Thyroid 101: The Key Tests Your Doctor Isn’t Running Transcript

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Introduction to Thyroid and Mental Health

Hi, ladies. Doctor Sharon Stills here with you, your co-host for this amazing summit hormones and mental health, overcoming anxiety, depression and ADHD.

Today I wanted to talk to you about your thyroid gland because it is one of the most misunderstood, misdiagnosed disease processes or organ under functioning that I have seen since the beginning of time in my practice, which is now 23 years ago.

So low thyroid can definitely be a root cause of depression and anxiety. I see it all the time, as well as brain fog and inability to think clearly. So the main things we're talking about here at the summit.

So what do I want you to know about your thyroid gland? I want you to know that the majority of women who get their thyroid checked get it checked in properly, they just get a TSH and maybe a free T4.

Proper Thyroid Testing and Lab Interpretation

Now, if you've been around and you're listening to podcast and you're listening to summit and we're not your first rodeo, then you probably already know you need a TSH, a free T3, a free T4, or a reverse T3, and the two antibodies, the anti TPO and your thyroid globulin, two antibodies.

So that's the first step. Knowing and being able to get your doctor to run the right tests on you. But from there it gets a little tricky because I see women all the time who've had the right tests done, but then they've been interpreted improperly and women have been told all your levels are fine because the free T3 is in the middle of the range, rather than at the top of the range, or even above the range where it needs to be.

Or your reverse T3 is too high. And so you're being given T4, which is just fueling the reverse T3 fire and not getting to your free T3, which is the active thyroid hormone.

And so you're not getting better. And then you're either told, oh, it's probably not your thyroid or you know, there's something wrong with you or I don't know, you know, we've done everything.

Your thyroid is fine now when you haven't been given the right dose. So I always tell my patients we're going to do the thyroid tatcha. We're going to do a little dance, because finding the right thyroid dose for you, it's going to be very different than the right thyroid dose for me or for her or for her or for her or for her, etc..

And so you need to find someone who knows how to interpret, who knows how to look at the levels, who knows reverse T3 should not be middle of the range, shouldn't be high.

If it's too high, you need just T3, not a combo. Someone who's going to give you an thyroid which is cleaner than an arm, or which has had corn filler, which a lot of people are allergic to.

Finding the Right Thyroid Treatment

Plus it's GMO and if it was something you were going to take for a week, you know, I'm pretty into like purity. But I'm also like, I don't want to drive people crazy, but this is something potentially you can take every day.

You want to get pure products because you're putting it into your body and you don't want to fix something and create another problem of toxicity with the solution that's just working against yourself.

So you need someone who's going to understand how to read the tests. And then and then you need someone

who is going to know how to prescribe for you, because you may need very high doses, you may need doses twice a day or three times a day.

You may need your doses 12 hours apart, which is optimal for the half life of T3. It's not a very stable molecule, but for some women, 12 hours apart may be too close to bedtime.

For some women, that's going to help them sleep. For other women, it's going to keep them awake. So you may need to take your dosing in the morning, and five hours later, you may need to be on a little bit of a T4, T3, and a lot of T3.

You may need to just be on T3. Maybe you can be on a t4, T3 and don't need any T3. Do you see what I'm saying? There's so many different ways to do it, and what I tell my patients is to be patient because we don't want to just bam, give you a high dose of thyroid.

I'm a big believer in start low and go slow for everything. There's no reason to overload your body. However, that takes a little time. But when you get there, bang!

It's like, the gates open up, the bells go off, the lever goes up, the lights go on and you feel freaking fantabulous. So it's worth doing the thyroid chatter.

Maybe it's called the thyroid shuffle, but once you get there, you're going to feel the brain fog. Lift the depression, lift the anxiety lift. And if you're carrying around extra weight or your hair is falling out.

Also, things that are circular with depression can be caused from imbalances or can cause anxiety and depression. So all these things tied together. So what is my take home message?

My take home message is if you think you have a thyroid problem, trust yourself. Don't trust someone who maybe does or don't doesn't know what they're doing.

You have permission to fire your health care provider and find someone who's going to listen to you. Because even if your levels look perfect, if you are sitting there with, we have a thyroid symptom checklist and there's at least 50 symptoms on there, from muscle pain to hair loss to dry skin to depression, to constipation to feeling cold all the time.

Symptoms, Temperature Checks, and Autoimmune Causes

If you're like, hello, I'm the poster child, I just checked like half of these off. Then it doesn't matter what your levels look like, they're not the right levels for you.

So that's really important. I know I say test on gas and I do test thyroid levels. Of course I do. Because if you have high antibodies, totally different treatment than if you just have a sluggish thyroid.

