

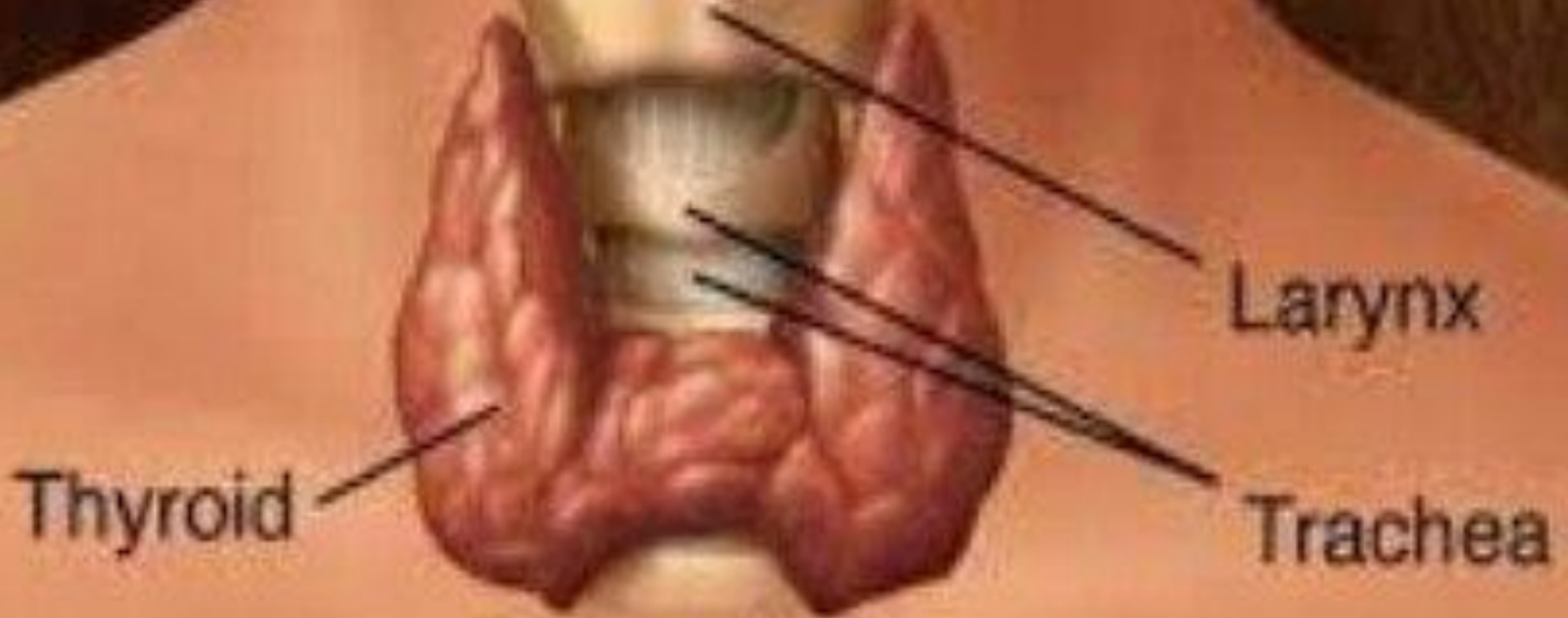
Thyroid disease.



Thyroid gland

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- Thyroid disease is a medical condition that affects the function of the thyroid gland (the endocrine organ found at the front of the neck that produces thyroid hormones).



- coarse and dry hair
- confusion or forgetfulness often mistaken for dementia in seniors
- constipation
- depression
- dry, scaly skin
- fatigue or a feeling of sluggishness
- hair loss
- increased menstrual flow (women)
- intolerance to cold temperatures
- irritability
- muscle cramps
- slower heart rate
- weakness
- weight gain



- Causes:

Thyroid diseases sometimes result from inappropriate TSH levels, or may be caused by problems in the thyroid gland itself.

The most common cause of hypothyroidism is Hashimoto's thyroiditis, an autoimmune condition where the body makes antibodies that destroy parts of the thyroid gland. Surgical removal and certain medications (e.g., amiodarone, lithium) can also cause hypothyroidism.

Other causes of hypothyroidism include pituitary problems, hypothalamus problems, and iodine deficiency (rare in North America, but affects nearly 2 billion people worldwide). Some babies are born with hypothyroidism - this is called congenital hypothyroidism.





- There are five general types:
- 1) hypothyroidism (low function) caused by not having enough thyroid hormones;
- 2) hyperthyroidism (high function) caused by having too much thyroid hormones;
- 3) structural abnormalities, most commonly an enlargement of the thyroid gland;
- 4) tumors which can be benign or cancerous;