# Table of Contents

Introduction 3

Chapter 1: The Thyroid: Master of your Metabolism 5

  How does the thyroid work? 6
  Thyroid Conditions 8
  Low Thyroid Function 11
  Blood Tests and Medication 14

Chapter 2: Where does it all go wrong? 19

  Underlying causes of low thyroid function 19
  Poor conversion of T4 to T3 19

  Heavy Metal Toxicity 20
    Liver and Gut Imbalance 20
    Adrenal Fatigue 23
    Oestrogen Dominance 26
    Sugar Imbalances 28
    Nutritional Deficiencies 29

Chapter 3: Nutrition

  Part 1: The Importance of Nutrition 31
  Part 2: The 5 rules 34
    RULE 1: Enjoy vegetables or fruit at each meal 36
    RULE 2: Eat protein at each meal 37
    RULE 3: Eat ‘good’ fats at each meal 39
    Rule 4: Enjoy ‘good’ carbs 1-2 times per day 43
    RULE 5: Have two free meals per week!! 45

  Part 3: Superfoods 46
Introduction

On some days do you feel that you’re doing all the right things but you still can’t lose weight. Are you feeling incredibly fatigued, tired, constipated, bloated, angry, sad, frustrated, even depressed?

Let me tell you it may not be your fault. Many people are suffering unnecessarily from low thyroid function and it can be ruining your life.

We live in a world of convenience and speed, and a result our food choices and lifestyles have changed considerably from 100 years ago. This has had many benefits for us, but there are also some downsides. One of the biggest downsides is the effect that it has had on our health. We are all aware that we are living in an age where obesity, heart disease, cancer and diabetes are at epidemic proportions, even with the help of advanced technology the incidence of these diseases is still growing.

Society has traditionally had one way of looking at weight loss. Reduce calories and exercise more. However, there are many underlying factors that this “traditional view” does not take into account. One factor is that our body is a very unique and intricate system, balanced by hormones and the health of our organs. Another factor is that all calories are not created equal!

The body’s thyroid, immune system, liver, digestive system and insulin levels all play a very important role in determining our weight, energy levels, mood and digestion. The unfortunate side effect of what is today considered a “healthy” diet is that many of these systems do not function optimally. This can mean that for a person on a weight loss program the very foods they are eating to try and lose weight are making it even harder for them to reach their goals. And to top it off they are left feeling tired, constipated, depressed and often feeling defeated. I know this was the vicious cycle that I was going through over and over.

I had put on a little weight so attempted to go on a calorie controlled program. I followed it to the letter. Using all the latest low calorie, artificially sweetened foods that are freely available. However after 4 weeks on the program, I lost 2 kg in the initial weeks then nothing after. So it was suggested that I lower my calorie intake further. I did, but I was already starting to feel pretty bad and after 4 weeks on this diet things just fell to pieces. I was absolutely ravenous all the time. I was so tired I had to stop exercising, I was suffering from headaches, and brain fog, I was feeling bloated and constipated and to top it all off I had gained back the 2kg and 1 more! So feeling completely depressed I went the opposite way and binged for several days. Then of course I gained even more weight and after each of these types of programs never quite got my health back to where it had been. But even after going through all that I continued to try various diets in hope that one would work, as this is what we are taught is the only thing that will get us to that fantastic looking body!

I’m sure that many of you would have had similar experiences making you feel less than ordinary.

This program is different. It is based on a completely balanced meal plan, with plenty of food to help you feel full and satisfied. All the meals are designed to be highly nutritious and specifically support the health of the thyroid and the body systems that are essential for full function of the thyroid organ and the function of thyroid hormones in the cells. By following this program you will improve your metabolism to help you to lose weight more easily, have abundant energy all day long, improve
digestion and reduce bloating as well as improving your mood, immune health and give you glowing skin.

The Thyroid Nutrition Plan is designed to support those with less than optimal thyroid function. With such a highly nutritious and healthy lifestyle it can be used by anyone and is certainly only going to be beneficial for both you and your family’s health.

This program is based on living in the real world! All the foods are available in your local supermarkets. The recipes are designed to be super easy, fresh, time efficient, healthy, delicious and with minimal cleanup.

Like you, I am incredibly busy. I’m a working mum with two little boys under 4. We have a very hectic schedule in our house and I just didn’t have the time to go to several different stores to get specialised health products. I needed something that would fit into my lifestyle. I also needed something that would satisfy my food cravings. Like most people I am really good some days and other days I’m terrible. That’s just life and that’s why I believe it’s important to follow the 80:20 rule in everything I do. I follow the program 80% of the time and then for 20% of the time, I have a free day or free meals. This means that you don’t constantly have to feel guilty, it’s just life and as this is not just a weight loss diet but a lifestyle plan, it means that it fits into your life.

Some similar health based plans require hours of preparation, cooking and cleaning up. Who has the time? With such a crazy schedule most of us don’t have the time or energy to be soaking beans, sprouting seeds, or making your own yoghurt! This plan is all about quick easy, time efficient ways to have a healthy lifestyle, a great body and amazing health.

The Thyroid Wellness Nutrition and Lifestyle Program will lay out for you a complete step by step plan that will help you to feel healthy, energised, balanced, trim and toned! The information is all here, all you need to do now is read through the information carefully and put it into practise! Good health.
Chapter 1

The Thyroid: The Master of your Metabolism.

The thyroid gland is located in the neck. It has two lobes, each about 4 to 6 cm long in the shape of a butterfly. It sits at the level of a man’s Adams apple. In most people, even those with low thyroid function, they are not visible. However it can become enlarged in some circumstances and is known as a goitre.

The thyroid is a gland that is part of the endocrine system. It is responsible for releasing hormones, as are all parts of the endocrine system. There is a very delicate balance between these systems and the hormones it produces.

The primary purpose of thyroid hormones is to balance our metabolism. Your body’s metabolism regulates how quickly your body uses the energy you have stored in your. When your metabolism is working properly, everything runs smoothly, and your body is functioning just the way Goldilocks found everything that belonged to Baby Bear. In other words, it isn’t too “hot”...working too hard and it isn’t too “cold”...not working hard enough.

Consequently, the thyroid gland influences just about everything in the human body. Thyroid hormone affect:

- Concentration
- Functionality of many different types of enzymes
- All aspects of the metabolism including: fats, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins
- The body’s utilisation of minerals
- The secretion and breakdown of all other hormones found in your body
- The response of tissues to these other hormones.
- The strength with which the heart contracts and the rhythm at which the heart beats.
- Lung and respiration. This is especially true when tissue/blood oxygen levels fall in a range that is below the optimal levels.
- They allow the bones to produce red blood cells when necessary. The stimulation of marrow in the bones also plays an important role in the regulating of bone synthesis.
- Cell turnover. This is vital for long term health and prevention of premature ageing.
There is not a tissue or organ in the body that isn’t affected by excess or insufficient amounts of thyroid hormones in the body. In other words, the thyroid is a small gland with a big responsibility. Though it may seem insignificant in size, optimal thyroid health is imperative to the human body.

How does our thyroid work?

The thyroid releases specific hormones when the pituitary gland (located in the brain) produces thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH). TSH is controlled by what the body feels it needs. For example, if body temperature drops, more TSH is produced to increase metabolism and in turn body temperature.

TSH communicates directly with the thyroid gland which then produces the thyroid hormones T4, T3, T2 and T1. T4 accounts for about 80% and is the least active form of thyroid hormone in terms of its effects on metabolism. T4 needs to be converted in the body, generally in the liver, to the most active form which is T3. T2 and T1 are only produced in small amounts and while they are believed to play a big part in metabolism they have not been well researched as they make up less than 4% of overall thyroid hormone.

Thyroid hormones are also responsible for assisting enzyme processes that allow our body and individual cells to absorb and utilise essential nutrients such as fats, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and electrolytes. The imbalance in electrolytes greatly increases fluid retention, a very common complaint in people with low thyroid function. However its main job is in energy production and a lack of energy is the number one sign of low thyroid function.

Thyroid hormones T1, T2, T3 and T4 are very similar in their structure, only differing in the number of iodine atoms attached. T4 or thyroxine has 4 iodine atoms, T3 or liothyronine has 3 iodine atoms, T2 or diiodothyronine with 2 iodine atoms and T1 or mono-iodothyronine with 1 iodine atom. So to produce thyroid hormones iodine is essential in the diet, however too much can be just as damaging (more to come on this). Tyrosine is another thyroid hormone. Tyrosine is an amino acid, found in proteins, so good quality proteins are also essential in the diet for good thyroid health and metabolism.

Once thyroid hormones are released into the blood stream they then need to be moved into the cells to help initiate and regulate energy production. This requires the body to have sufficient enzymes, nutrients and good detoxification capabilities. In the cells mitochondria work to produce energy for our bodies, but mitochondria require thyroid hormones to kick start and maintain the energy production. So, if we have good thyroid and mitochondria function we have improved energy, sleep, concentration, digestion, liver function, hormonal balance, ability to burn fat and build muscle, glowing, healthy skin and hair as well as improved immune response.

Although some medical communities believe low thyroid function affects only 5% of the population there is a great deal more research suggesting that low thyroid function affects almost 1 in 4 people and is the cause of many “undiagnosed” health complaints. The latest research is suggesting as many as 50 million Americans are currently suffering the effects of low thyroid function.

Until recently hypothyroidism was only diagnosed if TSH levels were 5 and over. Changes to the readings mean patients are now diagnosed and provided medication in the range of 2-3. This means thankfully that many more people who were previously told thyroid was not the cause of their
illness are finally getting proper treatment and recognition. Personally I have seen the best responses in symptoms when an individual’s TSH level is closest to 1. This level is now also being recommend by many other health professional.

**Thyroid Conditions**

As you have seen, though the thyroid may be small in comparison to other important parts of the body, it plays a big role in your body’s health. There are several different types of thyroid disorders. I’m only going to concentrate on the most common ones or this could take up at least three books. Let’s take a closer look at what they are and how they affect your body:

**Hypothyroidism**

This is where the thyroid gland is underactive. That is, it is not producing enough of the thyroid hormones to run the body’s metabolism.

The list of symptoms that can develop as a result is very long. Including:

- Fatigue
- Weight gain
- A puffy face
- Cold intolerance
- Joint and muscle pain
- Constipation
- Dry skin
- Dry, thinning hair
- Decreased sweating
- Heavy or irregular menstrual periods and impaired fertility
- Depression
- Slowed heart rate

Many people suffer from hypothyroidism without any known “cause” however these are the most common causes:

**Hashimoto’s disease**—This is now suspected as one of the most common causes of hypothyroidism, especially in younger women. Research suggests that as many as 90% of people with Hypothyroidism have Hashimoto’s autoimmune disease.
It is a form of chronic inflammation of the thyroid gland. This is an autoimmune disease. Normally the immune system helps protect the body against foreign attackers like bacteria or viruses that can cause illnesses. In autoimmune diseases, however, antibodies attack its cells and organs. This causes inflammation. When they do this, they destroy its ability to produce thyroid hormone.

**Thyroiditis**—This is an inflammation of the thyroid that causes stored thyroid hormones leak out of the thyroid gland. At first, it may cause hyperthyroidism due to raised hormone levels. After a month or two, however, most people develop hypothyroidism before the thyroid can heal. There are different kinds of thyroiditis:

- **Subacute**—Here you experience a sudden, painful form of thyroiditis without a known cause. The thyroid becomes enlarged. Experts aren’t sure what causes it. Possibly, it could be a viral or bacterial infection. Generally, the thyroid heals on its own after a few months. The thyroid may become underactive for a short time before it is able to return to normal size.

- **Postpartum**—This is found to affect women after pregnancy. This is generally short term and only lasts a month or two. However, the after effects can last for many months in an underactive state before it returns to normal, or stabilizes with medication in most women. (This may be one reason why women suffer from postnatal depression)

- **Silent**—It is called silent because it is painless, even if the thyroid is enlarged. This is non-pregnancy thyroiditis that works in a way that is similar to postpartum thyroiditis. The patient doesn’t develop a painful thyroid gland, but the thyroid produces too much hormone. It sometimes returns to normal, however, some people may then develop permanent hypothyroidism.

**Surgical removal of the thyroid**—Partial or full removal of the thyroid gland also creates hypothyroidism.

**Who is at risk for hypothyroidism?**
Hypothyroidism is much higher among women. If you suffer from any of the symptoms listed above, some further investigation would be worthwhile.
Hyperthyroidism

This occurs when your thyroid gland becomes overactive and produces too much thyroid hormone. It is sometimes called thyrotoxicosis, which simply means too much thyroid hormone in your blood. Your thyroid hormones circulate throughout your body. They act on almost every tissue and cell you have. When you have hyperthyroidism, it causes a lot of your body’s functions to speed up.

Symptoms of hyperthyroidism include:

- Nervousness or irritability
- Fatigue or muscle weakness
- Heat intolerance
- Trouble sleeping
- Hand tremors
- Rapid and irregular heartbeat
- Frequent bowel movements or diarrhea
- Weight loss
- Mood swings
- Goiters

What Causes Hyperthyroidism

1. **Graves’ disease**—This is the most common cause of hyperthyroidism. It is an autoimmune condition in which the body’s immune system produces an antibody called thyroid stimulating immunoglobulin (TSI) which connects to thyroid cells. That causes the gland to make too much of thyroid hormone. Graves' disease usually affects younger women and runs in families.

2. **Thyroid nodules**—These nodules are also known as adenomas. This is one or more nodules (lumps) that grow in the thyroid gland. These are usually noncancerous and fairly common. About 3-7 percent of people in the US have them. They may, however, become overactive and begin to make too much of the thyroid hormone.

3. **Thyroiditis**—This is an inflammation where thyroid hormone is leaked out of the gland. At first levels increase and cause the hyperthyroidism. It usually only last a few months. This is usually followed by a state of hypothyroidism.

4. **Excess iodine**—High amounts of iodine intake can cause you to develop hyperthyroidism. The body uses iodine to make thyroid hormone. (It is
important to note that high doses of iodine are not recommended to treat hypothyroidism

5. **Overmedicating with thyroid medications**—If you take too much synthetic thyroid hormone medication, usually prescribed for hypothyroidism, it can cause your thyroid to become overactive and results in hyperthyroidism. If your doctor prescribes medication for your hypothyroidism, you should always take it as prescribed. If you miss a dose, don’t take an extra one unless you consult with your doctor first. People who take this medication need to have regular visits with their doctor - at least yearly.

Some medications can interact with the synthetic thyroid medication and cause the hormone levels to rise in the blood. Always ask your health care provider about interactions when they prescribe medication for you that you have not taken before.

6. **Thyroid Cancer**—When nodules form, they may be solid or liquid filled cysts, lumps, tumors, or bumps. They may be cancerous or benign, but most are not cancerous. Thyroid cancer is rare, but a small percentage of the nodules will be cancerous. Cancer begins when thyroid cells change and grow uncontrollably.

---

**Low Thyroid Function**

Our main focus in this book is related to low thyroid function. This is looking at the symptoms and conditions mostly related to hypothyroidism. Unfortunately many people suffer from the symptoms of hypothyroidism but are told that all their thyroid hormone test results are “normal”. This should not be taken as the final word and there is merit for many in looking further into the symptoms. The reason it is so hard to diagnose low thyroid function is because almost everyone has a different variety and degree of these symptoms. Lowered metabolism can affect areas of the body that are already weak due to genetics or previous illness. This picture can also significantly change with adrenal fatigue (which we will discuss more about later).

For the most part the main symptoms suffered by people to varying degrees are:

- Fatigue- excessive tiredness
- Constipation, flatulence and digestive upsets
- Muscle and joint pain and stiffness
- Weight gain and inability to lose weight
- Memory loss and poor concentration
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Muscle weakness
- Puffy face and eyelids
- Hoarseness of voice and slow speech
- Infertility and loss of libido
- Painful, irregular and heavy periods
- Early menopause
- Ankle swelling
- Cold hands and feet
- Intolerance to cold, feels much better in the heat
- Coarse dry skin
- Eczema and psoriasis
- Thinning hair
- Candida
- Recurrent infections, especially post nasal drip
- Breathlessness with little exhaustion

**Weight Gain**

The most common complaint of low thyroid function is weight gain. Many people have often tried various diets over months and years, but end up heavier than before. This is because when we diet and restrict calories we reduce our metabolism further. This further lowers our ability to digest our foods and use them for energy instead of being stored as fat.

The other most common symptom of low thyroid function is fatigue. This often means that sufferers are too tired or run down to exercise regularly further leading to lowered metabolism with the associated weight gain and poor muscle tone. Poor muscle tone makes you feel weak and further reduces the average amount of calories we burn daily.

To add to the misery of putting on extra fat, low thyroid function leads to extra kilos as a result of fluid retention. This is a result of the body’s inability to correctly utilise electrolytes. This may also be one of the reasons high blood pressure is a common symptom of hypothyroidism.

**Fatigue**

Lack of energy is the number one complaint that causes people visit a health practitioner. So many people I have seen in practise believe it is just because of their age or busy lives. As you now know, low thyroid function slows down the metabolism and the way the body produces energy in the mitochondria of the cells.

Thyroid hormones are essential for mitochondria to function correctly. This is the process responsible for energy production. Poor thyroid function also inhibits the proper use of nutrients and enzymes from our food (such as B vitamins, essential fatty acids and zinc) which are vital to mitochondria function and in turn energy production.
Constipation and Poor Digestion

Most people with low thyroid function will suffer from poor digestion. The main symptom is constipation, bloating, discomfort and gas. This is the result of the metabolism slowing down all processes in the body. Including how quickly food passes through the bowels. A healthy digestive system is vital to our overall health and wellbeing. It ensures that we are receiving all the essential nutrients our bodies need to function and that we are clearing toxins from our system.

Low thyroid function can mean that it slows the time it takes for food to pass through the digestive tract, that is, from our mouth to the toilet. As this process slows down the food begins to stagnate and ferment. This can cause a range of issues such as poor nutrient uptake, absorption of harmful toxins, development of candida and lower immune function.

Nutrient uptake is reduced because of the rubbish coating the very delicate gut wall. When coated with fermented, slow digesting foods the healthy bacteria that breakdown nutrients for absorption is destroyed and replaced with unhealthy bacteria that cause the gut wall to become inflamed further reducing our bodies’ ability to absorb nutrients.

Once the gut wall becomes compromised its defences against nasty toxins and bacteria from our food and drinks, etc. is reduced. This means they are able to pass into the blood stream, once here it is the job of the liver to remove it. The liver as you will learn though this book is one of the most essential organs to help keep the thyroid functioning at its optimal level. However with low thyroid function the liver is also on go slow and has difficulty processing these toxins as well as oestrogen.

It is also common after a slow decline in the digestive function to suffer from food intolerances/allergies, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, constipation, reflux, bloating, flatulence, bouts of diaphragma and periods of feeling discomfort.

Depression and Anxiety

Research has suggested that as many as half the population that suffer from depression and nervous disorders are suffering from undiagnosed hypothryoidism. It is easy to blame many things in our life for making us feel down, but there may be a physiological cause. The brain cells have more T3 receptors than any other tissue in the body, and if sufficient T3 is unavailable the brain is unable to “wake-up” and think properly.

A common complaint is a foggy head with a dull headache, inability to concentrate and in extremes even conversing with others can become a very difficult task. This in itself would lead many people to become down and out. I remember many days with that fog over my head where I could not concentrate for more than 5 minutes. I could hardly complete my work and just felt that every second was a struggle.

One reason that it is likely so many women suffer postnatal depression is due to the significant changes in all the bodies’ hormones. Especially the effects of oestrogen on the intricate balance of the thyroid hormones. If you suspect that you have postnatal depression it is vital to see an understanding GP and ensure they closely check your thyroid levels.
Female Hormone Imbalance

Symptoms including:
- Irregular cycles
- Heavy bleeding
- Infertility
- Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)
- Endometriosis
- Heavy menopausal symptoms

The thyroid gland is part of the endocrine system. The endocrine glands are responsible for orchestrating a very fine balance of all the hormones in our body. Our hormones control our energy, body temperature, reproductive system, pregnancy and childbirth, sleep patterns, body fluid levels, reaction to stress, the list goes on and on. If any of the hormones are out of balance it can have a follow on affect to all the other hormones.

The most obvious to women involves an imbalance of the main reproductive hormones, oestrogen and progesterone. Both are vital in the right levels to ensure that our cycles are regular. This balance is something that we will go into more detail on in the following chapter.

