

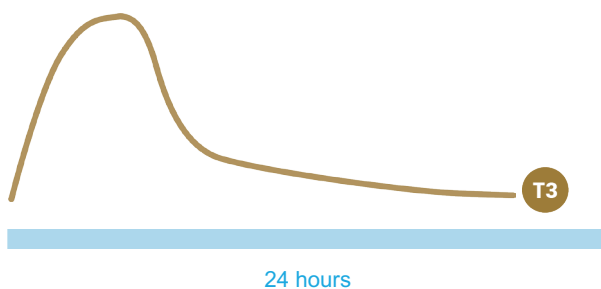
TREATING THYROID DISEASE

Selecting the appropriate treatment for hypothyroidism

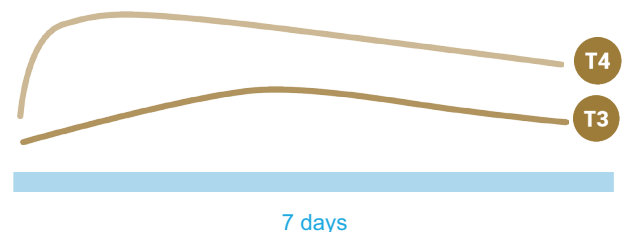


Regardless of the cause of hypothyroidism, the primary treatment is thyroid hormone replacement with levothyroxine or T4.

T3 is the active form of thyroid hormone, but it has a very short half-life, and treatment with T3 alone does not provide adequate thyroid hormone levels over the course of the day.



T4 is converted to T3 and provides adequate levels of both with T4 monotherapy.



Some patients prefer combination therapy with T3 and T4, however there is not good evidence to show that this is superior to T4 monotherapy alone.

Other patients feel desiccated thyroid hormone, derived from pork thyroid, is more "natural". Again however, there is not good evidence to show this is more effective than T4 alone.

Further reading

Jonklaas J, Bianco AC, Bauer AJ, et al. Guidelines for the treatment of hypothyroidism. *Thyroid*. 2014. 24(12):1670–1751.