

Thyroid Problems in Women

Thyroid illnesses are one of the top diseases of the decade. Evaluating your thyroid function to get to the bottom of potential problems is probably one of the most important things you can do for your body and your health. Kathryn Simpson, author of the book, *The Women's Guide to Thyroid Health*, explains that the thyroid affects everything from our basic emotional state, which keeps us from flying off the handle at the slightest little thing, to mental functions like being able to concentrate and remember things, to countless physical effects, from energy level to weight to immune function.

Take this simple semi-serious quiz:

1. You're convinced that winters have become much colder than they used to be, and the summers hotter!
2. The dryer has shrunk all of your clothes.
3. The ability to balance your checkbook is a thing of the past.
4. Your memory has given out. Post-it notes rule your life.
5. You're sure that everyone is out to get you or is trying to drive you crazy.
6. Everyone around you seems to have an attitude problem.
7. Your friends have started to roll their eyes whenever you start to say something.

8. You've revised your definition of a great night in bed to eight hours of medication-free sleep.
9. Your husband and children are suddenly agreeing to everything you say; or, alternatively, your husband and children have turned into complete idiots.
10. You don't care where your husband goes anymore (or with whom), just as long as you don't have to go with him.
11. You have stopped trying to hold your stomach in, no matter whom you run into.
12. You've given up every bad habit you used to have and you still don't feel well.
13. Almost everything hurts, and anything that doesn't hurt doesn't seem to work.

If you answered yes to even one of these questions, you've experienced firsthand how important a healthy thyroid is to a sound mind and body. Though there are many other possible explanations for any of these phenomena, all of them could be explained by thyroid dysfunction.

"The thyroid is a small crucial organ and when it stops acting properly you can experience any number of wake-up calls that should trigger further investigation", Simpson notes. Here is a list of problems you should look out for:

- Fatigue
- Hair Loss
- Weight gain
- Dry Skin and Hair
- Depression
- Mood Swings
- Brain Fog
- Muscle Stiffness
- Chronic Pain
- Insomnia
- Loss of Libido

An underactive thyroid can cause these and other issues. "The first thing you should do is consult with your general practitioner and get your thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) levels checked," she says, "especially if you suddenly gained or lost weight."

The Women's Guide to Thyroid Health explains how to develop and explore family health history, assess symptoms, and, along with their healthcare providers, create a personalized testing and treatment plan designed to restore healthy, balanced thyroid output. The book can help take the mystery out of interpreting test results, and is an easy to understand guide to options for hormone therapy medication, manage side effects, and discover simple nutrition and lifestyle strategies that can keep you looking and feeling well.

About the Author:

Kathryn R. Simpson, MS, was an executive in the biotech industry when she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Upon discovering that her symptoms were caused by multiple hormonal deficiencies, Simpson began conducting endocrine research. She discovered that resolving these hormonal deficiencies led to a complete resolution of all her symptoms.

Simpson is founder and director of The Hormone Resource Center, a specialty hormone clinic that treats hormone imbalance and diseases such as multiple sclerosis, lupus, and fibromyalgia. She is author of *The Perimenopause and Menopause Workbook* and *The MS Solution*.

The Women's Guide to Thyroid Health

By Kathryn R. Simpson, MS

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How to Survive a Hospital Stay

With the numbers of H1N1 (Swine Flu) and MRSA cases flooding emergency rooms all over the country, you'll want to do everything you can to prevent contracting those bugs and being subjected to fatal medical errors and infectious diseases if you have to go into the hospital. Martine Ehrenclou, author of the multiple award winning book, *Critical Conditions: The Essential Hospital Guide To Get Your Loved One Out Alive*, offers five life-saving tips to stay safe and free of disease if you have to be in the hospital. She offers these five tips.

If you're sick enough to be a patient in the hospital, then you certainly cannot oversee and monitor your own medical care while you are there. And monitoring your medications, treatments and procedures to prevent medical errors and diseases, has become essential. An average of 195,000 people in the US die each year due to medical errors in hospitals (for statistics, go to www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/11856.php).

1. How to choose the best advocate for you.

Your loved one who acts as your advocate will be your watchdog to oversee and monitor your medical care while you are a patient in the hospital. This person should have these qualities:

- ✓ proactive
- ✓ able to speak up and ask questions in a polite manner
- ✓ will get involved
- ✓ attentive to details
- ✓ organized
- ✓ willing to write things down
- ✓ willing to do some research

2. Patient Checklist.

Ask your advocate to create a patient checklist with your full name, birth date, list of medications and dosages, allergies to medications, current illnesses, current diagnosis,

dietary restrictions, primary physician's name and contact information.