Blood Tests and Medications

The most common test used to diagnose thyroid problems is to measure TSH (Thyroid Stimulating Hormone) levels. Unfortunately however there is great debate about whether this is a completely accurate way to diagnose thyroid disease. There are many health professionals (myself included) who feel that many people are going undiagnosed because of this blood test. We are only beginning to thoroughly understand the complexities of thyroid function at the cellular level. With this knowledge also comes the understanding that TSH levels are not always reliable indicators of thyroid disorders. This is especially true with stress, illness, depression, inflammation, and aging. Tests can show normal TSH levels and you still suffer from of all the symptoms consistent with hypothyroidism.

TSH is the hormone that tells the thyroid gland whether it needs to make more or less of the T4, T3, T2 and T1. It does not give a good indication of how the body uses these hormones. In Australia and many other countries most doctors rely on this test alone. If it comes back normal they will not do any further testing.

However if TSH is out of “normal” range then further testing of T4 and T3 along with thyroid antibodies will be undertaken to try to understand the cause of the out of range TSH. Other tests less commonly done that give an even deeper insight to how the thyroid is functioning include the Free T3 and Free T4.

TSH readings for a normal adult should be between 0.3 and 3. That is, below 0.3 indicates hyperthyroidism and above 3 indicates hypothyroidism. Some specialists are now working on 1 being the ideal upper limit of normal for those with thyroid issues. Less than 5 years ago the upper
limit of normal was 5. This means that many people were misdiagnosed and would now be treated for hypothyroidism.

It is important to note that TSH results may be low during your first trimester of pregnancy. Also extreme stress and acute illness can affect the results of your TSH test.

The further testing that doctors will perform include T4, T3, Free T3, Free T4 and thyroid antibodies. These determine if you have the correct level of the active thyroid hormones and whether the cause of the thyroid condition is due to an autoimmune disease (Hashimoto’s or Graves). Again however the accuracy of these diagnoses is under debate.

One doctor in the UK who has specialised in thyroid health for over 20 years has suggested that one of the most accurate ways he has found to diagnose hypothyroidism is with a very detailed account of the symptoms from the patient, along with high cholesterol readings. While not always the case, I have found this to be the case many times, particularly for young women.

If you do suspect that your symptoms may be caused by low thyroid function it may be worth talking to your doctor about having your cholesterol levels checked. Other blood tests that would be beneficial are Iron, Vitamin D, B12, blood sugar and for females, oestrogen and progesterone balance. There may be other tests required to determine adrenal health, inflammation and intolerances. It is best to consult with your health care provider or visit www.thyroidwellnessdiet.com to book an appointment.

Another method used to determine low thyroid function is the Basal Body Temperature. It has been proposed for a long time to be closely related to concentrations of thyroid hormones. Lowered body temperature is medically recognised as a symptom of hypothyroidism.

In order to measure your Basal body temperature, you need to use an oral thermometer. You need to shake the thermometer down if it is a glass one before you go to sleep and leave it within reach. Immediately after waking, with as little movement as possible, get the thermometer and put it in your armpit next to your skin for a total of 10 minutes. You need to keep a record of the temperature readings for three to fifteen days in a row. Females will need to be careful not to measure this while they are ovulating, as this causes a natural increase in body temperature. This is generally 14 days after the start of your period (however can vary for everyone).

Some physicians consider a temperature below 97.6 Fahrenheit or 36.5 Celsius to be a sign of possible low thyroid function or insufficient thyroid hormone replacement. A normal temperature is thought to average between 97.8 and 98.2 F or 36.7 and 36.8 C.

You should remember that Basal temperature testing is not perfect. Like any other test, it is never good to use it alone to diagnose a thyroid condition or determine which way you will treat yourself. When used in conjunction with other testing, it is a good tool to help you determine if there may be a problem. It is also an excellent tool that you use after you’ve been diagnosed and started treatment. It can help you make sure your thyroid treatment is on track and your thyroid is functioning properly. When irregularities occur with your temperature, you can discuss them with your physician and have the records of your temperature when you discuss them.
Charting your basal body temperature

One easy way to keep track of your temperature that gives you an overall view of your temperature at a glance is to prepare a basal body temperature chart. The chart doesn’t have to be elaborate. A simple graph with a dot each day marking your temperature works. It is also good to write notes on the chart regarding any problems or stressful situations to see how they affect your thyroid function.

As part of your free downloads you have received a basal temperature chart. I recommend that you chart your temperature for one cycle for women and 30 days for men. This will also provide vital information as to any underlying causes of low thyroid function that we will discuss later.

Medications

These comments are form both my personal experience and from those I have worked with. If you have a diagnosed thyroid condition, your medications as prescribed by your doctor are needed. I tried every other option before turning to Thyroxine and even though it certainly wasn’t the complete cure. In conjunction with the Thyroid Wellness Diet and Lifestyle Program, I have managed to completely reverse the symptoms (that is the symptoms, not just the blood tests).

With thyroid disorders you need to focus on what works for YOU. You are your own unique person. No one else in the world is configured exactly like you are or responds to medication the way you do. Thyroid disorders aren’t a “one remedy fits all” kind of thing. Not everyone suffers exactly the same way, has exactly the same test levels, or responds to the same treatment.

Once your thyroid disorder has been diagnosed, it is important that you follow the required treatment procedures. Treatment for hypothyroidism is generally pretty straightforward. Patients simply take medicine prescribed by their physician to boost their supply of thyroid hormone in their body. However as mentioned above, the treatment alone does not always reduce the symptoms. That is why it is also important to also look at diet and lifestyle.

For hyperthyroidism, however, treatment is usually more complex. You will need to be working closely with your GP or specialist and natural healthcare professional.

You’ve probably read a lot online about how people are dissatisfied with the thyroid treatments they are receiving or have received in the past. The truth is, most patients suffering from hypothyroidism benefit from thyroid medications like Levothyroxine, Oroxine and Synthyroid (the most widely dispensed drug). There are controversies and opinions that cause the lack of medical agreement on the treatment of hypothyroidism.

How Synthetic Thyroid Medication Works?

When a person with hypothyroidism takes thyroid hormone medicine they usually notice the following effects:
• Increased levels of energy
• If a person is diagnosed with severe hypothyroidism, they may experience gradual weight loss.
• Improved disposition or mood and better mental functions such as thinking more clearly and greater memory.
• Greater pumping action of the heart
• Improved digestive tract function
• If a person has an enlarged thyroid gland, they will have reduction in the size of the gland.
• Lower triglyceride levels
• Lower cholesterol levels

In many instances, thyroid hormone medicine works to promptly correct symptoms experienced by the thyroid disorder. Like all medication, however, it is not without its drawbacks.

Side Effects

Compared to the side effects of many prescription medication, the side effects from thyroid hormone medications may seem mild. I should also note that generally, these side effects won’t occur unless you are taking the incorrect dosage of the medication. If you are taking the correct amount of thyroid hormone medicine, there is usually no side effect from the medication.

This isn’t the entire list, but some of the most common side effects from taking too much thyroid medicine include:

• Nervousness.
• Heart palpitations
• Insomnia—Trouble sleeping
• Shaking or tremors
• Bowel movements that are more frequent than usual
• Excessive weight loss
• Discomfort when the weather is warm
• Osteoporosis—This is bone thinning that can occur if the dose is too high for a long period of time.
• Chest pain, irregular heart rhythm, or increased risk of heart attack—If you’ve been diagnosed with coronary artery disease and take too much medication

Like all prescription medications, you should always take your thyroid hormone medication as prescribed. If for some reason you can’t take it the way it is prescribed, you should talk to your physician to see if it can be taken another way that works for you. Taking your medication on an empty stomach is advised for maximum benefit.

Desiccated thyroid medication

The big controversy in thyroid medication therapy is whether to use synthetic or desiccated thyroid hormone replacement medications. Desiccated thyroid medication is taken from the thyroid gland of pigs and dried. It is also called porcine thyroid. Some of those medications include Armour Thyroid, Nature-throid, and Westhroid. These medications are FDA approved and have been around for more than 100 years. It used to be the only option for thyroid disorders available.

Then, along came synthetic thyroid medication. Desiccated thyroid medicine was then considered to be “old-fashioned.” Doctors jumped on the synthetic band wagon and didn’t look back.

There are still many physicians who prefer treatment using this method. Thyroid treatment using desiccated thyroid has made a resurgence and many doctors are finding out how easy it is. Many have started prescribing desiccated thyroid medications, because their patients have come to them, tried synthetic medication, and had little or no improvement. Others have prescribed it because their patients wanted to treat their condition in a method that was more natural.

Both synthetic medication and desiccated thyroid medicine are alike in four ways:

1. They’re both made in a lab
2. They both have consistent amounts of thyroid hormones in them
3. They both have to meet federal guidelines and regulations
4. They both are available in many different strengths

If you feel your thyroid medication isn’t working the way it should be, you should talk your concerns over with your physician. It is also important that you understand what could be the underlying cause of your thyroid disorder (as you will learn in the next chapter) and that you also look at your diet and lifestyle.
Chapter 2: Where does it all go wrong?

The thyroid is essential for the body to function, however, it is very sensitive to its environment. Today we have many conveniences, including fast packaged foods with low nutrient levels and many synthetic chemicals. We may also have high levels of harmful chemicals in the air we breathe (especially in big cities). Even with our modern day conveniences we are usually extremely busy and stressed. Unfortunately these are some of the reasons why low thyroid function has become so common in Western society.

The main reasons for the increased incidence of low thyroid function in many include:

- Poor conversion of T4 to T3
- Liver and Gut Imbalances
- Heavy Metal Toxicity
- Adrenal Fatigue
- Oestrogen Dominance
- Nutritional Deficiencies
- Sugar Imbalances

Some of these are both the cause and the result of low thyroid function. Most people will have two or more of these issues so it can be difficult to determine which came first. It’s the old chicken or the egg story.

Poor Conversion of T4 to T3

Poor conversion of the T4 hormone to T3 is believed to be main cause of thyroid problems. This is also not easy to pick up all the time in blood tests. T4 accounts for about 80% of the hormones produced by the thyroid gland. However this needs to be converted to the active form T3 to achieve a balanced metabolism. While there may be enough of the hormones being made it just isn’t in the right form for our body to use yet. It is similar to using to put the wrong key in the front door, no matter how hard you try it just won’t work. For T4 to be converted the message needs to be sent to the body that it is required, then a 5’-deiodinase enzyme rapidly removes one of the four iodine molecules from the T4 and converts it to the active T3. The enzyme selenium (a mineral that is also a potent antioxidant) to perform this action. In some cases the enzyme may not remove the atom correctly and we are left with what is known as a Free T3. This is a hormone similar to T3 however it is not active. Most of the conversion of T4 to T3 takes place in the liver. So liver health is paramount.

I have briefly mentioned the liver before as it is often sluggish as a result of low metabolism. However it may also be one of the reasons for creating the low metabolism. And the vicious cycle continues.
**Heavy Metal Toxicity**

Another reason that the liver is of vital importance is due to another likely cause of low thyroid function, heavy metal toxicity (traces of metals such as lead and mercury in the environment can enter and accumulate in the body).

Heavy metal toxicity is the result of exposure to heavy metals such as lead and mercury. Unfortunately these were pretty common in our environment up until a decade or so ago. They could have been in a workplace, home or even picked up during utero if your mother was exposed to high levels of toxins. While the toxins in our environment have been significantly cleaned up the effects on our bodies is still very evident. Where they are still around (ie. in many of our fish and and old lead based paints) we need to be very wary.

The thyroid gland is very sensitive to heavy metals and toxins in the body. It appears that toxins accumulate in the thyroid gland and affect how it functions. This may mean that it leaks out hormones or is unable to respond correctly to the messages being sent to it.

Heavy metals are stored in the body’s cells. If the levels are high it will make it very difficult for the cells to correctly use the thyroid hormone. This is a similar situation to the previous key analogy, only this timeto the previous key analogy. Only this time we have the right key, but someone has changed the lock on us.

The organ in the body that is responsible for clearing heavy metals and toxins from the body is the liver. So as a result you can see how the liver is one of the main organs we need to focus on for optimal thyroid health.

One of the best ways to determine if you have heavy metal toxicity is to have a hair mineral analysis, however this test is quite controversial in many circles. This is performed by cutting some hair from the nape of your neck and sending it away for analysis.

Heavy metals are stored in all the cells of your body. Some of the main symptoms people notice is extreme difficulty losing weight. Often when people start to lose weight, or detox, these toxins are released from the cells and need to be processed and removed by the liver. If this doesn’t happen they you can expect to suffer from symptoms like headaches, muscle fatigue and aches, flu like symptoms, fluid retention and poor weight loss. Sound familiar!

So before any real weight loss can happen it is vital to ensure that the liver is working properly.

**Liver and Gut Imbalances**

The liver is the second largest organ in the body (the skin is the largest). Many of you may have heard of a detox before, and the liver is the organ where key actions of a detox happens. The liver is responsible for processing anything that we eat or drink to ensure that the nutrients are stored and/or used correctly, thatany toxins are swiftly taken out of the body and that the waste our body produces is also swiftly removed. Unfortunately in our fast paced society we are exposed to so many toxins (not just heavy metal toxicity) that our livers can easily become sluggish. This includes
packaged foods, highly processed foods, sugar, fats, salt, soft drinks/sodas. Our bodies are designed to eat highly nutritious fresh and seasonal foods, that is, mostly fruits and vegetables. However the modern diet and lifestyle is a long way from what our bodies, liver and thyroid need to function optimally.

There are two phases that the liver undertakes to rid the body of toxins. It is vital that these are both working in balance to ensure health. To begin with toxins can be brought in from our environment, known as exotoxins, including:

- Foods (chemicals, additives, artificial sweeteners, pesticides, etc)
- Drinks
- Alcohol
- Pollutants/contaminants
- Household chemicals
- Drugs

Toxins also come from endotoxins. These come from the body. They are the by product of metabolism, bacterial toxins and fat soluble toxins stored in fat cells. Weight loss helps to release many of these toxins.

The Phase I Detoxification Pathway

Once these toxins enter the liver they go through the Phase 1 detoxification process. This involves a group of enzymes which, collectively, have been named cytochrome P-450. Some 50 to 100 enzymes make up the cytochrome P-450 system. Each enzyme is suited to detoxify specific types of chemicals, but there is considerable overlap in activity among the enzymes. These enzymes reside on the membranes of liver cells called hepatocytes. Human liver cells possess the genetic code for many types of P-450 enzymes, so when the body is exposed to different toxins, the liver will be induced to synthesize the specific enzymes required to neutralize them. This mechanism protects the body from the damaging effects of a wide variety of toxic chemicals.

This pathway neutralizes a toxin by simply converting it into something that is chemically in smaller pieces that will be handed over to Phase II, or, alternatively, makes it water-soluble, which allows its excretion by the kidneys or through sweating.

A significant side effect of Phase I detoxification is the production of free radicals as the toxins are transformed. For each molecule of toxin metabolized by Phase I, one free radical molecule is generated. Without adequate free radical defences, every time the liver neutralizes a toxin, it is damaged by the free radicals produced. Antioxidants, such as reduced glutathione, vitamins C and E, carotenoids, flavonoids and selenium reduce the damage caused by these free radicals. If antioxidants are deficient and toxin exposure is high, toxic chemicals become far more dangerous. The metabolites produced during Phase I are often potentially more harmful than their original toxic compounds, therefore it is important that they are not allowed to build up. This is where Phase II detoxification comes in.

The Phase II Detoxification Pathway

Phase II is the second stage in processing toxic compounds for elimination. This phase involves the addition of chemical groups (e.g., glutathione, glycine or taurine) to the toxic compound to make
itless toxic to body tissues and easier to excrete. During Phase II, the liver adds small chemical pieces onto the toxin in a process called conjugation – effectively wrapping it up safely. These conjugation reactions include sulfation, glucuronidation, and glutathione conjugation, which are key processes to healthy detoxification. These are also processes that have been shown to be impaired in many with low thyroid function and may be one of the underlying causes of the disease and symptoms.

The conjugation reaction (wrapping effect) neutralizes toxins and the intermediate compounds left over from Phase I. For efficient Phase II detoxification and production of bile, the liver cells require sulfur-containing amino acids such as taurine and cysteine, and several other nutrients as explained in more detail below. The right foods will provide these, so read on to find out how to support detoxification with foods, herbs and supplements.

The Main Detoxification Enzyme: Glutathione
Glutathione also plays a fundamental role in numerous metabolic and biochemical reactions. As the most powerful liver and brain detoxifier and protector, glutathione has multiple functions. First, as the major antioxidant produced by the cells, it participates directly in the neutralization of free radicals. It also maintains antioxidants such as vitamins C and E in forms that can be used by the body. Through direct conjugation, it detoxifies many foreign chemical compounds and carcinogens, both organic and inorganic, and also heavy metals such as mercury, lead, and arsenic. It is also critical for removing air pollutants such as volatile organic chemicals, and also many pesticides. Every system in the body can be affected by the state of the glutathione system. The immune system, the nervous system, the gastrointestinal system, the lungs, and the thyroid are especially affected.

The Glucuronidation and Sulfation Pathways
The glucuronidation and sulfation processes removes hormones such as testosterone, oestrogen, and steroids; fatty acid derivatives, bilirubin, and bile acids. These are the most important processes for a healthy and optimal thyroid function. Food and herbal supplements can have a big impact on the health of the liver. The following are some important foods and herbal to include to provide the nutrients needed for phase I and II liver detoxification.

- Milk thistle herb stimulates both glucuronidation and glutathione activity.
- Flavonoids from red grapes and blueberries help regenerate depleted glutathione levels.
- Selenium is crucial for recycling glutathione.
- Whey powder is a good source of cysteine, the critical amino acid needed for glutathione production, and supplies most other sulfur containing amino acids such as taurine for the sulfation process.
- Green tea encourages glucuronidation mechanism.
- Whey powder, eggs and cruciferous vegetables (e.g., broccoli, cabbage, brussels sprouts, cauliflower), and raw garlic, onions, leeks and shallots are all good sources of the natural sulfur compounds that enhance the Phase II detoxification reaction called sulfation.

It is also important at this point to note that certain foods and drinks cause more stress and damage for the liver and are best left out of the diet or taken only in small amounts. This includes alcohol, caffeine, sugar, artificial sweeteners, artificial flavors, artificial coloring, ‘bad’
fats and most processed and packaged foods. But don’t fear, once you have finished reading this book you will know exactly what to eat to ensure optimal liver and thyroid function as well as how to easily lose weight and look and feel amazing.

**Recommended Supplements and Treatment for Liver Detox, Heavy Metal Clearance and Improved T4 to T3 Conversion**

- Milk Thistle
- Turmeric
- Dandelion
- Selenium
- Zinc
- Colostrum or prebiotics
- Antioxidants
- Probiotics
- Green Drinks
- Whey Protein
- Fibre
- Vegetables and Fruit
- Thyroid Wellness Nutrition and Lifestyle Plan

**Adrenal Fatigue**

The adrenals are also glands and part of the endocrine system. They are two very small glands that sit just above the kidneys. They do however have a very large role to play in the body and in particular, balance with the thyroid. The main active hormone released by the adrenals is cortisol. The adrenals also release sex hormones and anabolic steroids such as androgen, oestrogen and DHEA. However in this context we will be focusing on the effects of cortisol.

Cortisol and the adrenals are used in what is called the flight of fight reaction. You have most probably heard of this before. Our bodies were designed so that if we are under extreme stress, such as our life is in danger from a lion that our body produces large doses of hormones from the adrenal glands that helps use have “super human” powers to either run faster than we ever have and for longer, or to stay and fight with more power and intensity than we ever believed possible. This was a mechanism designed to keep us alive. It was also only designed to keep us in this state for a short period of time.

In today’s hectic, busy and stressful world however many of us have switched on this fight or flight response and are unable to turn it off. If you have a crazy work schedule and busy home life, burning the candle at both ends, your body settles into a low grade chronic state of stress. That is you are
constantly relying on adrenaline to get you through the day or evening. For many of us it may not be on all the time but gets a work out several times a day. For example, getting the kids ready for school in the morning and out the door so you’re not late for work, being stuck in a traffic jam, having a big presentation to do at work, and or deadlines to meet, picking the kids up and driving them to several sports or activities, getting home to cook dinner with screaming hungry kids, paying the bills and stressing about whether you have enough money, watching a tragedy on the news, etc, etc. I’m sure you’ve getting the picture. These are all normal everyday activities that can cause our bodies to constantly be in a state of stress.

Other problems that can induce even higher states of stress are illness, anxiety, depression, hyperthyroidism, trauma (mentally and physically), relationship breakdowns, moving house, loss of a loved one, infertility, birth of a child, debt, loss of job, not feeling fulfilled in love, career and life.