I know word on the street is that everyone has Hashimoto's, but I can tell you in my practice, not everyone has Hashimoto's. Excuse me, I would say it's easily equal.

I have just as many patients who have Hashimoto's and just as many patients who don't, and just have a sluggish thyroid. And so you need to know that, because if you do have antibodies, then it's not just about giving you the right thyroid hormone, it's then putting on your sleuth cap and going, why?

Why is your body creating antibodies against your thyroid? Do you have a mercury toxicity? You do include a iron deficiency. Are you eating gluten? Are you eating foods that mimic gluten?

Is your vitamin D not optimized? Do you have viruses? Do you have bacteria in your gut? And so on and so on and so on. And so that's super important that you differentiate.

So you get the right treatments from autoimmune perspective to just a low thyroid. You can also check your temperatures. I have patients check their temperature with a basal body thermometer under their arm before they move up, and move up before they move out of bed, before they get moving for the day and you put it under your arm before you take your thyroid.

If you're taking thyroid, definitely before you have your coffee to get an actual basic basal body reading and your temperature should be 98.6. I don't mean to shit on you, but that's what an optimal temperature is.

And most of my patients who have been misdiagnosed and come to me for help and need help with their thyroid, they're at 96. Sometimes I see 95.9. They're 97.

And so we can use that as well as blood work as a way to know when to titrate and raise the dose. And if your doctor scares you and says, oh, your TSC is low and your free T3 is too high, you're hypothyroid.

We've got to take you off of it. Now, if you're on exogenous external thyroid support, of course your TSH is going to be suppressed. I expect to see it suppressed.

And newsflash if you're hypothyroid, you don't need a doctor looking at your labs to tell you you're hypothyroid. Just let your body talk to you. You will have an elevated heart rate.

Your heart will be pounding, you'll be sweating, you'll have diarrhea, your hair will be falling out. You will definitely be anxious and a different level of anxious.

You will feel like you want to tear your skin off. You will hear your heart beating. You will not be able to sleep. It will not be a pleasant situation.

Your body will let you know. So this is where it's the art and science. The practice of medicine, where you need a provider. Who's going to do this? I think I'm changing it to the thyroid shuffle with you to figure out what your doses.

Because when you get to your dose, like I said, it will literally. That's what I hear. That's why I say this. Patients come back and say doctor stills.

It's like someone flipped the switch. They turned the lights on.

Balancing Thyroid and Adrenal Health

For me, it is this beautiful experience and if you're carrying extra weight, the weight comes off. If you're constipated, your bowels start moving, muscle pain goes away.

All the things so what I want you to take from this is make sure your thyroid has been addressed properly. Make sure that you have someone who's not boxing you in, because that's what I see most often.

Women just get boxed in by I, I want to say lazy medicine or uneducated medicine or a combination of the things. Make sure you're properly evaluated, properly interpreted, and then you're properly prescribed the right combination of bioidentical like NP, thyroid or compound did T3, T4 combinations and then bioidentical T3 if that's what you need.

And of course I talked about the adrenal glands pre viously and I didn't say this in the adrenal gland section. But don't rev your thyroid without checking how your adrenal glands are doing.

Because if they're low, like I said and you rev the thyroid, think of kids at a playground that's still a thyroid goes up and adrenals go down. So often I will support the adrenal glands for a good solid four weeks if they're really low before bringing the thyroid on board.

So again, it's all all our hormones. I used to say they're a symphony. They still are a symphony. But now I say

they're a spiderweb because they really are interconnected.

And when you pull on one, when one is depleted or one is raised, it moves the whole system, right? Like like if you pull down a spider web. And so it's really important you don't just work with someone who only understands the gut or only understood the thyroid because it's all interconnected.

So when people say, you know, what is your specialty? You know, my specialty is women like you who just want to feel good. And so it doesn't matter if you have an ear infection, a urinary tract infection, if you have Covid, if you have asthma, if you've been diagnosed with cancer, it's all part of your same body.

And we need to treat all of you for you to feel better. And so thyroid, I just want you to have that on your list and something to make sure. Because if you're anxious or depressed and this hasn't been properly taken care of for you, and you're going looking at all of the things like you're missing a big piece, this could be I'm not saying it is, but it could be the missing link.

So I want you to go back and check and make sure your link is all linked up. All right. So enjoy the rest of the talks again. Doctor Sharon Stills, your co-host.

And it truly is my honor and my privilege. I am just over the moon that you're here with us and learning and growing and hopefully finding information that is going to change your life, rock your world and make you feel amazing.