

Thyroid Medication

Thyroid is an important endocrine gland producing thyroxin that is involved with the metabolic function of the body. Hypothyroidism is treated with thyroid medications, which are either synthetic or of animal origin. Several medications available are used as a replacement for T3, T4, or their combination. Armour Thyroid is the brand name of a desiccated thyroid, which is not recommended for replacement therapy. Levothroid, Levoxyl, Synthroid are brand names of the chemical compound levothyroxine sodium (T4). Cytomel is the brand name of the chemical liothyronine sodium (T3). Euthroid and Thyrolar are names for the chemical liotrix (T3 and T4). Levothyroxine sodium is typically used as an alternate treatment when endogenous thyroid hormone production is reduced. The dosage of medication required to maintain specific levels of thyroxin has to be determined by the medical practitioner. These drugs are sold in various dosage strengths that differ by only 12 micrograms. Hence, it is important for both security and efficiency that the existing active drug in the tablet is of definite consistency. If patients are given superpotent doses, it is possible that they will experience angina, arrhythmias, or tachycardia. Increased potency at times also leads to osteoporosis. It is also possible that the overdose is accidental due to negligence. If an overdose is suspected, it is advisable to contact the emergency room immediately. In case lower dose is given, then the symptoms cannot be alleviated. The potency of the drug is unstable as it is liable to change in the presence of light, air, temperature, and humidity. It is necessary to keep a gap of at least four hours between thyroid medications and ingestion of calcium supplements, antacids, iron supplements, and cholestyramines, as these are found to affect its absorption. Cabbage, buckwheat, flax, lentil, and milk and its products are some of the food products that affect the absorption of thyroid medication. Hence, it is important that there be a gap of several hours between their consumption. Thyroid hormones are taken orally except in atypical cases, such as myxedema coma, in which the patient has to be given intravenous medication. Dosages of medication are seen to vary with an individual's age as also the severity.

About the Author

Covers a wide range of clinical topics concerning the neurological diseases and disabilities.

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