The Thyroid-Adrenal Connection

If you have low thyroid function one of the first organs that tries to help is the adrenals. The adrenals can help provide the energy needed by the individual. If the thyroid deficiency is only minor and there is not much stress in one’s life the adrenals can go on supporting the individual for many years and there will not be any noticeable symptoms. However if the thyroid deficiency become too severe or there is a period of either long or intense stress adrenals begin to cope less well. The result is adrenal fatigue.

Adrenal fatigue is very common in many people with hypothyroidism. I find it is especially common in individuals who first developed hyperthyroid symptoms, such as those with postpartum thyroiditis or Hashimoto’s. However there is a theory that this may also be one of the main reasons why many people do not get relief of their symptoms from thyroxine alone. Research suggests that with adrenal fatigue the conversion of T4 to T3 is reduced. It is also suggested that as a result the cells in the body are unable to effectively use the T3 hormone. So the body develops toxic levels of both the T3 and T4 which is unable to be properly converted into its useable forms for energy and metabolism. So the patient is left feeling worse than ever, while their blood test shows that they are back in the normal or even hyperthyroid range.

For those with adrenal fatigue many of the symptoms are very similar to low thyroid function, so it can be hard to diagnose. These include:

- Constant fatigue and exhaustion
- Shaky hands; shakiness
- Diarrhea
- Feeling of panic
- Weakness
- Inability to handle stress
- Inability to focus
- Exacerbated reactions to daily stress
- Easily irritated
- Taking days to recover from even minor stress
- Flu-like symptoms
• headache
• all over body ache
• hyper feeling
• clumsy (drop things, bump into things)
• confusion
• suddenly feel extremely hungry
• jumpiness
• muscle weakness
• dark circles under my eyes
• waking up in the middle of the night for several hours
• difficulty falling asleep
• IBS symptoms
• worsening allergies

As you can see many of these symptoms are similar to low thyroid function. This may also be one of the reasons many people have such significant symptoms yet have ‘normal’ blood tests. So it is vital that when treating low thyroid function we also treat the adrenal function.

To determine whether this is a significant issue for you it is important to do the basal body temperature readings, as shown in Chapter 1. If the levels are consistently low this is a sign that the main issue is with the thyroid. If however the levels jump all over the place this is more likely an indication that you also have adrenal fatigue. Other ways to test for adrenal fatigue are the 24 hour saliva test (many alternative health providers can arrange for this). This will provide the most accurate reading. A saliva sample is collected every 4 hours over a 24 hour period. This will measure cortisol levels. This is far more accurate than the one off blood test as cortisol levels are meant to change throughout the day. Their level should be at the highest first thing in the morning. This is when we should feel refreshed and energised. Cortisol levels usually take a dip mid-afternoon before increasing for the evening. Then at night they should drop quickly so that we can get to sleep. Many people with adrenal fatigue find that this is completely the wrong way round. They feel tired, groggy and lethargic during the day, then at night after being desperate to get to bed all day, they struggle to get to sleep. It is a really vicious cycle as the stress of these symptoms makes both the adrenal and thyroid condition even worse.

Unfortunately when we are feeling so tired and exhausted the first thing that we grab for an energy boost is caffeine. Coffee, energy drinks, cola, tea, chocolate. All in a hope it will restore our energy for a short period, just so you can make it through your day. Most of my clients with adrenal fatigue really struggle with their diet and appetite control. They are constantly looking for a quick fix. They crave sugar, fats, caffeine, anything that is quick, easy and will give them energy. As a result there is usually a greater problem with weight. If you feel that you are in this category then it is important to note that you will need to take the healing process nice and slowly. If you were to jump straight into a diet or detox program you will probably find that your symptoms will only be exacerbated. You will end up feeling even more fatigued, with flu like symptoms, cravings and eventually even worse food choices, and the vicious cycle begins again with you feeling more deflated than ever. But don’t fear, there is an answer, and that is simply to help improve adrenal health first.
The first thing that you will need to look at is lifestyle changes. Reducing caffeine and sugar will be a good start as well as including more healthy foods into your diet (such as those recommended in the thyroid wellness nutrition plan). The second recommendation that I make to all my clients is to stop any strenuous exercise and just start walking. The best time to do this is first thing in the morning. While this can be a struggle at first the benefits are numerous. Walking is gentle and relaxing, it also gives you time to think about your day and plan what you will be doing, it is also energising and refreshing to just get the body moving even if it’s only for 10-15 minutes a day to start with. The other benefit of getting outside to walk is that you will be getting direct sunlight as soon as you wake. As the sun hits the back of your eyes it triggers a cascade of hormones that helps to set your circadian rhythm. This is basically your cortisol levels, so it will help you feel more energised during the day and sleep better at night. This may take several days or weeks to get the full benefits depending on how fatigued the adrenals are to start with, but stick with it and you will get amazing results.

Other activities that can help to reduce adrenal fatigue are yoga and meditation. These are great tools for calming the mind and body and helping to reduce stress. However anything that will help you reduce stress will also be just as helpful. Reading a book, taking a bath, watching a comedy, etc. Try to find things you enjoy and that make you laugh.

If you have severe stress in your life and you feel that you are not coping how you would like it is important that you seek professional health. A therapist may be able to give you tips and techniques to ensure that you are best able to deal with the situation at hand. We are not able to remove stress from our lives but we can choose how we respond to it.

**Recommended Supplements and treatment for Adrenal Fatigue**

There are a range of herbal and nutritional supplements that are also important to help support adrenal health. These include:

- B Complex Vitamins
- Vitamin C
- Magnesium
- Siberian Ginseng
- Withania
- Licorice

**Oestrogen Dominance**

The female hormone systems are, as we have mentioned, a very intricate orchestra. Female hormones include thyroid and adrenal hormones, but the best known of the hormones is oestrogen. Oestrogen is the hormone in much higher levels in women that gives them womanly features such as breasts and rounded hips. It also plays a big part in ensuring ovulation, menstruation and menopause. During our monthly cycles oestrogen needs to work very closely with another hormone, progesterone. Oestrogen starts to slowly rise from day 1 (usually counted from the first day of bleeding). Around day 14 of our cycles other hormones, progesterone, LH and FSH rise rapidly to trigger ovulation. This is the point where the egg is released into the ovaries and where fertilisation
can take place. This window of conception lasts for only 3-4 days per month. At this time oestrogen and progesterone are at their highest. If there is conception these levels will continue to rise to support the pregnancy. Otherwise the levels of both hormones should slowly drop until menstruation occurs approximately 2 weeks later.

Now if that is all working as normal we should have a 28 day cycle with no pain or suffering. However this is not the case for most women these days. If there is an imbalance of the ups and down of these hormones there can be a variety of symptoms that follow. This may include:

- Irregular and/ or heavy periods
- Fluid retention
- Breast tenderness
- Headaches
- Mood swings, irritability and/ or depression
- Weight gain around the hips, thighs and abdomen
- Low libido
- Symptoms of low thyroid function
- Sleep disturbances and insomnia
- Difficulties concentrating, “foggy head”
- Thinning of scalp hair

One of the main reasons for these symptoms is an excess of oestrogen. This can be cause by either a raised level of oestrogen or a low level of progesterone. Unfortunately in our world today we are surrounded by xenoestrogens and phytoestrogens which both throw off the hormonal balance and exacerbate our symptoms.

Xenoestrogens
Xenoestrogens are oestrogens or oestrogen-like compounds originating from external sources. They enter the body, mostly unintentionally, through the diet or through lifestyle practises, eg. Pesticide residue and dioxins in food, parabens in cosmetics and bisphenol-A (BPA in plastic drinking bottles and food storage containers.

Phytoestrogens
Phytoestrogens are found in many plant based foods. It is a compound that similar to oestrogen that also binds to oestrogen receptor sites in the body. However it does not send the correct messages to the body that the true oestrogen would. If we eat high amounts of foods such as soy, tofu and flaxseed it can lead to a high level of total oestrogen and an imbalance in our hormones.

Excess oestrogen in our body needs to be removed. This is processed in the liver and removed by the gastrointestinal system. If however the liver is not functioning properly (we have already discussed this process) oestrogen levels will continue to rise and place the body into an even greater place of oestrogen dominance.

Soy is one of the foods highest in phytoestrogens and unfortunately also contains goitogens. These are substances that block the synthesis of thyroid hormone and interfere with iodine metabolism, thereby interfering with your thyroid function. A diet low in iodine and high in soy will block the T4-
T3 conversion. So as we will discuss later is best left out of the diet for those suffering low thyroid function.

So you may be wondering how having oestrogen dominance affects your thyroid function. Firstly oestrogen dominance can affect the conversion of T4 to T3, secondly it can block the uptake of the thyroid hormone into the cells (again reducing the effectiveness of many thyroid treatments) and thirdly if high levels of oestrogen are present thyroid binding globulin (TBG) that carries thyroid hormones to the cells can become significantly less. As a result the thyroid hormones cannot enter the cells to be used effectively. This may be one reason why blood tests come back normal when all the symptoms are showing for low thyroid function.

For any individual suffering low thyroid function it is vital to also look at treating the underlying issue of oestrogen dominance for treatment to be effective.

**Recommended Supplements and Treatment for Oestrogen Dominance**

Liver Detox  
Thyroid Wellness Diet and Lifestyle Plan  
Magnesium- a high dose is required. That is 350mg elemental Magnesium twice a day  
VitexAgnus-Castus (Chasteberry) – 1g per day

**Sugar Imbalances**

One of the first things that I notice in my clients suffering from low thyroid function when I look at their diet is their cravings and reliance on sugar to get through the day. There is also a great deal of evidence to show that those suffering thyroid conditions have a greater chance of developing diabetes. The main reason for this is that the thyroid hormones disrupt how the body can break down carbohydrates. Due to our overload of carbohydrates from complex and simple forms in our “healthy” diets the body begins to struggle. The pancreas begins to secrete insulin to try to move this excess glucose (from the carbohydrates) into the cells where it is turn into energy. However the result of low thyroid function is that it dampens the response of the cells, a bit like someone’s knocking on the door, but the cells can’t hear. The pancreas responds by pumping out even more insulin to try and knock louder. Over time this creates damage and eventually insulin resistance.

There is also evidence to show that these surges in insulin create further havoc on the thyroid gland. This is especially true in those suffering from Hastimoto’s disease. The destruction to the thyroid gland causes the level of thyroid hormones to fall further and in turn exacerbates the insulin resistance as the cells become even less responsive.

Just as insulin resistance can cause damage to the thyroid so too can chronically low blood sugar. If you suffer from low blood sugar levels your body responds by secreting cortisol from your adrenal glands. The cortisol is then responsible for telling the liver to produce more glucose as a way to bring back the balance. As noted in the section above on Adrenal Fatigue the Adrenal gland is very closely linked to the thyroid. If they are placed under this type of stress on a regular basis it can lead to adrenal fatigue. Unfortunately the side effects of low blood sugar encourage you to eat more and
more sugar to “feel normal”, which causes more and more damage to the adrenals and thyroid glands. So as you can see it is a cycle that needs to be broken.

Today’s diets and lifestyles simply exacerbate this cycle. You need to change what you are doing to change how your body functions. The Thyroid Wellness Program will cover all of this.

Symptoms of Sugar Imbalances
- Need to eat constantly
- Shaking if skipping meals
- Craving sugar even after a big meal
- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Constant hunger
- Unexplained fatigue
- Never full, constant hunger
- Difficulty sleeping
- Sudden mood changes
- Sweating
- Shaking
- Trouble thinking clearly or concentrating

**Recommended Supplements and Treatment for Sugar Imbalance**
Reduction in carbohydrate rich foods (especially sugars from all sources)
Quality protein and fat rich meals and snacks
Cinnamon
Chromium
Magnesium
B Complex Vitamins
Exercise

**Nutritional Deficiencies**

There is a range of nutrients that are vital for the health of your thyroid, the conversion of T4 to T3, liver health, heavy metal detoxification, sugar balance, adrenal support, autoimmune support and oestrogen detoxification and balance. A deficiency of many of these has been found in people suffering low thyroid function. As yet the research doesn’t show if the deficiency causes the thyroid imbalance or vice versa but ensuring adequate levels of nutrients is essential to improving symptoms.
I have listed below the basics for daily intake, however it is important to note that every individual is different. For optimal results is it vital to work with your health professional. For an appointment with your Thyroid Wellness Coach please email us.

**Vitamins**

Vitamin A- 800 IU  
B Vitamin Complex- high strength (including B1, B2, B3, B6, B12 and Folate)  
Vitamin C- 1 to 2 grams  
Vitamin E- 400 to 800 IU  
Vitamin D- 1000-3000mg (start with lowest dose only increase if blood test show deficiency)

**Minerals**

Manganese – 4mg  
Calcium- 1000-1500mg  
Magnesium- 340- 680mg  
Zinc- 15-20mg  
Chromium- 120mcg  
Iron -15-90 mg (start with lower dose only increase if blood test shows deficiency)  
Copper – 2mg

A caution about Iodine- excess iodine can be just as harmful to thyroid function as low levels. Many people who believe their thyroid is imbalanced have looked to high dose iodine supplements. For a few this has helped however for many it has led to an exacerbation of symptoms as the body still has difficulty processing the correct hormones from this. To ensure that you do not exceed your individual iodine needs it is important to have an iodine loading test taken before using any supplements.

Food sources in moderation, however are a great way to ensure adequate intake. Including fish and seafood as well as seaweed and nori (most will be covered in the SuperFoods Chapter). During pregnancy we have a higher need for iodine so you may need to talk to your health professional if you plan to become pregnant or are pregnant.

**Antioxidants**

CoEnzyme Q10- 100-200 mg  
Alpha Lipoic Acid- 150 mg  
Flavonoids- found in many herbal supplements mentioned above and fruits and vegetables  
Caretenoids- found in many herbal supplements mentioned above and fruits and vegetables
Amino Acids

These are derived from protein. So a diet high in good quality protein will provide a sufficient quantity. This would include: fish, eggs, cheese, whey protein, pulses, nuts and seeds, some meat and poultry.
CHAPTER 3: The Thyroid Wellness Complete Nutrition Plan

Part 1

The Importance of Nutrition

Introduction

Eating in a healthy manner seems to be a habit that has been pushed away by our busy lifestyles. We often opt for the “quick fix” of fast food for dinner rather than what is good for our bodies. Eating food that is unhealthy for you causes many problems with your body that you are probably not even aware of or even thought about.

Sure you know all those “burger and fries” meals may catch up to you eventually in the form of weight gain or cholesterol problems, but are you aware of what it can do to your thyroid health? Many people are not aware of what an unhealthy lifestyle can do to their thyroid. The logical explanation for the lack of knowledge is that the thyroid isn’t a part of the body that is widely spoken about.

Though you don’t see advertisements for it on television, there is an American Thyroid Association that is dedicated to the advancement, understanding, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of thyroid disorders. This organisation is international and has members from 43 countries. It has been in existence for close to 90 years.

The organisation publishes guidelines for prevention of and dealing with thyroid disorders in distinguished medical journals. They also develop clinical practice guidelines to help guide and make recommendations concerning thyroid disease. The organization does a lot of good things. It just isn’t one that makes the headlines.

Since they recognise the importance of diet and nutrition to thyroid health, the American Thyroid Association has developed dietary guidelines and menu options for some of the issues that may arise with thyroid health. It’s time that everyone realises that optimal thyroid health is just as important as having a healthy heart. In fact, poor thyroid health can even lead to problems with your heart.

You have made the right decision. You’ve chosen the right book to get information about how your nutrition affects your thyroid, and what you can do to ensure healthy thyroid function.

Welcome to your new way of eating! In this book you will be introduced to some new ideas on what healthy really is. It is important to keep an open mind and remember that this plan is based on a scientific understanding of the thyroid and why problems develop. It is designed to give you the help you need to understand your thyroid and learn how you can get control of your thyroid health through nutrition.
Why You Should Value Nutrition

Nutrition is vital to our health. Over the last 100 years or more science has made many astonishing breakthroughs. Many of these mean that we now have a greater understanding of the human body and the incredible design that makes it all tick. We now have the knowledge of what is essential for making it all work. This includes a range of vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, proteins, fats, carbohydrates and water. With this technology though we have also had a very significant change in what we eat, how we get our nutrition, and the amount of chemicals and toxins found in our food, drinks and the air we breathe. Unfortunately even with our abundance of food and increasing obesity epidemic many people are suffering from nutritional deficiencies. Many people do not realize that, being well fed is NOT the same thing as being fed well. There is a vast difference between the two. You can be well fed because you have an abundance of food and can eat as much as you want. When you are fed well, however, you have the proper food you need to keep your body healthy and to make you look and feel great.

There are several nutrients that have been shown to be essential in healthy thyroid function. These include selenium, Vitamin D, Iron and Iodine. These are very common deficiencies in the Western World. Many of you may not be aware that Vitamin D is the biggest deficiency in Australia. You may find this especially strange considering Vitamin D is derived from sunlight! The reason is simple. Our lifestyles are no longer what they used to be we are not spending as much time outdoors. Vitamin D has a significant part to play in thyroid, immune and bone health.

There are also other nutrients and systems that while they do not directly affect the thyroid play a significant part in the use of the thyroid hormones in organs such as the liver and digestive system. A slow clearance here can prevent T4 from being converted to the active T3 and many symptoms of thyroid disease develop.

In our world today we are taught that a calorie is a calorie and that we simply need to reduce them to lose weight. I’m sure like most of the population you’ve tried a calorie controlled diet. You may have lost a little weight, but probably felt tired and hungry. Many people revert to caffeine and artificial sweeteners to keep on track and “trick” those cravings they have for foods. Eventually, however, you’re body catches on and it realizes that you’re not getting enough calories. It goes into “starvation mode.” This reduces your metabolism, and eventually the hunger becomes so intense you binge. You put all the weight back on. Even following your old diet you’re more likely to put on extra weight because you have lost some muscle and lowered your metabolism. This means you feel fatigued, lethargic and have more cravings to boot.

It is important that I mention that I’m not a huge fan of the term “Starvation Mode.” It sounds very dramatic. When we reduce our calorie intake so significantly our body starts to produce and reduce levels of certain hormones that send the message to hold onto fat until the lean calorie days are over and food is more abundant. It is an amazing mechanism that our bodies required back when food was so scarce. Unfortunately, now that calorie sources are in abundance, it can make the weight loss process a little harder. There is more and more research becoming available to show that certain people, due to their genetics, are more prone to hormonal imbalances that encourage the body to store fat in this way. Unfortunately, thyroid imbalance happens to be one of those.
Getting back onto the subject, you need to realise that not all calories are created equal. As you will see through the plan, if you eat highly nutritious foods that fill you up, provide a high level of vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, fibre, proteins, carbohydrates and fats (yes you read correctly carbs and fats) you will be able to eat more than you thought possible and reach you goal weight all while feeling strong, energised and balanced.

This plan is based on increasing nutrients that support the thyroid, blood sugar, liver, digestion and metabolism. Once this is in order cravings will be reduced or may even be non-existent. It has been tried and tested many times over with amazing results. Helping women to lose stubborn fat, improve energy, mood and concentration, increase strength, reducing bloating and constipation, improve menstrual cycles, reveal glowing younger looking skin and generally improve overall health.

**How Does it Work?**

It’s all about increasing your metabolism. Your thyroid is the master gland of your metabolism so this is what will help you get the health benefits and lose weight. It means that you don’t have to drastically reduce calories and your body won’t feel the need to store the extra fat. Some tricks include:

- Eating 5 small meals throughout the day
- Eating whole foods, the way they were intended
- Including a balance of proteins, fats and carbohydrates (from the right sources) NO FADS here!
- Include plenty of “super foods”
- Eliminate toxins and chemicals where possible
- Avoid estrogenic foods
- Reduce stress (or at least your response to it)
- Incorporate the right exercise

Don’t worry. This book will help lay all this out in a step-by-step plan that will be easy to fit into your life.
Part 2

The Five Rules

I know this sounds a bit scary, but these are more guidelines to help make this an easy lifestyle change for you. The rules are all about focusing on the good things that you can include plenty of in your diet each day. This will help nourish and sustain your body.

Does what we eat have a significant impact on our health? It has long been known you are what you eat! Food is essential for life and our energy. The food choices that we make work with our genes to create balance or imbalance in our bodies, so if we want to get the best out of our bodies we need to fuel it with the best foods that support and nourish our genetic potential.