This checklist will be placed in your chart and repeated by your advocate each time you are treated by a new medical professional or are transferred to another area of the hospital.

3. Notebook Notes. Ask your advocate to take notes in a notebook on your daily progress, conversations with physicians and primary nurses, medications, treatments and procedures. Notebook Notes will also include medical professionals' names and contact information.

4. Monitoring Your Medications. Medication errors injure 1.5 million people every year (for statistics, go to www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=11623).

Since medication mistakes are the most common medical errors, keeping track of all medications administered to you in the hospital is essential. Ask your advocate to keep an eye on any medication that looks new or different and to ask questions in a polite and respectful manner if something appears out of the ordinary. Repeating your allergies to medications upon entry into the operating room or when meeting a new nurse or physician may feel repetitive but is in fact an important part of keeping you safe and healthy.

Lists of medications and their dosages with descriptions of pills, medication bottles and labels, will be placed in Notebook Notes. Medication names can look alike and sound alike. Ask your advocate to be sure you are receiving the correct medication.

5. A Disease Free Hospital Stay.

Ask your advocate to make a request of everyone to wash their hands, including the doctors and nurses.

• A sign can be placed on the wall above your bed that asks everyone to wash his or her hands before touching you.

• A container of antibacterial gel can be placed on your bedside table for everyone to use if your hospital room isn't equipped with one.

• Ask your advocate to ask all the nurses and physicians to wash their hands and wear disposable gloves before touching the patient.

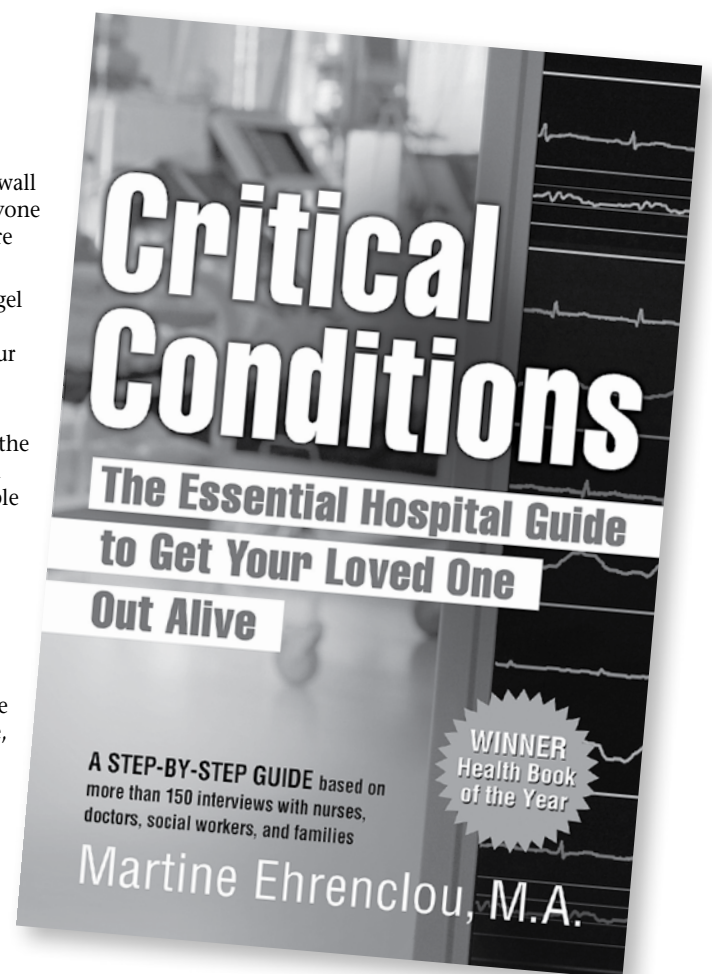
• Ask the physician to swap his/her stethoscope with an alcohol wipe before touching your loved one.

• Consider requesting a private room. If there is no roommate, you will have fewer people traveling into your hospital room and that translates to a lower probability of transferring infection.

• Ask your advocate to tell all your loved ones not to bring in their children. They could spread germs or leave with some.

About the Author:

Martine Ehrenclou, MA, is the author of the multiple award winning book, *Critical Conditions: The Essential Hospital Guide To Get Your Loved One Out Alive*. She is working on her next book on how to be a proactive patient. Visit her website at www.criticalconditions.com.



Critical Conditions: The Essential Hospital Guide To Get Your Loved One Out Alive

By Martine Ehrenclou, MA

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