

MAKING SENSE OF THYROID TESTING

StoneTree Naturopathic Clinic, Collingwood, ON

Your thyroid is a small gland in your neck, but it's a big deal all over your body. The hormone it creates is responsible for some of the most basic functions and systems of your body. If your thyroid isn't working properly, you'll feel it.

Fatigue and weakness, dry skin, hair loss, cold hands and feet, constipation, insomnia, depression, forgetfulness, and unexplained weight gain – they're all possible signs of a thyroid problem.

Testing Thyroid Function

Thyroid function is usually measured by a blood test called TSH. The challenge is that TSH can often look normal, even when things aren't right.

The TSH test doesn't actually measure thyroid function. It measures *another* hormone that stimulates our thyroid to make *its* hormone.

Your thyroid actually makes two main hormones: T4 and T3. T3 is the active form, but T4 is the most commonly produced. T4's not active, but gets converted into the active form by our liver and kidneys.

What's critical is that this conversion is nutrient dependent – it requires things like iodine, zinc, and selenium. If we don't have enough of these nutrients, our body can't convert the T4 into the active form. The result? The test shows normal, but we still feel lousy.

Environmental toxins can also prevent the active T3 from actually getting into the cell and doing its job properly. Here again, the blood test can look normal even though things aren't working properly.

To get a more detailed picture of thyroid function, we look at TSH *and* T3/T4 levels, as well as other indicators like basal body temperature.

*To learn more, book a complimentary 15-minute visit with a naturopathic doctor in our Collingwood, ON clinic by calling 705-444-5331, or emailing us at feelbetter@stonetreeclinic.com
www.StoneTreeClinic.com*