These rules are designed to help you overcome any fears you have relating to food. Unfortunately many women that I see in my clinic are really scared of food. It seems incredible that something that is so important for us can create so much stress in our lives. There are so many diets around today that offer the ultimate weight loss solution, suggesting quick weight loss with no effort. I can tell you though that this may work for some (with the right genetics) but for the majority of the population it leaves them feeling worse than before. These diets, including cutting carbs, diet products, calorie counting, food combining, etc, can only be followed for so long as they don’t contain all the essential nutrients we need for long term health. The “rules” that they have are so strict and are what is creating the confusion. If you can’t stick to the program long term forget any advice you received from it! From my experience working with women diets only make you fatter in the long run.

Poor diet choices are directly related to a number of health conditions, such as: diabetes, high blood pressure, poor liver health, gut conditions, skin conditions and hypothyroidism. Poor diet can also to increased inflammation and oxidation. That not only makes us feel unhealthy but it can also make us look older.

So what are the FIVE RULES?

1. Enjoy vegetables or fruit at each meal (5-6 times per day)

2. Eat protein at each meal

3. Eat ‘good’ fats at each meal

4. Enjoy ‘good’ carbs 1-2 times per day

5. Have two free meals per week
RULE 1: Enjoy vegetables or fruit at each meal

Let me mention the often neglected vegetables. We all know we need to eat vegetables each day. The Australian guidelines are 3-5 servings. However the World Health Organisation (WHO) are now recommending 9-13 servings (of fruits and vegetables, with the majority coming from vegetables) and certainly this is what I would be recommending.

Vegetables are power packed, nutrient dense, fibre filled foods that taste great (when prepared properly). They make us feel full, help our digestion and liver function by providing fibre, vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients (plant based antioxidants) for glowing skin and great health. Plus there really low in calories so you can eat a lot, so you never need to feel hungry.

I opt to have at least 30% raw to ensure that I still get many of the nutrients that can be destroyed by heat. I do however find that for many people with thyroid problems that (especially in the beginning) any more than 30% raw vegetables can be a burden on the digestive tract. If this becomes a problem, simply lightly steam the remaining 30% and slowly introduce the raw vegetables as your health improves.

WHAT FOODS TO ENJOYS:

This could be an incredibly long list. I would encourage you to be as experimental as possible. I make sure that I get at least one new type of vegetable each week. Most supermarkets have a great range these days and include more exotic options.

Cucumber, capsicums (as many colours as possible), zucchini, Chinese Greens, chilli, ginger, garlic, onions, spinach, Kale, Rocket, lettuce, sprouts, Mixed leaves, leek, fennel, cauliflower, broccoli, broccolini, asparagus, celery, peas, snowpeas, snake beans, eggplants, brussel sprouts, tomatoes, basil, parsley, ALL herbs and spices

Some vegetables that you may notice missing from here are the carbohydrate rich vegetables such as potato, pumpkin, sweet potato and corn. For the purpose of this program let’s consider these as carbohydrates. These are still allowed and encouraged but read the carbohydrates section (rule 4) for the best way to incorporate them in your diet.

Some thyroid diets recommend that you avoid vegetables from the cruciferous family. These include cauliflower, brussel sprouts, kale, etc (see superfood chapter for more information). These vegetables have been shown to inhibit the function of the thyroid gland. So a large amount of these would not be recommended. For example, a bunch of Kale everyday would be excessive, so it’s vital to mix it up. However in my experience a small amount of this vegetable in a balanced diet does not have a significant impact and many other factors are far more important to overall thyroid health.

So now on to a topic that is really, unbelievably, controversial: fruit. With the recent craze of high protein low carb diets, fruit has received a very underserved bad wrap in many circles. One blog I read the other day suggested that it was better to have a protein bar packed with artificial sweeteners, and too many ingredients that are impossible to pronounce. It is beyond me how that
could possibly be better for our bodies than a piece of highly nutritious natural fruit. The main reason this debate has surfaced is due to the sugar, or more importantly fructose levels of some fruits. Fructose is believed to have many damaging effects on our health and in particular our waistline. We can eat loads of it without feeling full or satisfied but it still loads the body with extra calories. A great example of this is soft drink or soda’s, they are loaded with high fructose corn syrup, giving them there sweet taste. Many people would have had the experience of going to the movies and drinking a “very” large soft drink and still not feeling full or satisfied at the end. Perhaps the large popcorn may have taken care of that, but I get off track. It really is the addition of sugars and sweeteners that is the cause of our obesity epidemic and if the only foods you are getting fructose from is a moderate amount of fruit the body will have no ill effects. In fact the health benefits from the fibre and nutrients that come with the fruit will far outweigh any effects from the fructose. It is important to note here though that I would not recommend fruit juice. This is because the fibre is removed so it takes away some of those benefits. One other caution on the topic of fruit is for dried fruit. While dried fruit is acceptable every now and again, moderation is key, it is important not to have an excess. The problem with dried fruit is that the effect of the drying process concentrates the sugars. This means that it is easy to eat too many, and this will not only significantly increase calories but also blood sugar levels.

In my opinion, and from what I have seen in practise, two pieces or serves of fruit per day is beneficial for your health and lifestyle. Like your vegetables, try as many different types of fruit as is available, this will mean a greater array of antioxidants, which is better for your health.

The best fruits to choose:

Blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, green apples, red apples, pears, oranges, grapes red and green, coconuts, dates.

However all fruits are fine in moderation. Yes even bananas (just not everyday for optimal weight loss)

RULE 2: Eat protein at each meal

Protein has so many benefits to our health. It contains the building blocks to our organs, muscles, bones, hormones and immune health. Protein is essential for thyroid health. Protein is made up of amino acids. There are 9 amino acids that we need to get from our food. When all 9 are available from our food it is called a complete protein. The best sources of complete proteins are meat, chicken, fish and dairy. Basically any animal sourced protein is complete protein. Vegetable sources of protein can be limited and usually require specific food combining to make sure that a complete protein is formed. For example, beans on their own are not a complete protein but mixed with brown rice and vegetables create a complete protein meal.

Tyrosine, one of the 9 essential amino acids, is vital for thyroid health. Tyrosine is used by the thyroid gland to bind to iodine to create the thyroid hormones, T4, T3, T2 and T1. Without adequate protein in the diet the body can have difficulty producing the thyroid hormones. While many diets
recommend very high protein intake this program is focused on a moderate protein intake to ensure a balanced level of tyrosine.

The effect of low protein, on the thyroid, is most evident in long term vegetarians who are not eating a balanced diet. I know from experience that a vegetarian diet can make it hard to get adequate complete protein. While it is not impossible it does require a lot more planning and preparation. Something that I have seen commonly in practise is that many vegetarian women do not have an adequate complete protein diet. They ate vegetarian from their late teens but without considering a complete protein diet, and are now suffering the consequences. I personally don’t eat much meat (after being vegetarian for almost 20 years), and I try to include lots of dairy, eggs, nuts and seeds, beans, lentils, chickpeas and fish in the program as these are better options for your health than excessive red meat.

The other great benefit of protein is its stabilising effect on insulin and blood sugar levels. One of the underlying issues with thyroid disorders has been linked to high blood sugars. This is not surprising considering the production of insulin by the pancreas part of the endocrine (hormonal) systems of the body and they are all connected. If we consistently have high blood sugar levels there is an increase of inflammation in the system which can create further damage to the thyroid gland.

One of the best ways to balance blood sugar levels is to eat the right foods, regularly. Including small amounts of good quality protein spread out over 5 meals per day has been shown to be one of the most effective ways to gain this balance.

The quality of your protein sources is essential. Animal products can have significantly different properties depending on how it was feed, farmed and processed. I always recommend choosing options that are free range, grass fed, organic or raw where possible. And never chose low fat options. The fat has many essential nutrients such as Vitamin A and D, which are essential for thyroid health.

According to the Obesity Society, eating high protein egg-based breakfasts can help curb hunger throughout the morning. This is when compared with a low-protein breakfast such as pancakes and syrup, or worse yet, skipping breakfast altogether. This is especially true in 18 to 55 year oldwomen. They have found that eating a breakfast that is rich in protein can help significantly improve appetite control and help you to avoid overeating throughout the day.

At their annual meeting, each participant ate a breakfast of about 300 calories that contained similar amounts of fat and fibre. The breakfasts that were protein rich contained 30-39 grams of protein. Both before, and at 30-minute intervals afterward, the participants completed questionnaires rating their appetite on aspects such as: hunger, fullness, and desire to eat. At lunch time, those who ate a protein rich diet felt lower hunger, more fullness, and a lower desire to eat.

Many people, especially when dieting, choose to skip breakfast or choose low protein foods. They feel there is a lack of high protein choices that are convenient. The results of the above test, however, prove that a protein rich meal can help you feel full until lunch and avoid overeating through the day. This will improve diet quality.

Guidelines suggest that about 20% of your diet should consist of protein. If you exercise frequently, however, you might need more. Some studies have indicated that since protein helps the body’s
metabolism, protein intake is important for effective weight loss, as well. It helps reduce muscle loss while increasing fat loss.

So, how much quality protein should you have in your daily diet? Minimum requirement guidelines suggest the following:

- 10 grams—Babies
- 52 grams—Boys in teenage years
- 46 grams—Girls in teenage years
- 56 grams—Male adults
- 46 grams—Female adults
- 71 grams—Pregnant/lactating women

Many people fall as much as 10% short of these guidelines. Sufficient dietary protein is an important part of your daily diet. It helps build muscle, works as building blocks for enzymes and hormones, and helps your body’s metabolism run proficiently. Protein also helps make meals more filling and helps dieters keep from feeling excessively hungry.

Good Protein Sources Include:

Eggs, Fish, Milk, Cheese, Ricotta, Seafood, Chicken, Turkey, Whey Powder, Nuts, Seeds, Lentils, Chickpeas, Beans, Lamb, Beef, Pork, Venison, Kangaroo (any wild meats available to you)

RULE 3: Eat ‘good’ fats at each meal

This is such a confusing topic. So let me try and break it down for you and hopefully remove the stigma that fats are back for you and your waistline.

Many diets over the years have pushed the fat free options and most food companies have obliged with fat free options of also everything. From skim milk to mayonnaise to ice cream. The problem is that many low fat foods are loaded with sugars or artificial sweeteners to improve their taste and texture. In the long run they do nothing for our health and ultimately our figure. You only need to look around you to see that it is not working. If low fat was the answer we would all have the ideal body by now as there is a low fat option for almost anything. So what is going on?

Fat plays an essential role in our diet. It makes food taste good and makes us feel satisfied, both during and long after a meal so we don’t feel the need to eat so much. Fats also play an essential role in many actions of the body. It is essential for hormone production and balance as well as maintaining healthy digestion, skin and hair. The good types also have anti-inflammatory actions. So to look and feel good fats are an essential part of our diet.

Fats have gotten a bad rap for a couple of reasons. Firstly fats are more energy dense because they have more calories per gram than carbohydrates and proteins. So the theory came about that having higher amounts of carbohydrates and protein would reduce calories and allow you to eat more food.
Unfortunately this is not the case. Secondly fat was believed to turn to fat in our bodies and was thus perceived as a terrible thing in our diet, but we need to change to way we see fats. Any unused calories from any food turns to fat, so it comes down to overall calories in versus what our body burns. So we want to ensure we provide our body with all the nutrients necessary for optimal health and energy to not only look good, but feel fantastic.

What types and how much fat should we have in our diet? Let’s start by breaking down the types of fats as this topic can be a little overwhelming.

1- Trans Fats
These include any oils (usually vegetable oils such as soy, cotton, sunflower and blends, etc) that have been through a structure of changing their molecular structure. This includes putting them under really high heat (such as frying) or making it into margarine. Whilst many health experts give margarine the ‘tick’ of approval because it doesn’t contain saturated fats when we look at the history of margarine it was developed to help fatten cattle up. To make matters worse there certainly hasn’t been a decrease in heart disease (the number 1 cause of death in the western world) since its introduction to our diets. I would encourage you to do some more research into this, but my preference is the naturally sourced butter (in moderation). More on these health benefits shortly.

2- Saturated Fats
Found in animal products such as meat and dairy as well as coconuts. Saturated fats have received a really bad wrap over the last 50 years or so. Many health professionals and food companies have lead the campaign that all saturated fat is terrible for us, believing it is the main cause of heart disease. As I’ve mentioned before, heart disease is the modern world’s number one cause of death. However 100 years ago heart disease was almost unheard of even though our great grandparents enjoyed butter, cream and dripping (all in moderation). Saturated fats are thought to increase cholesterol and block the arteries. However as you would now be aware there are many other factors that can increase cholesterol, and hypothyroidism is one of them.
Heart disease is the biggest killer because there are so many factor involved. Many of these with silent symptoms (that is the individual may not be showing obvious outward signs). The main factors that your doctor monitors are blood pressure and cholesterol. However when we really look into the data, having high cholesterol on its own is not as strongly correlated with heart disease as we are lead to believe. In fact cholesterol is an incredibly important factor in many functions of the body including hormonal balance (especially oestrogen, progesterone and thyroid). However in the case of hypothyroidism cholesterol may be high even if dietary intake is low. This is due to the body’s inability to correctly breakdown fats and use it for energy. One thyroid specialist even uses high cholesterol test results along with case history as the main way of diagnosing hypothyroidism.

What does all this mean? Unfortunately it doesn’t mean you should go out and eat copious amounts of cream, butter and red meat. However there are some health benefits to incorporating small amounts of saturated fats in the diet. The main benefit is that they are in a more natural state they also contain a range of fat soluble vitamins such as A, E and D. My theory is always the less processing and additional ingredients needed to make it palatable, the better it is for our bodies (in moderation of course).
The only vegetable source of saturated fat is coconut oil. Like animal fats coconut oil has
gotten a very bad rap over the years, however there is a new school of thought and lots of
research presenting a very different view. With advocates like Miranda Kerr, coconut oil has
taken on a whole new look and many believe it to be the cure for all. While I am always
sceptical of any food that is praised to ‘cure’ anything, as I have seen many of these claims
come and go, coconut oil does have a place in a healthy diet as well as some specific health
benefits to those suffering from the symptoms of poor thyroid function, or even for anyone
simply anyone simply wanting to gain energy and have glowing skin and hair. Coconut oil is a
saturated fat but unlike those from animal sources in contains a medium chain triglyceride.
Simply put, the body is very easily able to use the oil for energy and less of it becomes
stored.

Another benefit of coconut oil is its high burning point, this means it is an ideal oil to cook
with. Other oils such as olive oil are best used as salad dressings as they oxidise if used for
frying and cooking at high heat. Butter is also safe to heat but only to medium temperatures.

Back to coconut oil. Some people recommend up to 4 tablespoons per day, but I would
suggest a more moderate approach 1-2 teaspoons, no more than once a day. It is still a
calorie and while it does contain health promoting properties it doesn’t contain everything
our bodies need.

3- Polyunsaturated fats
Found in nuts and seeds such as sunflower, sesame, macadamia, almond and olive oil. These
are the best oils to use as salad dressing. The extra virgin is the least processed and is always
the best type to choose. These again are great for use in moderation and contain a balance
of three different types of fatty acids – Omega 3, Omega 6 and Omega 9, all of which have
great health benefits.

Both Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids can be produced by the body. However, Omega 3 is a
little different and is referred to as an essential fatty acid because we specifically need
sources of it from our diet as our bodies cannot produce enough of it and it is essential for
good health.

Omega 3 oils are found in some vegetable and nut sources such as as flaxseeds, walnuts, fish
and seafood as well as some meat (depending on the animals diet). The best sources are oily
fish such as Atlantic salmon and tuna.

There are 2 main types of Omega 3 fatty acids – DHA and EPA. Let’s take a look at them in
more detail:

DHA- is found in very high concentrations in our brain. Babies in the womb have a very high
requirement of DHA as it is known to support their brain development and eye function. It is
important for women to ensure adequate intake during pregnancy to ensure the babies’
optimal development but also many studies are showing that women with postnatal
depression are more likely to have low levels of DHA (as their supplies are depleted during pregnancy and lactation by the baby).
More research is underway with very positive correlations that low levels of DHA are associated with all forms of depression.
Knowing that hypothyroid sufferers often have poor fat digestion and increased symptoms of depression it is essential to ensure adequate amounts of DHA in the diet, whilst also supporting the body with optimal fat digestion.

EPA is an important anti-inflammatory. Inflammation is more common in our bodies that many of us realise and it can play havoc on our health. But what is inflammation and why does it happen?

Many of us are acutely aware of how our body responds to an injury. For example, a sprained ankle is not only painful and difficult to walk on, but it also becomes swollen and bruised. This is the body’s unique way of protecting itself. The immune system sends out messages to the affected area that causes it to swell, some of the factors found in the fluid that creates the swelling are nutrients and immune cells to assist healing, but the swelling also helps protect the area from further damage. The inflammation stops us from freely using the injured joint, or area until it can heal or repair. While this is a great mechanism for acute injuries the downside of this process is that it happens happens as a result of poor diet, ageing, illness, stress and excessive exercise. Hypothyroidism, especially Hashimoto’s, creates an increase in inflammation. The signs of this inflammation are not as obvious as an injury, it is often low grade and long term. So while inflammation is trying to protect our organs over time it can unfortunately damage organs and decrease their effectiveness.

Diet is of the utmost importance in reducing inflammation. It needs to contain plenty of foods rich in EPA such as fish, nuts and some green vegetables. Some herbs that are also known to help reduce inflammation include ginger and turmeric. There are also foods known to increase inflammation and should be avoided. These include sugar, white flour, preservatives, artificial sweeteners, and large amounts of poor quality meats and dairy, as well as most processed foods. This program will take all the guess work out as it uses the principles of incorporating anti-inflammatory foods and supplements and reduces or removes foods known to cause inflammation.

One of the great benefits of reducing inflammation in the system is an anti-ageing effect. Inflammation has been found in high levels of those with age related conditions such as arthritis, diabetes and heart disease. Also the skin and how we look has been shown to be significantly affected by inflammation in the body. So reducing inflammation will help you to have glowing healthy skin, to look younger and feel younger.

As we mentioned, fish is one of the best sources of Omega 3. However there is concern with much of our seafood and its levels of mercury and heavy metals. This is especially of concern in pregnancy and also in conditions such as hypothyroidism, chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia which many have their underlying cause in heavy metal toxicity.
I was lucky enough to sit down with one of the world’s leading experts on mercury and heavy metal detoxification. His recommendations were that even during pregnancy or a detox flaky white fish and tinned or fresh salmon or tuna served 3 times per week was safe to eat. However fish best avoided are swordfish and barrumundi. At 3 serves per week this will help to provide a small amount of omega 3 but during pregnancy, with any signs of depression, hypothyroidism, chronic fatigue or fibromyalgia supplementing with a premium quality fish oil supplement may be required.

**Rule 4: Enjoy ‘good’ carbs 1-2 times per day**

Carbohydrates are good for you. Yes, you read that correctly. Good carbohydrates are an important part of a healthy balanced diet. You will still be able to lose weight plus you will feel full, satisfied and have increased energy. Carbohydrates are not bad for us if eaten in moderation ….but it is most important that we choose the right types.

Carbohydrates can be broken down into two main categories complex and simple. Simple carbohydrates are the ones that we really want to avoid. These include sugar, honey, maple syrup, high fructose corn syrup, etc. It’s best to avoid sugar altogether but if you do need a little sweetness every now and again raw honey or maple syrup are better options as they are from natural sources and also contain vitamins and minerals. Again moderation is key. I will explain more about this in the chapter on foods to avoid.

The other type of carbohydrate is called complex. This refers to slower digesting carbohydrates that are (in their natural state) high in fibre and vitamins and minerals. There are 2 important factors to look at to choose the right carbohydrates. The first is the amount of fibre and the second is the level of gluten in the grain.

We all know that fibre is important for digestive health yet according to the World Health Organisation (WHO) the majority of Westerner’s take less than half their daily recommended fibre intake. They have also shown a strong link between low fibre intake and higher risks of many chronic diseases, including cancer. It is also important for anyone with or suspected to have low thyroid function. Having a slower metabolism also slows how the body digests food, which is why constipation is such a common problem. As a result the body’s elimination of toxins and waste is impaired, which can lead to further damage to the thyroid as well as difficulty for the liver to convert T4 to the active T3. So fibre is essential to help flush everything, regularly, through and out of the body.

