

Living With an Overactive Thyroid: Your Daily Guide

Medical-Surgical · Endocrine (Diabetes, Thyroid)

Hyperthyroidism means your thyroid gland makes too much thyroid hormone. This speeds up your body, so your heart races and you lose weight. These steps help keep you safe during treatment.

Take thyroid medicine safely

- Take methimazole or PTU every day as directed.
- **Fever, sore throat, or mouth sores: stop the medicine and call right away.** These are warning signs of low infection-fighting blood cells.
- Call for yellow skin or eyes, or dark urine.
- Pregnant or planning to be? Tell your provider at once.

Calm a racing heart

- A heart-rate pill (beta-blocker) slows a fast heartbeat and eases shaking.
- Do not stop it suddenly. Stand up slowly.
- Avoid coffee, energy drinks, and cold medicines for a stuffy nose.

After radioactive iodine

- Follow your written plan for ____ days.
- Stay at least 6 feet from others, and away from children and pregnant women.
- Sleep alone. Sit to urinate and flush twice.
- Wash your hands often. Do not share towels, cups, or utensils.
- Do not get pregnant for 6 months.

Protect your eyes

- Wear sunglasses outdoors. Use eye drops as directed.

- Raise the head of your bed at night.
- Stop smoking. It makes eye problems worse.

Eat well and rest

- Eat extra calories and protein. Have snacks between meals.
- Rest often. Keep your room cool.

Call your provider today if you have

- Fever, sore throat, or mouth sores while on methimazole or PTU: call right away
- Yellow skin or eyes, or dark urine
- A pounding or fast heartbeat
- Weight loss that continues, eye pain, or vision changes

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- A very high fever with a very fast heartbeat
- Confusion, extreme restlessness, or agitation
- Chest pain or fainting
- Severe vomiting or diarrhea with a racing heart

This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.

Online: nclexpace.com/patient-education/hyperthyroidism-self-care/patient

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