigue, hyperactivity, difficulty in sleeping, thinning of the skin, hair loss, fine brittle hair and muscular weakness especially in the upper arms and thighs.

Similarly, reduction in thyroid hormone production by the thyroid gland leads to hypothyroidism. Hyperthyroidism often eventually leads to hypothyroidism.





## Nutrition Management in Hyperthyroidism

- Consumption of foods such as broccoli, sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, spinach, turnips, peaches, pears, almonds and walnuts can naturally help suppress thyroid hormone production.
- Avoid smoking, alcohol consumption and caffeine found in tea, coffee, aerated drinks, cola and chocolate.

### Proximate Principles

A liberal diet providing adequate amount of calories, protein, vitamins and minerals is necessary as patients with hyperthyroidism can otherwise be prone to severe malnutrition because of higher than normal basal metabolic rate.

**Carbohydrates:** Emphasis should be placed on including complex carbohydrates such as wheat, jowar, bajra, nachni, oats, barley, brown rice which are high in dietary fiber rather than simple sugars.

**Protein:** Increase the intake of good quality protein in your diet by consuming egg, fish, chicken and cereal pulse combination.

**Fats:** It is also important to check the quality of fat in your diet. Fats should be of plant origin like soya oil, groundnut oil, sunflower oil and corn oil. Fat from animal origin such as ghee, butter, lard and hydrogenated oils should be restricted.

**Vitamins and Minerals:** The diet should also be rich in Vitamin A, B complex and C. The consumption of these vitamins should be twice as much as the recommended daily allowance. Pulse and wheat sprouts will enhance the B complex vitamins. Carotene rich foods like papaya, mango and fenhugreek leaves will ensure the vitamin A supplementation as carotene is converted to vitamin A in the body. Calcium and phosphorus excretion in urine is increased in hyperthyroidism. Therefore calcium and phosphorus-rich food like milk and milk products, dark green leafy vegetables, ragi must be a part of the diet every day. Ragi and milk preparation are an excellent source of calcium and phosphorus. Fish is also a good source of calcium.