There are two types of this complex fibre that are important for healthy bowel function and elimination. These are soluble and insoluble. Soluble fibre is found in large amounts in vegetables and fruit. This is one very important reason fruit and vegetables are so important in this program and to thyroid health. Insoluble fibre is found in grains and some starchy vegetables.
The reason most people have a low fibre intake even though they eat lots of carbohydrate rich foods is because most sources of carbohydrates these days have been highly refined. For example, white flour in bread, pasta, cereals, cakes, biscuits, pizza and much more make up the largest part of many peoples diets. White flour however has had most of its good fibre content removed. This process involves removing the outer husk of the wheat which is loaded with fibre and important vitamins and minerals such as B vitamins and magnesium. The remainder is then bleached and processed. So very little nutrient is left once we get to eat it.

One of the most popular diets around at the moment is the high protein, low carbohydrates diet. I have seen many of my clients (and even tried for myself) the struggle of sticking to this plan for a few days let alone following it for a lifetime. Some people however do well on these program and will lose a lot of weight, particularly in the first few days. This is very motivating and helps people stick to it for a little longer, but in general most people regain the weight within a short period of time. I spent many years working for a company with this type of diet plan where I worked with hundreds of people. The people that I saw struggle the most were those that also showed thyroid symptoms.

High protein diets significantly reduce carbohydrate intake from grains, fruit and vegetables. This reduction sends the body into a state called ketosis. This is a point when your body no longer has any glucose to burn for energy so it has to dip into your fat stores. This sounds great in theory and can work for some, but the reality for most is that it’s incredibly difficult to stick to. Most people feel ravenously hungry after a few days and your energy levels take a huge dive. It becomes hard to concentrate and most people become very constipated. Unfortunately if you have thyroid problems with underlying heavy metal toxicity this sudden switch and release of stored fat can release stored toxins and chemicals that lead to headaches, bloating, lethargy and just feeling pretty crap. This can also lead to further damage to the thyroid gland.

This is made even worse as many of these programs recommend replacing meals and snacks with their protein bars and shakes. These are often loaded with soy isolates and artificial sweeteners. (You will learn more about why these are so bad for your thyroid health a bit later).

**RULE 5: Have two free meals per week!!**

Yes you read this correctly. You can eat whatever you like to replace up to 2 meals per week.

One of the main reasons I believe this so important is to take away the stress. This program is not a fad quick fix weight loss diet. It is designed to support a healthy body. People often ask me how long they need to stay on the program and the best answer is you stay on it as long as you want to reduce you thyroid symptoms, increase energy, balance your mood and maintain a healthy weight.
For many people this way of eating will be a big change. This change can create a stress, when you think you won’t be able to ever eat your favourite foods again, or worse still avoid social situations because the food choices won’t fit into your diet. I have seen this time and time again. It is impossible to follow long term. There will always be special events and birthdays as well as temptations. I have found that the best way to reduce this stress and still stay focused on your long term health goals is to allow for some free meals up to 2 times per week.

The most important thing to remember during your free meals is to maintain moderation. The best way to do this is to set yourself a time frame, ideally no more than 2 hours. If you try to extent that lunch to afternoon tea, dinner and beyond a lot of damage can be done! It is best not to go absolutely crazy with the amount of food or drink (especially alcohol and soft drinks). I would also recommend paying attention to how you feel during your free meals as well as the following morning. The surprising thing is that many people on this plan find that they feel less and less like having “free” meals and often choose the healthiest options, because they know just how good they will feel as a result. The other benefit of this plan is that I will educate you on what your healthiest options are for you even if you’re out and about so you can still enjoy a great lifestyle without stress or struggle.
Superfoods

What is a Superfood?

If someone told you there was a “superfood” that could lower your cholesterol, decrease your chances of heart disease, improve your thyroid health, reduce your risk of cancer, and could top it all off with improving your mood, what would you do?

Remember, this is a “superfood,” not a drug. It has no side effects. Would you be the first in line for a life-time supply? Who wouldn’t be? There would be a line that was much bigger than any “Black Friday” sale has ever seen. Guess what? You can find these life-altering “superfoods” every day at your local grocery store!

Don’t be skeptical. Trust me, they’re there. You may already eat some of them, and if you do, that’s great. Others, however, you may have walked past without a giving them a single thought.

You may be wondering, why should you change your diet to include these superfoods? There are many reasons why you should alter your diet and make these foods part of it. These include:

- They make you feel happy. Depression is common in those with thyroid disorders, so these foods are more important. Even if you are healthy, these foods can still make you feel better.

- They can help you to lose weight because you will be eating foods that satisfy you. There’s a difference between being full and having your body feel satisfied after a meal. These foods satisfy your body instead of increasing cravings.

- They give you a higher energy level, so you’ll be able to increase your activity. With our busy lifestyles, everyone needs to be operating at optimal energy level. Another good benefit of higher energy is you’ll be able to do more which will help promote weight loss.

- They help detoxify your body. There are a large number of toxins in everything from the air we breathe to the bottles we drink our water from. These foods help cleanse your body and get rid of all these toxins.

- They help you think more clearly. If you feel you’re walking around in a constant state of “brain fog,” these foods are just what you need to help you think and focus more clearly.

- They help to improve your immune system. Everyone knows how important the immune system is to the overall function of your body. Keeping this system operating at its best keeps you healthy and feeling great.
• They help your skin appear clearer and brighter. People, especially women, spend a small fortune on beauty products to give them beautiful, healthier looking skin. With a change in your diet, you could improve your skin without the cost or all that goop.

It is no secret that the effect a proper diet has on your health and how you feel can be an astounding one. Even those who are relatively healthy can make improvements in their diet. People could probably improve at least 50% of their suffering by simply changing the foods that they eat and the way they move.

It isn’t just a matter of eating one certain food for each ailment. Healthy diets incorporate a wide variety of superfoods that will help to maintain weight, fight off disease, and help you live longer, healthier lives. No matter which superfoods you choose, there is one thing you can be certain of. All of the foods will be unprocessed foods.

One of the greatest things you can do for your thyroid is to give it proper nutrition. Nutrients such as iodine, vitamin A, zinc, tyrosine, and healthy doses of antioxidants are essential for healthy thyroid function. These nutrients combined with superfoods can help you have excellent thyroid health.

Types of Foods That are Superfoods

If you think that anything that is good for you tastes bad, you’ll be in for a great surprise. You might not like all of them, but even the pickiest pallet will find many of these foods to be both nutritious and delicious.

Are you still a little skeptical? You won’t be by the time you finish reading. Here are a few super delicious superfoods and how they work to improve your overall health to keep you feeling great.

• Berries—Now I’ve got your attention. After all, who can “not” love berries? Berries are a top choice of doctors and nutritionists and are considered an antioxidant superfood. They are packed with antioxidants and phytofavonoids and are high in both vitamin C and potassium.

Blueberries can help lower your risk of cancer and heart disease, and are also an excellent natural antiflammatory. Inflammation is a key in almost all chronic diseases, including thyroid disease.

When it comes to choosing what berries to eat, remember the darker the berry, the more antioxidants it will have. Having a one-half cup serving of berries each day can make all the difference. Often people who are single and living alone don’t buy fruits like they should, because before get a chance to eat them all, they go bad. The good thing about berries is that frozen berries are just as good for you as fresh ones.
• Acai—The Acai berry is a purple fruit which resembles grapes. You can buy Acai supplements in the form of pills, powder, and juice. You can find it at department stores, supermarkets and health food stores.

They contain Anthocyanins and flavonoids. These are both powerful antioxidants which are excellent for helping you cope with the stress in your life. They are also a big help in removing toxins from your body and improving your digestion.

Your body produces harmful byproducts called free radicals. Research has shown that Acai helps neutralize the free radicals. By eating a diet rich in antioxidants you can deter both the aging and the disease processes.

• Alfalfa—The list of nutrients in Alfalfa is very long and includes calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, and phosphorous along with vitamins A, C, thiamine, riboflavin, and niacin. Alfalfa can be purchased from most supermarkets, or you can actually buy alfalfa sprout seeds at health food stores, feed stores, or on-line seed suppliers and grow them yourself. They are a delicious addition to any salad or meal.

• “Super” Greens – these foods are one of nature’s miracles, they are high in detoxifying properties as well as vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. A great way to start the day!

1. Spirulina—This super green is high in protein and can help improve your immune system, lower cholesterol, and aids in stabilizing your blood sugar levels. You can buy supplements in either pill or powder form at health food stores or at your local supermarket.

2. Chlorella, wheat grass, and barley—These come in both pill and powder supplement form and they help to nourish the body and protect it from harmful chemicals. You can find them at health food stores, vitamin stores, pharmacies, and department stores.

Chlorella is specifically high in carotenoids like beta-carotene, and is known to be an excellent form of the crucial Vitamin A for thyroid function. It is one of the best green foods you can buy for liver detoxification. Optimal liver function is imperative for good thyroid health conversion of T4 to T3 which mainly takes place in the liver.

• Garlic—While garlic may be bad for vampires, it is excellent for humans. It is well known as a natural health remedy and has been used to treat many ailments for many years. The good thing about garlic is that you don’t need to limit yourself to fresh garlic. Garlic powder or dried garlic flakes are equally effective, and they are easy for you to store. It is good for helping your immune system as well as for heart health.
• Onions—Onions are good for more than improving the flavor of your food. They are rich in selenium, which is an antioxidant important for thyroid health. Onions can actually help to support your immune system.

• Cruciferous vegetables—these vegetables are another excellent source of nutrients, but with low thyroid function should be used with caution. These include:
  o Arugula
  o Bok choy
  o Broccoli
  o Brussels sprouts
  o Cabbage
  o Cauliflower
  o Chinese cabbage
  o Collard greens
  o Daikon radish
  o Horseradish
  o Kale
  o Kohlrabi
  o Land cress
  o Mustard greens
  o Radish
  o Rutabaga
  o Shepherd's purse
  o Turnip
  o Watercress

They are all rich in Vitamins C, E, and K, beta carotene, manganese, zinc, and selenium. They are also loaded with antioxidants, and they help your body by working as a natural anti-inflammatory. The cruciferous vegetables contain high amounts of sulfur. This is important in Phase II of the liver detoxification process which is essential not only for our general wellbeing but also the conversion of T4 to T3, and thyroid health.

A word of caution with cruciferous vegetables: There is evidence that consuming excessive amounts of cruciferous vegetables can decrease thyroid function due to its goitrogenic action. As it does however have some great benefits for our health. I would recommend these in moderation of no more than 2 serve per day. This means that juicing with Kale and watercress would be out, but a serve of broccoli with dinner would be fine. There is evidence that cooking the vegetables, even lightly, reduces the negative effects as does fermenting the food (for example cabbage in the form of Sauerkraut). But I have yet to find anyone too concerned about only being allowed 1 serve of Brussels sprouts per day!
Fermented Foods- The most common are sauerkraut, kefir and miso. By fermenting foods it adds beneficial bacteria to our diets. These are significantly lacking in our Western Diet and lead to an imbalance in digestive and liver health. By addressing this imbalance with natural foods we can help the detoxification processes of the body as well as helping create regular bowel movements, which is often a struggle for those with low thyroid function.

These foods are becoming more fashionable and therefore more readily available. I do find that to get the good quality ones, that is without added preservatives or ingredients, it is best to get them from a health food store or make them at home yourself. At first I found the idea of this a little overwhelming, but it has turned out to be really easy. The alternative was that I purchased from the health food store in bulk. These foods have a very good storage life in the fridge and I found I only need to visit the health food store once a month or so.

Sauerkraut is most commonly made from cabbage but many versions also have other vegetables added (such as carrots and herbs). It has a very tangy flavor and is great to add to salads and stir fries (but should not be cooked). I recommend adding 1 tsp to begin with and build up to almost ½ cup per day. It will have amazing benefits for your digestive system.

Kefir is made from milk. It has the “good” bacteria added to it and has a thick, creamy texture with a slightly sour taste. I have come to really enjoy the taste but I know for many who are so used to very sweet foods it would be best to start with just a small amount (approx. 1/8 cup) mixed with fruit and honey. Once you get used to the taste you can build to ½ cup per day. This is best as a healthy snack or for breakfast.

Miso is fermented soy. You will see in the next chapter that my recommendation is to avoid all soy products when you have low thyroid function. Fermented soy however is the exception. The two soy products that are fermented are miso and temph (similar to tofu). The process of fermenting the soy removes the goitogenic properties. The fermentation also promotes the growth of healthy bacteria so is great for gut health. Miso is great as a healthy warm drink in between meals, or as an addition to sauces and marinades for a rich, salty taste.

Herbs and spices—The herbs and spices that we use in our everyday foods can have some amazing health benefits. Not only do they add amazing flavor but also high amounts of antioxidants. We have in modern society moved away from cooking our own foods, instead eating takeaways or using premade sauces to flavor our foods. It can be a big change to go back to creating your own spice and herb mixes. But it doesn’t need to be hard and you will find the benefits truly worthwhile when you get to enjoy the health benefits and the real flavor of your food.

Some of my favourite herbs and spices include:

- Turmeric- helps to reduce inflammation
• Chili- increases metabolism and circulation
• Ginger- increases metabolism and circulation
• Rosemary- may improve memory and concentration
• Cinnamon- helps to balance blood sugar levels
• Parsley- assists in detoxification

This is by no means an exhaustive list, I find that the local spice stores are the best place to stock up, the herbs and spices are so fresh the taste is very different. You will be blown away by the smells as you walk in and get some real inspiration of what and how to use them. I also like to grow my own fresh herbs. I am a terrible green thumb, and I can pretty much destroy any plant in a few days. However even I have been able to keep a small herb garden on my kitchen window, it is so simple and the herbs thrive without too much care, plus the freshness adds not only great flavour but far more health benefits to our foods. Go crazy with your herbs and spices. Try new ones in new ways!

• Nuts and Seeds— Delicious, nutritious, portable and easy snacks! Nuts are loaded with good fats, fibre and protein, as well as vitamins and minerals. But I would say there are two cautions. 1- They are highly addictive! I always struggle to stop at one, and while they are healthy overconsumption will lead to weight gain (believe me I know). 2- To make a complete protein make sure to always mix 3 different types of nuts and seeds together. My favourites are almond, Brazil, cashew, walnut, macadamia, pepita, sunflower seed and hazelnuts.

Brazil nuts are an excellent source of selenium, which is important for those suffering from thyroid conditions. Eating as few as two Brazil nuts a day can actually boost your selenium intake.

There has been a great deal of research done recently that showed people who consumed nuts (moderate amounts) as a snack lost more weight than those who skipped snacks or ate fruit alone. So, no need to be scared of the fats in nuts as long as you eat the right amounts. This is approximately 1 small handful for a snack.

• Celtic sea salt-Celtic sea salt is a coarse gray salt that is unrefined and contains over 80 minerals, trace minerals, and other important elements. It has a high mineral content, so it can work successfully with the thyroid, to provide healthy nutrients to your body.

Celtic sea salt helps to alkalise the body as well as balancing electrolytes. Fluid retention can often be a problem with low thyroid function due to an imbalance in electrolytes. It can be purchased at health food stores.

• Quinoa- Here are seven health benefits of quinoa:

1. **Quinoa is one of the most protein-rich foods we can eat.** It is a complete protein containing all nine essential amino acids.
2. **Quinoa contains almost twice as much fibre as most other grains.** Fibre is most widely known to relieve constipation. It also helps to prevent heart disease by reducing high blood pressure and diabetes. Fibre lowers cholesterol and glucose levels, may lower your risk of developing haemorrhoids and may help you to lose weight as it takes a longer time to chew than does other foods because it makes you feel fuller for longer and is less “energy dense” which means it has fewer calories for the same volume of food.

3. **Quinoa contains Iron.** Iron helps keep our red blood cells healthy and is the basis of haemoglobin formation. Iron carries oxygen from one cell to another and supplies oxygen to our muscles to aid in their contraction. Iron also increases brain function because the brain takes in about 20% of our blood oxygen. There are many benefits of iron some more of which include neurotransmitter synthesis, regulation of body temperature, aids enzyme activity and energy metabolism.

4. **Quinoa contains lysine.** Lysine is mainly essential for tissue growth and repair.

5. **Quinoa is rich in magnesium.** Magnesium helps to relax blood vessels and is known by naturopaths as the great relaxant. Other health benefits of magnesium include transmission of nerve impulses, body temperature regulation, detoxification, energy production, and the formation of healthy bones and teeth.

6. **Quinoa is high in Riboflavin (B2).** B2 improves energy metabolism within brain and muscle cells and is known to help create proper energy production in cells.

7. **Quinoa has a high content of manganese.** Manganese is an antioxidant, which helps to prevent damage of mitochondria during energy production as well as to protect red blood cells and other cells from injury by free radicals.

- **Sweet Potatoes—**Sweet potatoes are healthier for you than regular potatoes, because they are rich in beta carotene and vitamin A. They contain natural unprocessed carbohydrates, and are loaded with fibre and vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Plus they have a sweet taste. You want to be sure not to eat them in excess, because they are still a complex carbohydrate, but in moderation, they can be good for you.

  Sweet potato is a real favourite of mine, mashed, baked, or grilled. My current favourite is baking in a little coconut oil and topping with stir fried vegetables, cottage cheese and pepitas. (It’s delicious!)

- **Omega 3-Rich Fish—**Excellent for memory, joint, and heart health. Being high in monounsaturated fats, they can help lower cholesterol. Some research shows that this superfood can also reduce depression. Fatty, cold-water fish are where Omega-3s are most prevalent. Fish that are wild are better than those that are
farmed. Fish such as salmon, herring, sardines and mackerel are high in Omega-3s. You can also find Omega 3s in fortified eggs, walnuts, and flax seed.

While getting it naturally is both delicious and healthy, you can also buy high quality Omega 3 supplements at health food stores and pharmacies.

- Dark chocolate—Yes, I said chocolate! Dark chocolate is loaded with antioxidants and can help lower blood pressure. It is recommended that you look for chocolate with 80% or higher cocoa content. The darker the chocolate, the better it is for you. Also, the darker it is, the lower the fat and sugar content. Who said eating healthy couldn’t be delicious?

- Sea vegetables—You know vegetables grow in the soil, but did you know they grow in soil both below and above the water? Sea vegetables are easy to cook, are plentiful in supply, and are full of flavor.

You don’t find sea vegetables in many Westerners diets, but they’ve been a part of Asian cuisines for many years. In fact, you’ve probably tasted sea vegetables and never knew it. A large number of food manufactures use them as stabilizers or thickeners in their products.

These vegetables are full of chlorophyll and fiber. They give foods a salty flavor. The flavor comes from having a blend of potassium, sodium, magnesium, calcium, iron, and phosphorous.

These are an excellent choice for thyroid health. They are the highest natural source of iodine as well as many other trace minerals. Kelp has four times the amount of iron than beef has and 600 times more iodine than the amount found in shellfish. They not only help your thyroid function, but improve overall function of your metabolism.

Here are a few sea vegetables you may have tried or may want to try to help you achieve a nutritious lifestyle:

1. Nori—If you’ve ever eaten sushi rolls, you may be familiar with this since it’s used to make them. It comes in different colors like marine green and dark purple. You can crush it into flakes or cut it into strips. It contains both vitamin C and iodine, and you can find Nori either untoasted or toasted. It makes an excellent condiment for dishes like soup, salad, rice, grains or casseroles.

2. Agar Agar—This is a clear gelatin that is tasteless. It’s a great substitute for chemical-based or animal gelatin. You can buy it in opaque flakes.
Created by a combination of sea vegetables, it is just like any other gelatin. You can use it in things like pies, jellies, and puddings. It will thicken at room temperature when you dissolve it in hot liquids.

3. Arame—These have a mild, sweet flavor. They’re loaded with calcium, iodine, vitamin A, dietary fiber, and potassium.

All you have to do is rinse them and soak them in warm water for up to 15 minutes prior to cooking. Then you can use them in mini things including omelets, quiches, pasta salad, stir-fry, or even tossed into a cold salad.

4. Dulse—This vegetable is actually a reddish-brown color. It’s loaded with protein and potassium. You can find it powdered as a condiment, or in whole stringy leaves. They have a texture that is chewy and a mild salty taste. If you use sesame oil and pan fry Dulse, it becomes crispy and light. You can use it in a salad or on a sandwich to give your meal a delicious flavor and they will add a little crunch. A lot of people compare Dulse to bacon.

5. Kombu—This comes in thick sheets or strips. It’s purple and packs in iodine, magnesium, calcium, and iron to your new, nutritious diet.

It doesn’t take a lot to keep you healthy. In fact, a piece of Kombu not much larger than your thumbnail added to beans will make them easier to digest. You can add them to rice and soup as well. You should remember when you use it that it will double its size and soak up excess water like a sponge. Because of this, you’ll want to make sure you have extra broth in what you cook using Kombu.

