Your thyroid is a small gland located in the neck and plays a big role in regulating metabolism, the process that converts what you eat and drink to energy.

Hypothyroidism means the thyroid is underacting and doesn’t produce enough hormones to maintain the metabolism process. Too little thyroid hormone can also mean too much bad fat, or LDL cholesterol, in your bloodstream. The thyroid hormone helps the liver break down the cholesterol circulating in your blood and stimulates other enzymes needed to get rid of the bad fat (Everyday Health 2014). Hypothyroidism is prevalent in both genders, but women, especially those older than age 60, are more likely to have it.

Symptoms and Treatment

Symptoms can include fatigue, unexplained weight gain, muscle weakness, aches, or tenderness, joint pain, elevated blood cholesterol, thinning hair, and slowed heart rate

Hypothyroidism can be treated and maintained with a synthetic thyroid hormone that is taken orally every single day to be affective. However instead of a pill regulator, exercising 30 minutes a day for 4-5 times a week can also improve the thyroid functioning.

A program of low-impact aerobic exercises and strength training is recommended to help regulate the body’s metabolism. Low-impact aerobics, such as, swimming, walking, and cycling, get your heart rate up and your lungs going without putting too much pressure on your joints, which is important because joint pain is another common hypothyroidism symptom. A stationary bicycle and a low-impact elliptical machine are good machine choices for a low-impact cardio workout, as long as there is no swelling in knees or ankles.

Also, Pilates or gentle yoga can improve core muscles and ease the back and hip pain that can be associated with hypothyroidism. People with hypothyroidism can also benefit from strength training — exercises such as lunges, leg raises, and push-ups or those involving weight-training machines. Strength training builds muscle mass, and muscle burns more calories than fat, even when you’re at rest. Building muscle can help counter possible weight gain from an underactive thyroid.

Hypothyroidism and Exercise

Darla Rosenbrock

What is it?

Exercising with Hypothyroidism

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