

Shalamar Hospital is striving to provide our patients quality health care, at lowest possible costs. Our hospital is continually active in pioneering new treatments and therapies to improve the lives of people in our community.



## WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR AUTOIMMUNE THYROIDITIS?

If the thyroid is damaged, replacement of thyroid hormones through the use of levothyroxine tablets will be necessary.

## IMPORTANT POINTS

1. The permanency of thyroiditis depends on the type of thyroiditis you have.
2. Consulting an endocrinologist for a thorough evaluation can determine the type of thyroiditis and avoid unnecessary treatment as some types do not require it.
3. Postpartum thyroiditis may manifest as postnatal depression.
4. Women who had postpartum thyroiditis after one pregnancy should undergo testing after subsequent pregnancies.
5. Patients should confirm with their doctor if their prescription qualifies for exemption from charges.
6. Thyroid problems often have a familial component, and individuals with a family history of thyroid issues should consult their doctor to determine if testing is necessary.

A photograph of a doctor in a white coat and mask examining a patient's neck. The doctor's hands are visible, wearing white gloves, and are gently touching the patient's neck. The patient is looking upwards with a concerned expression.

# Thyroiditis

## ENDOCRINE SURGERY CLINIC

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Thyroiditis refers to the inflammation of the thyroid gland and there are four main types of thyroiditis: viral or sub-acute thyroiditis, postpartum thyroiditis, drug-induced thyroiditis, and autoimmune thyroiditis. The first three types of thyroiditis are usually temporary and the thyroid gland typically returns to its normal state, although this is not always the case. The fourth type, autoimmune thyroiditis, can cause permanent damage to the thyroid gland.

## VIRAL OR SUB-ACUTE THYROIDITIS

Viral or sub-acute thyroiditis is an inflammation of the thyroid gland that is typically caused by a viral infection. It is more common in women than men, and usually affects those aged 20-50. The symptoms of this type of thyroiditis include an enlarged thyroid gland with pain or tenderness that develops rapidly over 24-48 hours, as well as flu-like symptoms, sore throat, and fever. There is a phase of hyperthyroidism followed by a phase of hypothyroidism.

Diagnosis of viral or sub-acute thyroiditis is done through a physical examination and blood tests. A radioisotope iodine uptake scan may also be done to rule out other causes of thyroid overactivity, and a low uptake confirms the diagnosis.

Treatment of viral or sub-acute thyroiditis usually involves anti-inflammatory drugs or a short course of steroids for patients with persistent pain and other symptoms. Recovery is usually complete in two to five months, and only about five percent of cases result in permanent under-activity. In such cases, levothyroxine tablets are prescribed to replace the missing thyroid hormone.

## POSTPARTUM THYROIDITIS:

### WHAT IS POSTPARTUM THYROIDITIS?

Postpartum thyroiditis is a type of temporary thyroiditis that occurs after pregnancy, particularly in women with thyroid autoantibodies. It typically develops within the first six months after childbirth.

What are the symptoms of postpartum thyroiditis?

Postpartum thyroiditis usually begins with symptoms of an overactive thyroid gland (hyperthyroidism), which may resolve on its own or progress to symptoms of an underactive thyroid gland (hypothyroidism). Thyroid swelling is typically mild and painless. Postnatal depression may occur during the underactive phase.

### HOW IS POSTPARTUM THYROIDITIS DIAGNOSED?

Physical examination and blood tests for thyroid hormones and thyroid autoantibodies are used for diagnosis. An antibody test can help differentiate thyroiditis-related hyperthyroidism from Graves' disease. A low uptake on a radioisotope uptake scan may confirm the diagnosis, which can be performed safely while breastfeeding.

### WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR POSTPARTUM THYROIDITIS?

No treatment may be required in mild cases, as the condition may clear up quickly. If hyperthyroid symptoms are bothersome, a

beta-blocker drug may be prescribed to alleviate them. If hypothyroid symptoms are problematic, levothyroxine tablets may be necessary. Neither treatment interferes with breastfeeding.

## WHAT IS THE OUTCOME OF POSTPARTUM THYROIDITIS?

Most women recover completely. Women who take levothyroxine may be able to stop taking the medication within six to twelve months. If blood tests reveal abnormalities more than a year after childbirth, further treatment may be necessary. Postpartum thyroiditis often recurs after subsequent pregnancies, so thyroid function should be monitored after each childbirth, and yearly blood tests should be conducted to check thyroid hormone levels since postpartum thyroiditis increases the risk of permanent thyroid disease in the future.

## DRUG-INDUCED THYROIDITIS

### WHAT IS DRUG-INDUCED THYROIDITIS?

Thyroiditis may be caused by certain medications, such as Amiodarone, Lithium, Sunitinib, Axitinib, Interferons, Pembrolizumab, Nivolumab, And Ipilimumab. The thyroiditis usually resolves without treatment in most cases, but steroid therapy may be necessary with some drugs, such as Amiodarone.

## AUTOIMMUNE THYROIDITIS

### WHAT IS AUTOIMMUNE THYROIDITIS?

Autoimmune thyroiditis is a self-destructive process in which the body's immune system attacks thyroid cells as if they were foreign cells. Up to 20% of healthy women may experience mild thyroiditis, while men have a lower frequency of thyroiditis. Only a small portion of these individuals (about 10% of those with thyroiditis) develop ill health from the autoimmune process, with the most common form known as "Hashimoto's thyroiditis."

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF AUTOIMMUNE THYROIDITIS?

The most common features of autoimmune thyroiditis are the development of hypothyroidism and, sometimes, painless thyroid enlargement (goiter).

### HOW IS AUTOIMMUNE THYROIDITIS DIAGNOSED?

Measuring antibody levels is the method used to diagnose autoimmune thyroiditis. If the antibodies are present, a blood test for thyroid hormones can be performed to determine the extent of damage. In some cases, typical features may be seen on thyroid ultrasound. Blood tests may also predict the likelihood of thyroid failure, in which case follow-up testing or treatment may be recommended. Individuals with a strong family history of autoimmune thyroiditis may be screened for thyroid antibodies.