6. Wakame—This is the most tender of all and it will add potassium and dietary fiber to your daily diet. You need to soak it for approximately 10 minutes. Be sure to remember that it can expand up to seven times its original size. When you soak it and then cook it, it becomes silky and practically melts in your mouth. You can use it to add minerals to your favorite soups, snacks, roasts, or stir fries. You can also sprinkle it on stews or salads.

- Coconut- Coconuts have been gaining a lot of popularity over the last few years. For over 30 years the Western world shunned coconuts as being high in saturated fats so therefore being an unhealthy option. However new research is showing that the type of saturated fat in coconuts is a medium chain triglyceride which is used very differently by the body. It is believed to have specific benefits and effects on the
metabolism and thyroid (which was discussed in the previous chapter). As also mentioned previously coconut should be used in moderation.

All of the coconut can be used:

- Oil- we discussed the amazing benefits of this in moderation in Part 2
- Water- contains high amounts of electrolytes and is a great alternative to sugar laden electrolyte drinks such as Gatorade. I love to use it as an alternative to milk in smoothies, gives and amazingly sweet and refreshing taste.
- Flesh (fresh, dried chips, desiccated)- great snack high in fibre and nutrients. If using a fresh young coconut for the water make sure to also scoop out the delicious flesh.
- Milk and Cream- excellent to use in decadent curries, creamy drinks and smoothies

- Whey Protein Powder – This may seem like a strange one as my philosophy revolves around whole, natural foods and whey protein always comes in a box. Whey has to go through an extraction and drying process, so why is it a superfood. Protein is essential for thyroid health. Whey protein contains a great source of protein that is low in fat and helps us feel full and satisfied. Most importantly it is extremely convenient. In this day and age we are all so busy and need some super easy to prepare options. Proteins such as meat, eggs, etc can be time consuming to cook, difficult to carry when out and it’s not ideal to eat too much.

Not all Whey Protein Powders are created equal. It is important to look at several features when looking for a protein powder. Firstly the best whey proteins are made from unpasteurised grass fed cow’s milk. This high quality milk also means higher quality whey protein. If possible find a protein powder that has been made using very low heat to ensure that it maintains a high level of nutrients.

Secondly, Protein Powder should not contain artificial colour, flavours or sweeteners. The main ingredients should be whey protein isolate and whey protein concentrates. This means that many of the “bodybuilder” style protein powders are out.

Whey Protein contains tyrosine which is essential for thyroid hormone production. It also assists to support liver detoxification, so supports the conversion of thyroid hormone T4 into the active T3.

When you look for “superfoods,” look for a variety of color, texture, shapes, and flavor. No one likes eating boring meals that don’t taste good. Variety makes your meals seem exciting.
As you may have noticed there are a lot of superfoods. You would probably struggle to eat all these foods everyday. I will give you a plan at the end of the book which includes a lot of these over a week.

Get away from focusing on calories! Calories don’t determine the amount of vitamins, enzymes, minerals, or nutrients a food contains. Focus on foods that are nutrient-rich instead of those that are low calorie foods. Superfoods contain nutrients such as protein, carbohydrates and fats. They will also give your body a lot of nutrition in every single bite. When you stop focusing on calories, you can focus on actually consuming good quality food that will help you to feel full and satisfied as well as providing all the nutrients that are essential for optimal thyroid function.
Part 4

What Not to Eat?

Which Foods Should You Avoid

If you have a thyroid condition, you might be surprised at how great a benefit you can get from even a few small changes in your diet. I’ve discussed the benefits of a healthy diet and told you the foods that are good for you to help you maintain optimal thyroid health.

There are also a few foods you should avoid eating if you want to keep your thyroid working at its best. They can actually cause thyroid problems or cause you to experience a worsening of your current thyroid disorder symptoms. These include:

1- Soy
2- Gluten
3- Sugar
4- Processed Foods
5- Artificial Sweeteners

Soy

Though soy is thought of universally to be a health food, it may not be good for everyone. There has been a long-standing concern about the negative effects soy has on thyroid function and production of your thyroid hormones.

There is a great deal of mixed research on the health benefits of soy, but from what I have studied and what I have seen in both myself and my clients I would not recommend anyone with, or suspected of a thyroid condition to include soy in their diet.

The reason soy has such a damaging effect is two-fold. Firstly soy is a member of the goitrogens food group which is thought to cause enlarging of the thyroid. Goitrogens, or at least some of them, have an anti-thyroid effect. They slow down the function of your thyroid and have in fact actually caused thyroid disease in some cases.

Secondly, soy is phyto estrogenic. Essentially this means that it mimic’s oestrogen in the body. As mentioned previously in the book, oestrogen dominance is one of the underlying reasons thyroid disease is so prominent in our society, and since soy has increased so significantly in our diets so has low thyroid function.

Soy has been touted as the new health food that is low in saturated fat and therefore great for our heart health and a much better choice than meat or dairy. Unfortunately while high amounts of fat and obesity are definitely contributing to the increased incidence of heart disease saturated fat intake alone may not be the main reason (The World Health Organisation is now looking at sugar as being the biggest cause of Cardiovascular disease). So, good quality dairy and some meat, in moderation, are in fact good for our health, providing us with fat soluble vitamins, zinc, Omega 3,
magnesium, iron, calcium, potassium, B vitamins (and more). These are all essential for optimal thyroid health.

Going back to the roots of soy, it was first used in the Japanese diet as miso and tofu. In the 1950’s Western medicine was looking for a way to reduce the rising incidence of heart disease and discovered the low levels of heart disease amongst the Japanese. This was believed to be due to the low level of saturated fat and high soy intake of the Japanese diet. Unfortunately however Japan also has the highest incidence of thyroid disease, especially Hashimoto’s, as named by a Japanese doctor who first documented the disease.

The most common people to suffer from low thyroid function and Hashimoto’s are women, they are often diagnosed in their late 20’s – early thirties. This is a time when many women have been ‘health conscious’ and like myself used soy as a substitute for meat and dairy as a way to lose weight and gain good health. Unfortunately this may be the reason for the increase in thyroid symptoms for many and I would recommend removing it all from your diet.

There are a lot of foods that contain soy. These include: tofu, many vegetarian sausages and meat alternative, soy milk, soy cheese, soy ice cream, soy yoghurt, soy sauce, protein bars and shakes, as well as many packaged foods and drinks. It is essential to always read the label.

Gluten

The biggest reasons to cut gluten from your diet is the impact it has on your thyroid. Several studies have shown a strong link between autoimmune thyroid disorders and gluten intolerance (Hashimoto’s and Grave’s Disease- which are believed to account for 90% of all thyroid dysfunction). The molecular structure of gluten, gliadin, resembles the thyroid gland. When gluten enters the gut, your thyroid marks it for destruction. The antibodies cause the body to attack your thyroid tissue. If you have autoimmune thyroid disease and eat gluten, your immune system will declare war on your thyroid. Since your thyroid plays a major part in the functions of so much of your body, this in turn, is declaring war on your entire body and increasing the symptoms of thyroid disease.

Gluten is a protein found in rye, wheat, barley and some oats. This means that many of our favourite foods contain gluten. Such as: bread, pasta, pizza, cereals, biscuits, cakes, pastry, muffins, sauces for thickening, batters. This also includes what we often think of as healthy wholegrains. It is surprising to many people with thyroid disease how much of a staple these are in our diets and how different they feel once they stop eating them. It is important to read the your label to identify gluten as it can be sneaked into many foods that you would never think of, including: soy sauce, most packaged foods, sauces, soups, even ice cream.

Luckily there are many fantastic gluten free options of almost any foods available today. However if you wish to indulge in a gluten free chocolate brownie make sure it is only as part of your free meal. Just because its gluten free doesn’t mean that it’s good for you!

The effects of gluten on thyroid health are believed to last for up to 6 months. So it is important to remove it from your diet completely for optimal thyroid function. This means that even on your free
meals this is one food ingredient you should still steer clear of. Luckily there are some great gluten free options available for just about everything as mentioned above.

Many people believe that gluten intolerance leads only to digestive complaints. However these are just the tip of the iceberg and for some may not even be a major complaint. Gluten intolerance creates high levels of inflammation in the body, especially if there is also an autoimmune condition. As a result some symptoms that develop include:

- Joint and muscle aches and pain
- Fatigue, even chronic fatigue
- Brain fog
- Dry skin
- Eczema and psoriasis
- Headaches
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Anemia and malnutrition (due to inability to absorb nutrients in small intestines)

All of these just further add to the list of symptoms of low thyroid function.

Sugar

We discussed in the earlier chapter on Sugar Imbalances and the impact this has on your health and the health of both the adrenal and thyroid glands. If you suffer from low thyroid function having even a small excess of sugar will exacerbate symptoms and cause long term havoc. While I do not recommend reducing all carbohydrates from your diet, highly refined sugars and all forms of simple sugars should be significantly removed or reduced.

Common symptoms include:

- Craving sweets
- Irritable if meals are missed
- Depend on coffee or other kinds of caffeine for energy
- Eating relieves fatigue
- Feel shaky, or jittery
- Feel agitated or nervous
- Get upset easily
- Poor memory, forgetful
- Blurred vision
- Fatigue after meals (this is the hallmark symptom)
- General fatigue
- Constant hunger
- Craving for sweets that isn’t relieved when you eat sweets
• Must have sweets after meals
• Waist girth equal to or larger than hip girth
• Frequent urination
• Increased appetite and thirst
• Difficulty losing weight
• Migrating aches and pains

If you are really struggling with sugar cravings and need to add some sweetness to your foods and drinks, I would recommend Stevia. It is a herb that is very readily available in most supermarkets. It is also available in powder, tablets and liquid forms. The new types are also much better than they used to be. If you have tried them in the past you may have found that they had a bitter aftertaste, but that is no longer the case. It is much sweeter spoon for spoon than sugar so you often only need to use a very small amount.

Stevia is derived from a plant. It has a very small amount of calories per serve. The main benefit is that it does not have any effect on the blood sugar levels, in fact some research suggests that it actually has a stabilising effect. Another benefit is that it is helping to feed the good bacteria in the gut. Unlike sugar which is the best friend of the unhealthy “bad” bacteria that causes so many digestive problems for people in Western society.

Processed Foods

The majority of the foods we spend our money on are foods that have been processed. The amount of processed food some people intake can be as high as 95%. Habitual consumption of processed foods, junk foods, and fast food can wreck havoc on the thyroid. These foods are high in calories from trans and saturated fats, sugar and salt and low in nutrients.

Everyone seems to have a hectic lifestyle and we all want things to be quick and easy. It can often lead to eating a lot of packaged foods. This will always make it difficult to manage our weight and general wellbeing. Making healthier food choices will allow you to enjoy a variety of foods that will provide your body with essential nutrients for optimal health and thyroid function.

Artificial Sweeteners

Having issues with your thyroid can cause you to gain weight. Your thyroid controls your body’s metabolism, so weight gain is common. Because of this, many people use low fat and low calorie products that contain artificial sweeteners. Artificial sweeteners contain chemical compounds such
as aspartame or sucralose. They are not healthy and can be harmful to your thyroid. People use artificial sweeteners because they think it’s healthier than sugar because of the low-calorie content. The chemicals in the artificial sweeteners, however, are toxic poisons. In fact, they may actually encourage weight gain.

Since the chemicals in these sweeteners are not natural, your body doesn’t recognize them. When your body craves something sweet, artificial sweeteners will not satisfy the craving. Some researchers have actually shown that many people who consume artificial sweeteners have an increased consumption of total sugars in their diet. Artificial sweeteners are greatly sweeter than sugar. When you consume artificial on a regular basis, products that aren’t sweetened may taste bland, so you need to add more sugar and sweetness to your foods and drinks.

Artificial sweeteners can cause you to suffer from many unpleasant side effects. Here are a few of the side effects believed to be caused by the ingredients in artificial sweeteners:

- Anxiety
- Unexplained pain
- Depression
- Dizziness
- Brain fog
- Fatigue
- Fibromyalgia
- Headaches
- Hyperthyroidism
- Hypothyroidism
- Insomnia
- Restless legs
- Memory loss

As you can see, the foods you eat and/or don’t eat play an important role in your thyroid function. In other words, the old phrase you’ve probably heard since you were a child, “You are what you eat” is most certainly true. It is important to cut soy, gluten, sugar, processed foods and artificial
sweeteners from your diet if you wish to increase energy, lose weight, improve digestion and reach optimal health. This can seem a little overwhelming as these are foods that make up most of a ‘regular’ Westener’s diet. I would encourage you to look at these foods carefully in your diet but to spend most of your time focusing on the amazing delicious healthy foods that you can add to your diet such as those in the superfoods section. It is most important to simply focus on fresh whole foods in a state as close to what nature intended.
Part 5

Drinks

If what you eat is important for thyroid health, it stands to reason that what you drink should be important as well. After all, it is consumed by your body just like food. You should do your best to not only eat healthy, but drink healthy!

Here is some valuable information you should know about the things you should and things you shouldn’t drink. These will have a great effect on the way you feel and also have an effect on the quality of your thyroid health:

1. **Water**—Water is a necessity for every living thing. Without it, we simply can’t exist. It is the quality of the water you drink that is important for those with hypothyroid, hyperthyroidism, or autoimmune thyroid disorder. If you have been diagnosed or are exhibiting a lot of the symptoms, you should drink quality water.

   Believe it or not, there are many different types of water. Here’s a look at many types of water and how these waters can affect your body’s thyroid function:

   Tap water is for most of us pretty clean and healthy. However it may contain chemicals like fluoride, lead, and other toxins. These toxins put a great toxic load on the liver that may already be suffering. I would recommend looking at a good water filter to remove as many toxins from the water as possible. Unfortunately fluoride is not removed by simple water filters. This is one chemical that has been suggested to significantly affect thyroid health. In fact the only way to remove fluoride from our water supply is with a reverse osmosis filter. The downside is that it also removes everything from the water, including the important minerals, so I would not see it as the best option.

   If you have the option spring water in bottle, when you are sure of the source is the best option. However this can be very costly and there have been some suggestions that certain companies have been bottling tap water!

   You should aim for 2-3 Litres of purified water per day. Staying hydrated is important to help energy and focus, but also to help flush toxins and fluid retention from the body.

2. **Lemon juice**—I recommend that everyone start the day with the juice of ½ a lemon in hot water. This has the benefit of helping proper assimilation of water to the cells because of its high nutrient content. Lemon is also an acid balancer. It has long been used by naturopaths to assist the liver and gall bladder. The benefits of this mean that you start the day off by detoxing and assisting removal of any toxins that have been released overnight. Another benefit is that it supports your digestive system to properly breakdown your foods for the day. With better nutrient absorption you will suffer less bloating, gas and constipation as well as feeling more energised and have glowing skin as these require you to absorb all the nutrients from your food. Another great benefit is that our liver is responsible for breaking
down stored body fat. So if you’re on a weight reduction program it is vital to help the liver flush out fat and toxins for best results.

So enjoy your lemon and hot water when you first wake up. I find now that I get as much as a hit of energy as I used to from coffee. Use lemon during the day if you need an extra hit. Make sure to use it as a zesty low calorie dressing on salads and fish, to optimise your health.

3. Coconut water—This comes from young, green coconuts. It has a great sweet taste that is very refreshing. Coconut water is high in electrolytes such as potassium and magnesium. Simply taking a drink of coconut water will give you a burst of energy. It will help you have clarity of mind and a greater sense of well being. If you’re one that usually drinks sugary sports drinks, you should give coconut water a try. As mentioned previously coconuts also have some great benefits for thyroid health.

You can buy these coconuts in many health food stores. You can learn how to cut them yourself. You simply make a hole and use a straw. It’s the best coconut water you can get. You can also buy pre-packaged coconut water. Look for “virgin” or no sugar added. There are several companies that sell packaged coconut water, so it’s relatively easy to find in your local grocery store or health food store. Look for those marked “100% coconut water” on the label, and avoid those that just have “coconut juice” or “coconut drink” written on the label. They usually have added flavors and sugars.

4. Coffee—Every morning, people around the world begin their day with a fresh cup of coffee. Small amounts of it usually won’t be a problem. The problem arises when you consider the fact that most people don’t consume just small amounts, they consume large amounts of caffeine on a regular basis. This not only affects the thyroid function, but your overall health.

Caffeine can affect your body’s metabolism and your adrenal glands. It is a stimulant. When you drink coffee or soda, your body produces adrenaline, which is supposed to be produced in your body’s natural “fight or flight” mode. It isn’t meant to be produced when you’re sitting behind a desk or relaxing in your recliner. As a result of higher caffeine intake, increased stress and reduced nutrient intake intake means that adrenalfatigue is on the rise. This is one of the underlying causes of low thyroid function.

As a standard rule for anyone suffering low thyroid function I would recommend no more than one caffeinated beverage per day. Ideally this would come from either a percolated or filtered coffee or green tea. Tea in bags contains high levels of fluoride which should be avoided in large doses.

5. Herbal teas—Many people have found herbal teas to be a good alternative to coffee. Many are also loaded with antioxidants and provide many health benefits.

- Dandelion Tea- fantastic for liver health and detoxing- you can add almond milk and a little honey for a treat
• Rooibos Tea- high in antioxidants, best with a little almond milk
• Peppermint tea- great for reducing craving and calming an upset stomach
• Ginger Tea- tastes great, helpful to increase metabolism and in turn burn more fat
• Chamomile Tea- helps relaxation, a great one in the evening before bed

These are my favourites but the possibilities are endless. Just check out the herbal tea isle in your local supermarket or health food store to find some new favourites for you.

6. Alcohol- My goal isn’t to be a party pooper and suggest that you can’t celebrate ever again. After all, for many people with a thyroid or autoimmune thyroid condition, having an occasional alcoholic beverage won’t cause any problems. But drinking alcohol on a regular basis can definitely take its toll on your health.

Although some sources claim that drinking a lot of alcoholic beverages can depress the activity of the thyroid gland, thus resulting in a hypothyroid condition, the main effects of excess alcohol consumption is on the liver and adrenal glands. Just remember that alcohol is a carbohydrate and will affect the blood sugar levels, and thus consuming a lot of alcohol over a period of months and years can fatigue the adrenals. Weak adrenals can not only have a negative feedback to the thyroid gland, but can affect the gut and immune system.

Plus of course alcohol will also impact the liver. And the liver plays an important role in thyroid health, as some of the conversion of T4 to T3 takes place in the liver. The liver has other important functions as well, with the most important being detoxification. By putting a strain on the liver, this will also affect digestion, and reduce important nutrients.

But alcohol can also have a direct effect on thyroid health. Acetaldehyde is a by-product of alcohol, and is one of the main causes of “hangovers” when consuming alcohol. Acetaldehyde apparently can interfere with the thyroid receptors, which means that even if a person is producing a sufficient amount of thyroid hormone they can have hypothyroid symptoms.

Another important note is also that if you are going to enjoy a few drinks make sure that they are gluten free. The most common gluten containing beverage is beer, some companies are specifically making gluten-free alcoholic beverages, as a number of brewers make beer using non-gluten ingredients. There is also gluten-free vodka, rum, and most wines are also gluten free. But once again, moderation is key to enjoying alcohol. Your best options are red or white wine, cider or my personal choicea vodka, soda and fresh lime.

7. Almond milk—This is my favourite new addition to my diet, and is becoming very popular in main stream health circles. Almond milk is suitable for anyone without a nut allergy. It contains high levels of protein and calcium but is very low in fat and calories. It is important to choose the unsweetened version as these are just the natural pressed almonds with
water and have all the health benefits. It can be used in place of milk. Such as in coffee or herbal teas, smoothies, hot chocolates, etc.

Drinks to avoid

As with foods, any drinks that are high in sugars, artificial sweeteners and flavours should be avoided. This can be a very difficult change for many people. We are so used to drinking soft drinks, sodas, cordial, fruit juices, tea, coffee, etc. These should be avoided. Soft drinks and sodas should be completely avoided. This includes both regular and diet drinks.

Fruit juices, especially, commercial juices should be completely avoided. These often have not only the concentrated fruit sugar but also added sugars and preservatives. Fresh juices with both fruit and vegetables can be a refreshing snack on occasions.

As mentioned before it is best to limit caffeine intake to only one serve per day. However none would be better. Coffee is one of my biggest weaknesses. I really enjoy the taste and the social aspect. So I always limit myself to one a day and try to have a few days per week without one. I also use either a plunger or have one freshly made. I order a long black and add almond milk (some coffee shops are now beginning to stock Almond Milk and Stevia, if you are a regular ask them if they can also stock these).
Chapter 4
Lifestyle and Exercise

Diet is a very big part of the picture for achieving great health, however it is not everything. It is so important for optimal thyroid function to take into account your whole lifestyle. Smoking, stress, sleep, exercise and sunshine should all be taken into account to help ensure a trim, toned body, increased energy, improved wellbeing, great digestion, glowing skin and great.

