

Thyroid Health & Menopause

During menopause, changes in oestrogen and progesterone levels can influence thyroid function, while existing thyroid disorders can amplify menopausal symptoms.

Symptoms

The Thyroid-Menopause Connection

The thyroid gland regulates metabolism by producing thyroxine (T4) and tri-iodothyronine (T3) hormones. As women approach menopause, the risk of thyroid disorders increase. During menopause, Thyroid function can be affected by the decline in oestrogen levels, leading to overlapping symptoms such as fatigue, mood swings, weight changes, and brain fog, which can make it challenging to understand which symptoms are menopause or thyroid - related. Fluctuating oestrogen levels can alter thyroid hormone metabolism. In the UK, about 1.5% of women in their 60s experience hyperthyroidism. To differentiate between menopause and thyroid dysfunction, a thyroid function test may be needed. Addressing thyroid disorders can help alleviate menopause symptoms, and if thyroid levels are normal but symptoms persist, menopause is more likely the cause.

Hyperthyroidism



Hyperthyroidism results from excess thyroid hormone production accelerating metabolism. Weight loss, heat intolerance, sweating, anxiety, and heart palpitations can intensify during menopause, often mistaken for menopausal changes. Graves' disease is the leading cause, and untreated cases may disrupt menstrual cycles and worsen menopausal symptoms.



Hypothyroidism



Hypothyroidism affects approximately 2% of the UK population, with prevalence rising to over 5% in individuals over 60. Hypothyroidism slows metabolism due to low thyroid hormone levels, causing fatigue, weight gain, depression, dry skin, and hair thinning—symptoms that often overlap with menopause. Hashimoto's thyroiditis is the primary cause.

Diet & Nutrition

Diet & Lifestyle support for thyroid-menopause symptoms

Diet can play an important role in supporting the overlap between thyroid dysfunction and menopause symptoms. BANT nutrition practitioners assess and identify potential nutritional imbalances to understand how these may contribute to an individual's symptoms and health concerns. Practitioners consider each individual to be unique and recommend personalised nutrition and lifestyle programmes rather than a 'one size fits all' approach.

