

10 Crucial Questions to Ask About Your Thyroid Health

An estimated 26-28 million Americans have some form of thyroid disease, half of whom are unaware of their condition or were misdiagnosed because thyroid disease can masquerade as a host of other ailments.

The American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists is out to change that, offering a straightforward list of *10 Questions To Ask About Your Thyroid Health*—five to ask your doctor and five to ask your pharmacist—the organization wants to arm your viewers with the information they need to become their own thyroid health advocates.

In conjunction with January's Thyroid Awareness Month, the American College of Endocrinology (ACE)—the educational and scientific arm of the AACE—has kicked off a year-long campaign to help people understand the importance of their thyroid, a butterfly-shaped endocrine gland located low in the front of the neck.

10 Questions to Ask About Your Thyroid Health was created by ACE to encourage dialogue between patients and their physicians, and—if necessary—their pharmacists regarding this vital hormone-producing gland. The list is available for public download at www.aace.org, a website that also features general information about thyroid conditions and diseases, including thyroid cancer. In addition to the informational sheet, the awareness campaign will be featured in major health fairs throughout the year, interviews on media outlets across the U.S., and a special issue of *EmPower Magazine*, ACE's nationally distributed patient education magazine.

“An estimated 28 million Americans suffer from some type of thyroid problem that needs to be properly diagnosed and

treated,” said endocrine expert Yehuda Handelsman, M.D., FACP, FACE, FNLA, and president of ACE. “This campaign identifies the different types of thyroid disorders, signs and symptoms to look for and important questions to ask your doctor about thyroid illness.”

“For 20 years, AACE and ACE have focused on public awareness campaigns to help educate people about thyroid health and other endocrine-related diseases,” said R. Mack Harrell, M.D., FACP, FACE, and president of AACE. “As the endocrine experts, it’s our responsibility to help people learn more about these serious but treatable conditions.”

Here are 5 questions you may want to ask your physician and your pharmacist about your thyroid:

Physician

- Where is the thyroid located, and what does it do?
- What are the differences between hypothyroid and hyperthyroid patients and what are the symptoms of each?
- What is Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH), how is it measured, and what should my target number be?
- What else besides TSH levels are important for making sure my thyroid condition is under control?
- Why are more people than ever being diagnosed with thyroid cancer and should I be checked for it?

Pharmacist

- What is the difference between a generic thyroid hormone pill and a brand name thyroid hormone pill?
- Will you notify me in advance if you switch my thyroid medicine from the brand name I normally use to a generic?
- What time of day is best to take my thyroid hormone pill?
- May I take my thyroid medication with food, other medications, vitamins or supplements?

- Can any of my other medications affect my thyroid?