- **Stop smoking!**—You’ve probably heard that for years for many different reasons, the biggest usually being lung cancer. Few people fail to realize how smoking affects the thyroid. It does affect it though in a negative way, so stopping is extremely important for a healthy thyroid.

  Tobacco smoke **contains hydrogen cyanide** that is converted to thiocyanate in the body. This is a chemical that actually acts as an anti-thyroid agent. It directly inhibits your uptake of iodine and hormone synthesis. It also decreases the binding of T3 to its receptors which can affect your muscles, liver, and other organs.

  If you have a thyroid disorder, you should immediately stop smoking! In fact I strongly believe that smoking is one of the worst things anyone can do for their health and those around them and that no matter what your health is that you should stop. I understand however that it is easy to say and not so easy to do. If you do smoke it is best to talk to a professional about quitting (quitline.com.au)

- **Sunshine**—Vitamin D is present in some of the foods we eat. It is, however, supposed to be primarily synthesized from exposure to the sun. With all the research and awareness on skin cancer, people are now getting less sun exposure than ever. Consequently, more people now suffer from number of people who suffer from vitamin D deficiency. Many scientists believe that some sun exposure is beneficial, and that the risks can be minimized effectively. New health messages need to be constructed that effectively present the pros and cons of sun exposure.

  The chief health function of vitamin D is to maintain serum calcium and phosphorous levels within the normal physiologic range. This is necessary to support the majority of metabolic functions, neuromuscular transmission, and bone mineralization.

  Often vitamin D supplements are needed to correct the deficiency if your vitamin D levels are below 50 ng/mL. Your doctor can arrange a Vitamin D test. It is difficult to correct a moderate to severe deficiency through sun exposure alone. Once the deficiency is corrected, maintaining vitamin D levels through sun exposure alone can often be achieved. You should have your levels checked again three to six months later to be sure your efforts to maintain it through sun exposure are working.

  Getting an insufficient amount of natural sunlight and vitamin D has been associated with many medical conditions including:

  - Adrenal insufficiency
- Allergies
- Alzheimer’s Disease
- Autoimmune disorders
- Colon, skin, breast, and prostate cancer
- Depression
- Both type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- Gluten Intolerance
- Heart disease, hypertension,
- Infertility and/or sexual dysfunction
- Learning andbehaviourdisorders
- Teeth that are misaligned or have numerous cavities
- Obesity
- Osteopenia, osteoporosis, osteomalacia (adult rickets)
- Parkinson’s Disease
- Premenstrual Syndrome
- Psoriasis

As you have learned from previous chapters in this book, many of those are linked to symptoms of thyroid disorders.

Vitamin D isn’t the only benefit of the sun. Humans are programmed to be outside in the daylight and inside when it gets dark. One of the biggest problems we face now is that many people spend almost all of their days indoors. Sunlight helps produce natural nocturnal melatonin in the body. A natural cure to the sleeplessness and low energy is morning sunlight. When you are exposed to bright morning sunlight, melatonin production occurs sooner and it becomes easier to sleep at night, as well as wake and feel energized during the day.

Getting as little as 10 minutes of direct sunlight (especially if received before 9:00 a.m.) can make a world of difference. It can help your thyroid function, sleep, and general health.
• **Stress**—Stress can be one of the major causes of an increase in low thyroid symptoms. The impact of chronic long term as well as acute stress is directly on the adrenal glands. As we discussed previously adrenal fatigue has a direct link to the thyroid and how the hormones are produced. Unfortunately many of us live with high amounts of stress. Stress that our bodies do not deal well with when joined with other poor diet and lifestyle habits. This adrenal fatigue may be reduced if we can control the effects of stress on our bodies. It is not the external stress itself that causes the adrenal fatigue, but how we deal with the stress long term. Life will always throw some stressful situations at us, but some are easier to deal with than other. It is just important to recognize what is important and what is not worth stressing over.

It may seem like no matter how hard you try, there are just not enough hours in the day. With bills to pay, your career, and your family, life can get pretty demanding. It may seem like you have no control over the stress levels in your life, but you can have more than you think. You need to take charge of your emotions, schedule, thoughts and the way you handle your problems. No one else can do it but you. It is imperative that you learn to manage your stress.

Identifying your stress is important. You can try many different management techniques, but they may be useless if you don’t know where the stress is coming from. You need to identify the sources of stress. Sounds simple enough, huh? You can say, “This, this, and this are stressing me out.” Often, however, you fail to recognize your own stress-causing thoughts, behaviours, and feelings. For example, you may know work deadlines are stressing you out, but fail to realize that it is your own procrastination habits that lead to that stressful deadline.

In order to begin identifying your stress, you need to take a closer look at yourself and your attitude, habits, and excuses. To do this you should ask yourself a few questions:

• **Do I explain stress away as only being a temporary thing?** It is common for people to just say they have a lot going on right now, even though “right now” isn’t really the problem. The real problem is they can’t remember the last time they took a break.

• **Do I identify stress as a fundamental part of my work or home life?** Too often, we simply explain stress as things always being crazy but we fail to make any changes to our lives.

• **Do I blame my stress on other people or outside events?** Unless you can see yourself as being responsible for the part you play in creating stress, your stress level will continue to be out of your control.
Begin keeping a daily log of your stress. This can help you be able to identify regular stressors and how you cope with them. It’s easier to do than you might think.

- Each time you feel stressed write it down.
- Write down what stressed you out.
- How did you feel? This includes emotionally and physically.
- Tell how you reacted to the stressor.
- Describe what you had to do to make yourself feel better.

Keeping this log allows you to take a closer look at how you currently handle stress. It allows you to see if you are handling the stress in ways that are helpful, healthy, unhealthy, or unproductive. Often, people handle stressful situations in ways that only make the problem worse. They handle it in unhealthy ways that may be a “quick fix,” but do more damage over a period of time. These may include:

- Smoking and/or drinking too much
- Over or under eating
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Taking pills to relax
- Escaping through too much sleep
- Procrastination—Putting off the problem because they simply don’t want to deal with it.
- Overworking—If every minute is busy, you don’t have to face the problem.
- Anger—Taking your stress out on others, usually those who care about you the most.

As you can see, some ways of handling stress aren’t good for you at all. Once you determine whether or not your methods of handling your stress are causing greater health problems or emotional problems, it’s time to begin finding healthier ways to cope with it. You need to find ways to handle your stress that are healthier than what you’re doing now.
While there are many ways to handle stress in a healthy manner, they do require change of some kind—either change the circumstances or your change reaction to them. There is no “one way works for everyone” method to stress management. Here are a few things you can try:

Don’t avoid circumstances that need to be addressed, but if the circumstances are not necessary, avoid them. If you’re thinking there’s no way you can avoid any of the stress in your life, here are a few tips for you:

- Say NO—In both your personal and professional life, it is never wise to take on more than you can handle. When you know it’s beyond your capabilities to do something, simply say, “No.”

- Try to stay away from those who cause you to be stressed—You can’t always avoid your boss or your mother-in-law, but you can limit the amount of time you spend with them. If it’s someone you don’t need to associate with that stresses you, cut the relationship totally.

- Don’t talk about topics that stress you out—Politics is always a “hot” topic. If you have strong political views and get upset when someone opposes them, then don’t discuss them.

Try to change stressful situations—You can’t always avoid situations that are stressful. You can learn to change things so you can prevent the situations from happening again. A lot of times you can change a situation simply by communicating in a different way. You can do this by:

- Tell others how you feel—No, don’t tell people off on a regular basis, but do learn to express your feelings in a positive way. As long as it’s done in a respectfully, it’s great to share the way you feel with others. If you keep it bottled up, you just become resentful and the situation won’t get any better.

- Learn how to compromise—You can’t ask someone else to change if you’re not willing to. Compromise is a give and take situation.

- Find a more efficient method of managing your time—It’s difficult to stay calm if you’ve got too much to do and not enough time to do it. Planning your schedule wisely will help reduce your stress.

- Change yourself—Some things are beyond your control and you can’t always change what is stressing you. You can, however, change your outlook on the circumstances you are facing. If you change the way you approach the problem, you won’t compound the situation and create even more stress for yourself.
• View things from a more positive prospective—Take your evening commute in traffic, for example. Use it to spend your time focusing reflecting on your day and regrouping for tomorrow instead of the road rage. Use it to wind down from the day so you can better relax when you get home and not dwelling on the convertible that just cut you off. If you do that, you may be so worked up that you can’t relax when you get home.

• Determine if something will really matter in the long run and if it is really worth getting upset over. Will it matter tomorrow that that convertible cut you off…No, it won’t. It will be a thing of the past. There’s no need to get all stress over it if it doesn’t really matter.

• Focus on the bright side—When you become stressed about something negative in your life, think about something in your life that is positive to balance it. There’s an old saying that says, “Count your blessings…not your blisters.” When something comes along that really upsets you, a “blister,” think of the good things you have in your life, the “blessings,” and it will help to make the bad situation better and relieve your stress.

• Don’t set yourself up for failure—demanding perfection of yourself isn’t realistic. Often times we set standards for ourselves that just aren’t realistic. We push ourselves and push ourselves to reach goals that are humanly impossible. When we do this, we are setting ourselves up to fail. You become stressed unnecessarily, so why drive yourself crazy

Instead, set standards for yourself that are realistic. When you do this, you are setting yourself up for success.

It’s also important that you learn to recognize what you can and can’t control. There’s no use getting upset over things you have no control over.

Being able to forgive and forget can be difficult, but it’s something you need to learn to do to manage your stress levels. Realize that you’re not perfect, so don’t expect others to be. Everyone makes mistakes. When you learn to forgive others and forget about it, then you can move on.

How do you do it? How do you handle your stress in healthier ways? There are many healthy ways to handle stressful situations. Here are a few:

• For some, it’s as simple as buying a squeeze ball. This is a ball about the size of a baseball that you can hold in your hands, wrap your fingers around, and squeeze. It can be a firm rubber ball or one of those squishy type balls. Whatever degree of firmness you are comfortable with will work. The point is to just squeeze it whenever you’re feeling stressed. Take the frustration and stress out on the ball instead of those around you. This can be done
discreetly under your desk, even at meetings. You’ll be surprised at how simple it is to do and how well it works.

- Take a long walk—This will give your body great exercise and give you a chance to clear your head. Whether you take a nature walk, walk around an inside/outside track, or walk around the mall is totally up to you. Whatever degree of solitude suits you best.

- Talk to someone—This can be a professional therapist or just simply talking it out with a good friend. Talking to yourself, like many of us do, will usually always get you the same opinion, and it’s usually not objective. Talking to others gives you a fresh pair of eyes with which to see the problem and you might see the situation differently and be able to brainstorm with them to come up with a new solution.

- Workout—Exercise is a great stress reliever. It releases endorphins which are “feel good” hormones in the body. If you’re suffering from thyroid disorder, you may not feel like exercising. You may be so tired and both emotionally and physically drained. I understand that, but you’d be surprised how good it can make you feel and how much stress you can relieve. A lot of people feel more energetic after a good workout than they do when tired.

- Music—Listening to your favorite music can calm you down. If you listen to uplifting music, it can help lift your spirits as well as take your mind off of what is stressing you out. With all the small, discrete technical devices that play music today, you can listen to about anything you want any time you want. Just plug in a pair of ear buds, sit back, and relax.

- Write down your feelings—It could be in a journal, or a letter you tear up later. Sometimes putting them on paper helps you see them from a different perspective.

- Get a massage—This will help you relieve the tension in your body and help you relax.

- Meditation—this may not be for everyone. I must say that in years past I found it almost impossible to enjoy meditation. My mind wandered all over the place. However I have now found that once I started meditating on a regular basis that the benefits are amazing. It really helps to still the mind and allows me to have better clarity, concentration and energy. I would recommend that if it’s your first time start with only 5 – 10 minutes, I found it best with a guided meditation (there are many available on the internet). It is also really important to not be too hard on yourself, even if your mind
wandersdon’t worry just look at it as spending some quiet time out. As you find that you are getting better start increasing the time.

There’s no perfect combination of stress relievers that fits every person. There are many other ways to relieve stress. What works for others might not work for you. That’s why it’s important to experiment and find out what works for you.

Make sure to take time for yourself whenever you can. You need to schedule relaxation time into your schedule each day. This will give you a chance to connect with others and do things you enjoy each day. Having something you enjoy doing each day will make you enjoy your day more and will also make it easier to make healthy nutrition and lifestyle choices.

All the stress management techniques you try might be in vain if you don’t take care of yourself. It is important that you remember to take care of yourself with regular exercise, plenty of sleep, and a healthy diet.

- **Exercise**— To help achieve great health and reduce the symptoms of low thyroid function it is vital to include exercise as part of your daily lifestyle. Exercise has the benefit of increasing your metabolism. This helps to increase energy, burn fat, maintain muscle mass, increase circulation and improve bowel movements. All of these are decreased with low thyroid function.

Exercise does not mean you need to get an expensive gym membership or workout for a crazy amount of time each day. In fact that is not always healthy for you. I find that it can in fact be a real detriment to those suffering low thyroid function. This is for two reasons: 1/ if you have adrenal fatigue, exercise, even in comparatively small amounts can cause further adrenal fatigue. 2/ Some people with low thyroid function over exercise because it makes them feel better at the time but they tend to have a crash afterwards and it takes them a long time to recover.

Exercise should be something that makes you feel good, that you enjoy and that you look forward to each day. That may seem like a foreign concept to many of you who are taught that you just need to burn as many calories as possible for weight loss, even though this has been shown over and over again not to work.

I have worked with hundreds of people on their weight loss journey. I have seen what works to get the best results if you are looking to lose 5 or 50+kgs. This is the secret. Just move. The best results I have seen are from individuals who walked for 12,000 to 17,000 steps, every day and did 3 weight/resistance and interval sessions per week. The key was that they enjoyed the exercise and did it regularly.

To complete the 12,000 steps takes about 2.5 hours per day. This is a lot if you try to do it in one big chunk. The best way is to look at doing a walk first thing in the morning for 45-60 minutes, then adding incidental exercise into your day.
Incidental exercise is exercise you do in your daily activities such as: raking leaves, vacuuming your home, washing the car, scrubbing the floor, taking the trash out, etc. If you’re like most people, you probably don’t count this as part of your exercise program. New research shows, however, that when it comes to fitness, these activities count. After all, they burn calories too.

Another way to get incidental exercise is to take the stairs instead of the elevator. Try parking at the far end of the parking lot instead of grabbing the closest parking spot. These activities won’t take much longer at all, and will give you a great health benefit. If you have a desk job, you can train yourself to get up and move around at least hourly. Instead of sitting in front of the computer for hours at home, divide your computer time. Separate the time with a task like cleaning windows or doing household chores. If you do, you’ll get more incidental exercise and get more things done as well.

Most of us have pretty sedentary lives and would be lucky to reach 5-6,000 steps per day. I would recommend getting a pedometer. These are great motivation! You will see exactly what you have done, there is no denying it. I have had many clients who have got to the end of the day and realised they haven’t reached their goal steps, so instead of crashing on the lounge with a tub of ice cream, they watch TV while marching on the spot!!

Walking takes care of the cardiovascular exercise, but there is another type of exercise that I find incredible for its results to boost metabolism without draining the adrenals or worsening thyroid symptoms. This is a short high energy interval/resistance training or SHEIRT. SHEIRT only takes 10 minutes a day to complete, it can be done anywhere with very little equipment. The benefit is that by taking only 10 minutes to complete is that it doesn’t drain your body and put excess stress on the adrenals. Plus there is no excuse that you can’t find the time to exercise!!! There are 4 parts to the training as listed:

1- High intensity interval training

This is a relatively new way of exercising and goes against the original idea that to lose weight you need to do a moderate exercise for over 45 minutes. This training has been shown to have significantly better results to increase metabolism both while you are exercising as well as for the next 24-48 hours! And it is relatively simple to do.

You need to spend 4 minutes only doing high intensity interval training. This involves 30 seconds of high intensity work. This may include sprinting, high knees, burpies, cycling, skipping, star jumps, etc. It is important to work to your own limits and both the type of exercise and the speed will vary depending on the individuals previous fitness levels. Most importantly is that for those 30 seconds you go as hard and fast as you can. You should only just be able to push through the 30 second mark. For the next 30 seconds you need to do an active recovery. This means that you still need to keep moving but it is a time to catch your breath. This may include jogging, slower cycling, slower skipping, stepping side to side, etc.
Repeat this 4 times.

2- Resistance training
3 resistance exercises, performed for 1 minute each for a total of 3 minutes.
Resistance exercises are exercises that use either your own body weight or external weight to focus on individual muscle groups. I find that a resistance band is great for these exercises, its cheap, easy to use and store and works for all fitness levels depending on how much tension you put on it.
For example: Squats, push ups, lunges, tricep dips, bicep curls, peck flys, shoulder press, upright rows, etc.

3- Abdominals
Choose 2 abdominal exercises and perform for 1 minute each. This totals 2 minutes of ab exercises.
For example: Sit ups, leg raises, leg cycles, arm and leg raises, planks.

4- Stretching
Stretching is important for everyone however is even more important if you have tired and fatigues muscles. Make sure that you stretch any muscles that feel tight, sore or knotted. This may be gently stretching to the sky then rolling down to touch your toes, or hamstring, triceps, shoulders and back.

I have outlined a couple of complete SHEIRT programs below.

While I believe that walking and the interval/resistance bursts are by far the best way to get started and build your fitness when you have low thyroid function, it does not mean that you have to give up the gym membership or bootcamp classes. I believe that any exercise that you enjoy doing and can commit to long term is the right one for you. I would however always recommend that you do this only once you have regained your health and energy.

SHEIRT Session 1

4 minutes cardio
30 seconds: high intensity (8/10): air boxing (best done when no one’s watching!!)
30 seconds: lower the intensity (4/10): marching on the spot
Repeat 4 times in total

3 minute resistance
1 minute squats
1 minute push ups
1 minute alternating forward lunges

2 minute abs
1 minute sit ups/crunches (only just taking shoulders and head off the ground)

1 minute knee plank (lie on floor and prop up to elbows keep a straight line from head to knees, brace mid section)

1 minute stretching and deep breathing:

Sit on a chair, stretch one leg out straight with heel on the ground point toe to ceiling and lean forward, supporting yourself with your arms on thighs, change sides after 30 seconds. Try to remember to continue to take deep breaths.

SHEIRT Session 2

4 minutes cardio

30 seconds: high intensity (8/10): step ups (find a step in your house or the gym that is about knee high, but if you feel any discomfort reduce the height, your hips are probably still re-adjusting!)

30 seconds: lower the intensity (4/10): marching on the spot

Repeat 4 times in total

3 minute resistance

1 minute tricep dips

1 minute push ups

1 minute alternating backward lunges

2 minute abs

1 minute sit ups/crunches (only just taking shoulders and head off the ground)

1 minute back extension (lie on ground face down, arms out straight. Slowly lift head and shoulders so chest is slightly off the ground, hold for 2 seconds and return to ground slowly)

1 minute stretching and deep breathing:

Tricep stretch 30 seconds

Down face dog 30 seconds

Try to remember to continue to take deep breaths.
Chapter 5

A Weekly Meal Plan

I am not a big fan of just giving people a meal plan to follow blindly. I believe that it is really important to understand why you are eating what you eat, as well as the health benefits it has for you. The benefits of understanding all this information is that you are not only able to make the right choices at home where you have your all your resources at hand, but you will also be able to make the best choices in the real world. I have seen in my clients and also myself, if you simply follow a meal plan it often doesn’t include foods that you like and it may not fit into your lifestyle. All this adds up to a result of failure, you fall of the wagon reasonably quickly and feel that you have failed, again. With this plan there is no such thing as failure as long as you continue to take positive steps towards your health it will pay off. My favourite saying is “progress not perfection”. So remember the 5 rules (including the 2 free meals per week), include a range of the superfoods and avoid the no go foods, easy!

However I also understand that when you’re busy it can be hard to start adapting to a new way of eating. So I have included ideas to create a weekly meal plan with recipes to make this super easy for you. Recipes are in the second section.

THE PLAN

To start each day:

½ lemon juiced into hot water

Walking- minimum of 10 minutes, aim for 60 minutes per day

Then 3-4 days per week follow with 10 minute SHEIRT.

