

HASHIMOTO'S (THYROIDITIS) DISEASE

When Your Immune System Attacks Your Thyroid

The most common cause of hypothyroidism, a thyroid gland that shows little to no activity, is Hashimoto's (Thyroiditis) Disease. Hashimoto's Disease is a condition that affects the body's immune system as well as the thyroid. Early diagnosis of Hashimoto's Disease and the correct treatment can help maintain normal hormone levels.

The following guide is intended to help patients understand the causes, risk factors, symptoms and possible complications caused by the disease if left untreated.

01 | Causes/Risks

The origin of this autoimmune disorder is unclear; however, there is speculation that it may be caused by a virus that triggers the body's immune system to attack. The body begins to create antibodies that destroy the thyroid gland, which is located at the bottom of the throat beneath the Adam's apple. Other causes/risks to consider are:

- Hormones – up to 20% of women, seven times more than men, who develop thyroid issues within the first year after having a baby also develop Hashimoto's Disease.
- Radiation Exposure – exposure to radiation, either by being treated for cancer or a nuclear exposure, contribute to developing Hashimoto's Disease.
- Other Autoimmune Disease – rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, type 1 diabetes or celiac disease can increase the risk of Hashimoto's Disease development.

02 | Symptoms

There are many symptoms, some of which are more noticeable and others that are less obvious, the most common symptoms may include:

- Constipation
- Exhaustion
- Skin becomes pale and dry

- Swelling of the face
- Body inflammation
- Hoarseness
- Muscle aches and pains
- Depression
- Prolonged Menstrual Cycle
- Weight Gain
- Insomnia
- Difficulty getting pregnant
- Hair thinning or hair loss

03 | Complications

If left untreated, Hashimoto's Disease could cause additional health issues such as:

- Goiter(s)
- Heart problems
- Mental health issues

For additional resources and information on Hashimoto's Disease visit:

<http://www.webmd.com/women/hashimotos-thyroiditis-symptoms-causes-treatments#1>

Did You Know? Hashimoto's Affects About Seven Times More Women Than Men

References

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hashimotos-disease/basics/definition/con-20030293>

http://www.medicinenet.com/hashimotos_thyroiditis/article.htm#hashimotos_thyroiditis_facts