

HYPOTHYROIDISM

Understanding the development of hypothyroidism

The most common cause of hypothyroidism worldwide is iodine deficiency. Without adequate iodine, the thyroid is unable to produce adequate **hormone**.



In iodine **sufficient areas**, the most common cause of hypothyroidism is autoimmune. Patients have antibodies that block TPO activity and impair thyroid hormone production.

When the thyroid is unable to produce sufficient T3/T4, the pituitary tries to compensate with increased TSH. This often leads to a goiter, due to constant stimulation of the thyroid gland.

Further reading

Roberts CGP and Landenson PW. Hypothyroidism. *The Lancet*. 2004. 363(9411):793–803.