

# Thyroid vs Parathyroid

Knowing the differences between the thyroid and the parathyroid glands may be helpful in managing your disease.

## Thyroid Gland

A small gland in the middle of your neck that uses iodine to make thyroid hormones.

### Thyroid hormones

Controls how our body turns food into energy (our metabolism)


#### Labs measuring Thyroid function:

- Thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH)
- Free T3 – active thyroid hormone
- Free T4 – inactive thyroid hormone

**Hypothyroid** – you do not make enough thyroid hormone

#### Common symptoms:


Not handling hot temps well, weight loss, anxiety, and diarrhea

 **Usually treated** with a medication called levothyroxine. This medicine should be taken separately from foods and most drinks

**Hyperthyroid** – you make too much thyroid hormone

#### Common symptoms:

Not handling hot temps well, weight loss, anxiety, and diarrhea

 **Usually treated** with medications or surgery to reduce thyroid hormone production

## Parathyroid Gland

4 small glands behind the thyroid gland that make parathyroid hormone (PTH).

### Parathyroid hormone

Controls the amount of calcium in your blood. When you have kidney failure, imbalances in serum calcium and phosphate can lead to increased PTH levels and mineral and bone disorders.

#### Labs measuring mineral and bone health:

- Parathyroid hormone (PTH)
- Phosphate
- Calcium
- Vitamin D

#### Symptoms of mineral and bone disorders includes:

- Muscle cramps
- Bone and joint pain
- Weak bones that may break easily
- Itchy and dry skin
- Calciphylaxis: When calcium deposits in your soft tissues. It can lead to painful ulcers

#### Bone and mineral disorders in dialysis are treated with:

- Diet changes to reduce phosphate intake
- Phosphate binders to reduce phosphate absorption from food
- Calcium and vitamin D supplements, adjusted as needed
- In some cases, the parathyroid glands may need to be removed