Next add 1-2 tsp super greens powder (ie. spirulina, chlorella, Vital Greens) in a large glass of water.

Follow shortly after with breakfast.

Monday:

Breakfast:

2 poached eggs on a bed of steamed spinach and mushrooms

Morning Tea:

Hummus (2-3 Tbsp) with vegetable sticks (such as carrot, celery, capsicums, cucumber)

Lunch:
Tuna Salad.

**Snack:**
Berry Protein Smoothie

**Dinner:**
Asian Salmon. Serve with a side of mixed dark leafy greens and ¼-½ cup fermented vegetables.

**Tuesday**

**Breakfast:**
½ Ruby Red grapefruit
Quinoa with cinnamon

**Snack:**
Apple with 1 Tbsp ABC Nut Butter

**Lunch:** Alfalfa Salad

**Snack:**
½ a coconut (including water and flesh)

If too difficult to open coconut try some of the store bought coconut waters with no added sugars.

2 squares of 80% or more chocolate

**Dinner:**
Turmeric Fish with Moroccan Style Quinoa. Serve with a side of mixed dark leafy greens and ¼-½ cup fermented vegetables.

**Wednesday**

**Breakfast:**
Super Smoothie

**Snack:**
1 boiled egg and cucumber sticks

**Lunch:**
Crunchy Sprout Salad

**Snack:**
¼ cup Kefir with ¼ cup fresh blueberries (a small amount of honey if needed)

**Dinner:**

Greek Style Lamb with Mediterranean Vegetable Medely. Serve with a side of mixed dark leafy greens and ¼- ½ cup fermented vegetables.

**Thursday**

**Breakfast:**

Vegetable Omelette

**Snack:**

Pear with match box sized square of parmesan cheese

**Lunch:**

Quinoa Tabouli

**Snack:**

Handful of mixed nuts and seeds and a piece of fruit

**Dinner:**

Vegetable Lasanga. Serve with a side of mixed dark leafy greens and ¼- ½ cup fermented vegetables.

**Friday**

**Breakfast:**

Green Smoothie with LSA (Linseed, Sunflower and Almonds)

**Morning Tea:**

Celery sticks topped with cottage cheese (2 Tbsp) and sunflower seeds (1 tsp)

**Lunch:**

Lentil and Vegetable Soup with 1 slice rice bread

**Snack:**

¼ cup Kefir (or coconut yoghurt) with ¼ cup fresh blueberries (honey if needed)

**Dinner:**

Prawn, Lemon and Parsley Gluten Free Spaghetti. Serve with a side of mixed dark leafy greens and ¼- ½ cup fermented vegetables.
Saturday

Breakfast:
Cheese and Avocado Toastie

Morning Tea:
Berry Protein Smoothie

Lunch:
‘Big Breakfast’

Snack:
Lentil and Vegetable Soup (1 cup- as leftover from yesterday’s lunch- no bread)

Dinner:
Cauliflower pasta with bolognaise. Serve with a side of mixed dark leafy greens and ¼- ½ cup fermented vegetables.

Sunday

Breakfast:
Ricotta Pancakes with Berries

Snack:
Miso Soup

Lunch:
Cottage cheese and Sweet Potato Stirfry

Snack:
¼ cup coconut chips (the dried thick ones are the best) and 2 squares 80%+ Dark Chocolate

Dinner:
Chicken “burritos” with Cos Lettuce leaves and Guacamole
Recipes

Breakfast

How to cook Quinoa?

Soak ½ cup quinoa overnight in 1 cup water and a squeeze of lemon, rinse well before cooking. Place on stove top with enough water to cover. Heat until boiling and reduce to a simmer (approximately 5-7 minutes), once there is only a small amount of water left, remove from heat and cover. Let steam for 5-10 minutes. For a breakfast add ¼ tsp of cinnamon, or can be used as a rice alternative in lunches and dinners.

Super Smoothie

Protein Powder 1 ½ scoops

Unsweetened Almond milk 200mL

½ cup of spinach

1 banana

Handful of ice

Place all ingredients in a blender. Blend until smooth. Pour into a large glass to serve.

Vegetable Omelette

1 tsp butter (preferably organic)

1 cup mixed vegetables chopped finely (mushrooms, red onion, green capsicum)

2 eggs (preferably organic)

Handful of Rocket and baby spinach mix

Lightly beat eggs and place aside. Melt butter on a low heat. Add the vegetables and cook till just under tender. Spread out the vegetables evenly in the pan then pour over the eggs. Cook till almost set, flip in half and serve on a bed of greens.

Green Smoothie with LSA

1 handful of baby spinach

1 stalk celery

½ cucumber
1 green apple
½ cup frozen raspberries
½ cup water
2 Tbsp LSA (ground Linseed, Sunflower and Almonds)
Handful of ice
Place all ingredients in a high powered blend and blend till smooth. Serve immediately in a tall glass.

Cheese and Avocado Toastie
1 slice natural cheese
¼ avocado
1 slice rice bread (or any gluten free, soy free breads)
Toast bread. Mash avocado over the toast. Place cheese on top then put under a grill that is turned onto high. Allow cheese to melt and bubble slightly (around 3-4 minutes). Allow to cool slightly before eating.

Buckwheat Ricotta Pancakes with Berry Sauce
Per person
1 egg
1 Tbsp Ricotta
¼ cup buckwheat pancake mix or Gluten Free Pancake mix
½ tsp of butter or coconut oil.
Mix ingredients together, it should be slightly thicker than the consistency of a regular pancake, if the mixture appears too thick add a little water or Almond Milk. Cook in a small non stick pan with ½ tsp of butter or coconut oil. Make sure that the pan is not too hot, should be at a medium heat. Cook until you see bubbles form on the surface (about 3-4 minutes). Flip Pancakes and cook for a further 1-2 minutes until golden brown. Serve with berry sauce.

BERRY SAUCE: Place ½ cup of frozen berries in a saucepan and reduce for 4-5 minutes. Add Stevia powder if you need extra sweetness.
**Lunch**

**Tuna Salad.**

One small tin of tuna in springwater on a large salad of leafy greens (ie, Rocket Mix), cucumber, red and green capsicum, tomato, ¼- ½ cup fermented vegetables and 4-5 olives (if you like them).

Dressing: Place olive oil, balsamic, wholegrain mustard and lemon juice in a jar, shake well and pour over salad.

**Alfalfa Salad**

1 cup of mixed baby leaves (prepacked is fine for convenience)

⅛ cup alfalfa sprouts

1 finely sliced radish

⅛ cucumber, diced

⅛ red capsicum diced

2 boiled eggs

Place in a large bowl, top with 2 boiled eggs and one of the dressings (my favourite is the Tahini it has a really creamy yet fresh taste)

**Crunchy Sprout Salad**

1 cup of rocket leaves (prepacked is fine for convenience)

6-8 cherry tomatoes

1-2 slices of Spanish (red) onion

⅛ cup of crunchy sprouts

Match box size serve of REAL Greek fetta, crumbed

Place in a large bowl, top with one of the dressings (my favourite is the Greek)

**Quinoa Tabouli**

⅛ bunch Parsley, finely chopped

2-3 mint leaves finely chopped
1 tomato finely chopped
½ cucumber finely chopped
1 radish, finely sliced
½ cup of cooked whole quinoa

Dressing: 1 clove of garlic (crushed or grated), juice of ½ Lemon, 2 tsp of olive oil, pepper and a pinch of celtic sea salt. Place in a jar and shake.

Place all ingredients in a large bowl. Pour over dressing and mix well before serving. Serves 1.

**Lentil and Vegie Soup**

1 tin brown lentils
1 brown onion
2 celery sticks
2 carrots
4 tsp mixed dried herbs (such as thyme, rosemary, oregano)
2 cloves garlic crushed
½ red chilli (seeds removed)
1 tin crushed tomatoes
2 tsp Olive oil
2 tsp Vegetable stock powder
1 sheet wakame or nori torn up
4-5 cups boiling water

Place onions and oil in a large saucepan. Saute on a low heat till translucent. Add celery and carrots, cook for 3-4 minutes. Then add all other ingredients except the lentils. Bring to the boil and simmer with lid on for 5-6 minutes. Add drained lentils and simmer for a further 3-4 minutes.

Serves 3-4. Can be frozen, so make a big batch for to save time later.

**Big “Breakfast”**

1 egg scrambled, poached or boiled
½ cup spinach
½ cup mushrooms
1 tsp coconut oil or butter

½ tomato

¼ cup baked beans (organic, sugar free if possible)

1 slice rice bread

Prepare eggs as you like. Slice mushrooms and add to non stick pan with the oil or butter. Allow to collapse. Place tomato in the pan for 3-4 minutes each side. Then add the spinach and remove from heat immediately. Once spinach is wilted add all vegies to plate. Heat baked beans and serve on same plate with 1 slice toasted rice bread.

**Cottage Cheese and Sweet Potato Stirfry**

½ cup cottage cheese

1 Tbsp. Pepitas (Pumpkin seeds)

½ cup peeled and diced sweet potato

½ zucchini

½ red onion

5 snow peas

3 mushrooms

3-4 basil leaves

Salt and Pepper

1 tsp coconut oil

In a large pot of boiling water cook the sweet potato until tender. Slice all the other vegetables. In a fry pan add the coconut oil and all vegetables including sweet potato. Cook until golden brown.

Place cooked vegetables in a serving bowl. Top with cottage cheese, pepitas, basil and salt and pepper.

**Dressings:**

You can also create your own salad with whatever vegetables you have around and choose your own dressing. I’ve included my favourites below.

**Tahini Dressing**

1 tsp Tahini Paste (hulled)
1 tsp olive oil
Juice of ¼ lemon
Pepper and Celtic Sea Salt
Place all ingredients in a jar, shake and pour over salad.

**Greek Dressing**
½ clove of garlic, crushed or finely grated
1 tsp dried oregano
1-2 tsp olive oil
1 tsp white wine vinegar
Juice of ¼ lemon
Pepper and Celtic Sea Salt
Place all ingredients in a jar, shake and pour over salad.

**Balsamic Dressing**
1 tsp balsamic vinegar (get a good aged one)
1-2 tsp olive oil
1 tsp ‘mixed’ dried herbs
Pepper and Celtic Sea Salt
Place all ingredients in a jar, shake and pour over salad.

**Dinner**

**Asian Baked Salmon**
2 pieces of salmon (approx. 100gms each)
½ red chilli
1 clove garlic
1 cm stick of ginger
2 tsp sesame oil
Tamari Sauce (gluten free soy sauce)
Juice ½ lemon
2 tsp honey if needed
Handful of Basil leaves
½ Yellow Capsicum
½ cup broccoli
½ cup snow peas
½ a zucchini
1 tsp coconut oil

Finely chop chilli, ginger and garlic. Mix in a small bowl with sesame oil, tamari sauce, honey and lemon juice.

Place the salmon in two individual aluminium foil packages place half the Asian mixture over each, sprinkle over a few basil leaves and seal the foil well. Place in a 360 F or 180 C oven for approximately 15 mins.

Cut vegetable into thin sticks. Stirfry in 1 tsp of coconut oil until just tender. Add sea salt and basil leaves before serving.

Serve with ¼ cup of brown rice per person. Serves 2

**Turmeric Fish with Moroccan Style Quinoa**

2-3 pieces of white fish
1 tsp coconut oil
2 tsp of turmeric
2 tsp olive oil
½ cup Quinoa wholegrain
½ Zucchini
½ red capsicum
1/2 cup sweet potato, 2cm chunks

½ red chilli

½ tsp turmeric

1 clove garlic crushed

1cm piece of ginger, finely chopped

¼ tsp cinnamon

Place quinoa in a saucepan with 1 cup of water. Bring to the boil, turn down to a simmer.

Simmer for 5 minutes. Add turmeric, ginger, garlic, cinnamon, oil, salt and pepper, and vegetables. Return the lid and cook for a further 5 minutes. Turn off heat and leave to steam for 5-7 minutes.

Sprinkle fish with turmeric. Bake in the oven at 360 F or 180 C for 10-15 minutes.

Serves 2.

**Greek Style Lamb with Mediterranean Vegetable Medley**

14 oz or 400 gms organic, free-range lamb marinated in Greek style herbs and spices

3-5 whole garlic cloves

1 red onion

2 cups sweet potato

1 red capsicum

1 green capsicum

1 zucchini

2 Tbsp Olive Oil

2 Tbsp Balsamic Vinegar

1 tsp rosemary

1 tsp thyme

1 tsp oregano

Celtic Sea Salt

Pepper
Cook Lamb as directed. Once cooked leave to rest for 10-15 minutes before serving.

Cut all vegetables into chunky squares, approximately the same size. Place in a large baking tray. Coat well with the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, herbs and salt and pepper.

Cook in a preheated oven at 360 F or 180 C until really tender, almost falling apart. Approximatley 1 hour per 2.2 pounds or 1 kilogram.

Serve 3-4.

**Vegetable Lasagna**

1 packet Gluten Free Lasanga Sheets
1 jar Organic Pasta Sauce Garlic and Basil
1 Tbsp Olive oil
2 carrots
1 brown onion
2 zucchinis
2 cloves garlic
1 tsp rosemary
1 tsp oregano
1 tsp thyme
14 oz or 400gms ricotta
3 eggs
1 packet frozen spinach
Grated Mozzarella Cheese (optional)
Mixed leaf Salad Mix and fermented vegetables to serve

Serves 4-6.

Preheat oven to 360 F or 180 C. Allow spinach to thaw.

Place lasanga sheets into a pan of boiling water for 3-5 minutes until tender and drain.

Finely dice the onion and mince the garlic. Add to a pan with olive oil. Saute at a low heat till translucent.
Chop the carrot and zucchini into a fine dice or grate. Add to pan with the pasta sauce and herbs. Mix well. Place on lid and allow to simmer on a low heat for 15-20 minutes until vegetables are very soft and tender. Stir occasionally.

In the meantime, place thawed spinach, ricotta and eggs in a large bowl and mix well.

In a lasagna dish, start to assemble. Place a layer of lasagna sheets first, followed by half the tomato/vegetable mix. Then layer another sheet of pasta, top with all the ricotta mixture, followed by lasagna sheets, the rest of the tomato/vegetable mix and another layer of lasagna sheets. Top with grated cheese, if you like (my kids like the cheese, I usually put it on the boy’s part and have only a very little sprinkling on mine).

Bake in the oven for 30-40 minutes. Allow to rest for 10-15 minutes before serving.

Serve with a mixed leafy green and fermented vegetable salad.

NOTE: this is a great one to make ahead of time, I often do this the morning or day before and then just put in the oven when I get home (I often also make 2 at the same time and put in the freezer for next week). If there are any leftovers it’s great for lunch the next day.

**Prawn and Tomato Spaghetti**

1 pack of Gluten Free Spaghetti

500 grams (16 oz) Frozen Prawns

1 pack cherry tomatoes

½ red chilli

2 cloves garlic crushed

½ onion (brown)

Juice of 1 lemon

2 Tbps Olive oil

Thawed Frozen Prawns

Cook gluten free spaghetti as directed.

Place a fry pan on stove at a low heat, add olive oil, onion, garlic and chilli, cook for 2-3 minutes until onions turn translucent (not brown).

Add cherry tomatoes, cook for 3 minutes. Then add thawed prawns. Once prawns turn pink add the gluten free spaghetti and lemon juice. Serves 4-5.
Chicken “burritos” with Cos Lettuce leaves and Guacamole

2 Macro Organic Chicken Breasts
Burrito/ Taco Spice Mix (1/2 packet- more if you like)
2 Tsp Olive Oil
2-3 tomatoes
2 ripe avocados
Pinch of Celtic Sea Salt
Pepper
½ red chilli
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 lime, juice
¼ cup coriander, finely chopped
A few coriander sprigs
1 carrot, grated
¾- ⅓ cup fermented vegetables
Handful of snow pea sprouts
1 Cos Lettuce

Thinly slice the chicken and place in a plastic bag with the olive oil and spice mix. Shake to coat well. This can also be done in a bowl.

Place chicken in a large fry pan till brown and cooked through.

In a bowl add avocado, lime, chilli, garlic, salt and pepper. Mash together and mix well. Add in 2-3 finely diced tomatoes and the chopped coriander.

On a plate place the grated carrot, snow pea sprouts, fermented vegetables, coriander sprigs and Cos Lettuce leaves (cut off the base, wash the leaves and lay out individually).

Also place on table the Guacamole and chicken strips.

Use the Cos Lettuce as the wrap and place ingredients inside, wrap and enjoy!

I usually have burrito wraps and grated cheese available for my boys to have with this dish. So it’s great for the whole family.

Serves 2-3.
Snacks

Berry Protein Smoothie

½ serve High Quality Whey Protein
½ cup frozen berries
½ cup unsweetened almond milk
½ cup water

Place all ingredients in blender. Mix until well combined. Serve in a tall glass.

If you do not have a blender handy you can use a hand held protein shaker that are available in most supermarkets for under $5.00. Just mix the protein powder and almond milk, then you can eat the fruit separately.

After Dinner Snacks!

I know that for a lot of you this can be the most dangerous part of the day. I used to be terrible at this time and it has taken me many years to get out of the habit of having something sweet as a reward for a hard day. If this is you too I know just how hard it can be to control these cravings. I find for most people that if you try to go cold turkey the situation can go bad pretty quickly. So especially to begin with I have a few recommendations that I find really help to ease those cravings and make you feel like you’re not missing out. Just remember to enjoy in small amounts. If you overeat it will make weight loss very difficult.

You could try a protein shake, Kefir and blueberries, Coconut chips and 2 squares 80%+ dark chocolate, coconut yoghurt or a piece of fruit.

But if you’re looking for something even more decadent you may like to try the following:

Healthy Hot Chocolate

1 cup Unsweetened Almond Milk
1-2 tsp Raw Cocoa Powder (available in health food stores)
1 tsp stevia powder

Heat milk in a saucepan till just under boiling. Take off the heat and briskly mix in the Cocoa and stevia. Serve immediately in a large mug.

Simply Sweet Biscuits (From I Quit Sugar)

2 ½ cups Almond Meal
½ tsp Bicarbonate soda
½ tsp sea salt

120g (4 oz) butter, softened

1/3 cup stevia powder

1 tsp vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 360 F or 180 C and line a baking tray with baking paper. Pulse the almond meal, Bicarbonate of soda and salt briefly in the food processor. Add the butter, stevia and vanilla and blend a little more. Spoon heaped teaspoons of the mixture onto the baking tray and press down with your hands to flatten. Bake for about 8 minutes until golden. Cool on a wire rack. Makes about 30.

These can be stored in the freezer in an airtight container. Try to stick to only 2 at a time, and not every day, they are still a treat!

Final Words

This meal plan contains a lot of variety. I personally believe this is really important to a new lifestyle. However you may find that purchasing all these ingredients is not economical straight up. This is especially the case if you are cooking only for yourself. If that is the case simply pick and choose which recipes you think you would like best and will best fit into your lifestyle. My philosophy is always to keep it simple. Also look at all the recommended foods from throughout out the book to see if you can make healthier versions of your favourite recipes. As a take home, try to make these changes consistently in your diet and you will see the results. If you would like further recipes and a deeper understanding of the thyroid wellness program try our detox, course or use our personal health coaching program. Find more information at www.thyroidwellnessdiet.com.au

I do hope that you find this information insightful and beneficial to your health. I have spent many years gathering this information and have put my heart and soul into it. I really feel that if you simply take some action you will find that health will follow. Wishing you a speedy journey to optimal health.
REFERENCES


Clinical Key—Thyroiditis, November, 2013, Retrieved from: https://www.clinicalkey.com/topics


Florea, Anca V., MD and Virji Mohammad A., MD, PhD, November, 2013, Endocrine Pathology, Case 537, An 11-Year-Old Girl with Symptoms of Hypothyroidism, Retrieved from: http://path.upmc.edu


Is Your Low-Carb Diet Causing Thyroid Issues?, March 20, 2012, retrieved from: http://bodyecology.com


Natural Thyroid Treatment Methods for Graves’ Disease, Hashimoto’s Thyroiditis, and Hypothyroidism, November, 2013, Retrieved from: http://www.naturalendocrinesolutions.com


Shim, Melanie L., MD, June, 2002, Chapter XV.2, Case Based Pediatrics for Medical Students and Residents Department of Pediatrics, University of Hawaii John A. Burns School of Medicine, Retrieved from: http://www.hawaii.edu


Shomon, Mary, December 30, 2012, Top 10 Signs That You May Have A Thyroid Problem, Retrieved from: http://thyroid.about.com


The Salerno Center, 2012, retrieved from: http://salernocenter.com
