

## Ep #10: Hypothyroid Is a Feminist Issue



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Victoria Albina, NP, MPH**

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As a functional medicine practitioner, I work with so many people who are beyond fatigued. Perhaps your energy is low, your zest for life is waning, your memory feels less than dependable, brain fog is a daily drain. You've been to your primary care provider, maybe even endocrinologist and were told that everything was normal, that you're fine, but you still feel exhausted.

Sound familiar? I'm really excited to dive into another area of fatigue with you today. Hypothyroid. We'll be talking about the physiology, why thyroid health is a feminist issue, and what you can do to help yourself feel better. Hold on tight, this is going to be a good one, my loves.

You're listening to Feminist Wellness, the only podcast that combines functional medicine, life coaching, and feminism to teach smart women how to reclaim their power and restore their health! Here's your host, Nurse Practitioner, Functional Medicine Expert, Herbalist and Life Coach, Victoria Albina.

Hello, hello my kittens. I hope you are doing beautifully today. I am so excited to talk with you today about a topic near and dear to my heart, which is thyroid health. While my primary love is of course, the gut and digestion and all things microbiome, the thyroid is right up there with gut health, vying to be my favorite organ system.

A friend of mine was sort of like, half joking that my tagline should be, "I'm Victoria Albina and I help you with all the things your primary care provider blew you off about like belly aches, being depressed or fatigued," and she was right. I practice medicine because well, I'm a massive nerd for this stuff and because I got the big shrug off from way too many doctors to even count back when I was sick.

And I'm out here to help other people, particularly other humans socialized as women to take back control of our mental and physical health, and

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having talked all about the adrenal glands and their role in fatigue the other week, it's time to give the old thyroid her turn.

So hypothyroid is a super common condition. It's estimated that more people in the US have something called subclinical hypothyroid or hypothyroid that isn't diagnosed by regular allopathic or drug-based Western medical means than have type two diabetes, which is staggering to think about.

More than 12% of the US population will develop a thyroid condition during their lifetime. It's estimated that 20 million Americans have some form of thyroid imbalance or disease, and that up to 60% of those with actual thyroid disease are unaware of their condition or have subclinical hypothyroid, which means again, they haven't garnered a proper diagnosis from their healthcare provider, but they likely have some symptoms of hypothyroid.

Hypothyroid is a wicked complex condition and this is just the first of many episodes and articles on the issue, so I won't be talking about all of the minutia today, but I'll be sure to hit the high notes for you, my loves, with the hopes of empowering you to believe your body and your intuition, to empower you to speak up and to ask for what you need at the doctor's office, to empower you to get a proper diagnosis and to start doing everything you can to support your thyroid wellness now.

So, hypothyroid is low functioning thyroid. Hypo like hypoactive versus hyper like a hyperactive kid, like what I was in the 80s. This is a condition in which your thyroid isn't making enough thyroid-stimulating hormone known as TSH to signal your body to make the actual thyroid hormone you need. Or your thyroid is making enough thyroid hormone but your body isn't able to activate the thyroid hormone you are able to make, which is known as T4 into the more active, usable form, which is T3.

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So I want you to picture your hypothalamus and pituitary in your brain as holding those little tin can and string phones you maybe made as a child. I loved those. Your hypothalamus in your brain is holding a tin can and there's a little string to the pituitary also in your brain, which is holding a little tin can of its own and there's another set of three little strings that go out to your thyroid, your ovaries, and your adrenal glands.

So yes, when any one of these is out of balance, all the others can be too. And your thyroid then has another little set of strings going out to your digestion. This is all to say these systems are intricately linked. So if you have leaky gut, you're at higher risk for hypothyroid and vice versa.

If you've ever played with tin can phones, you know how easily the little strings get tangled, frayed, or break. And in this metaphor, that's when we have trouble with our thyroids. When your brain isn't sending the right signal down to your thyroid or if your thyroid mishears the message or doesn't get the communication from your other organs, oh my, we've got trouble brewing.

So how do you know if you have hypothyroid or subclinical hypothyroid? Common symptoms include fatigue, dry skin and thinning hair, especially the outer third part of your eyebrows, depression or mood concerns, impaired cognition, meaning brain fog, memory loss, not being able to find words all of a sudden, an increased sensitivity to cold, which usually feels like cold paws and feet when everyone else is all cozy, constipation, muscle weakness, irregular or heavier than normal periods, which makes sense because these systems are all connected.

Weight changes, generally the gaining of the weight, and side note here, I'm not saying that any weight is a bad weight, but that gaining weight when nothing else at all has changed, like gaining weight out of nowhere may be a sign that your thyroid needs investigating. All weights, all bodies are good bodies. I just want to be very clear on this point. Not making a judgment.

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Just saying your thyroid affects your metabolism. Your thyroid's out of whack, therefore metabolism out of whack.

As per my obsession with all things gut health, I want to take a quick detour to talk about the role of thyroid health in digestion, which will help illustrate the connections between your thyroid system and pretty much every other system in your body. Because thyroid hormone has downstream effects on pretty much all cells in our bodies.

This is why it's so vital to know what's going on with your thyroid. So hypothyroid can lead to constipation. T3 thyroid hormone, the activated form that's made from T4 is required for intestinal motility, or your body's ability to move food through your digestive system, which I have an article about on, I'll link to it in the show notes.

T3 also triggers your biogenic stomach acid, which then makes the production of pancreatic enzymes. Without acid and enzymes in your tum, and without the signals to start motility or the little weave of energy that moves food through your GI tract, your food will just - it'll just sit there, not getting digested, which can make you feel pretty lousy and can lead to constipation, which fair enough, that sucks on its own, but can also increase your risk of bacterial, fungal, or parasite overgrowths like small intestine bacterial overgrowth, known as SIBO, or overgrowths in your large intestine, which can look an awful lot like irritable bowel syndrome or IBS, which millions of Americans, especially women, suffer with and get little support around in Western medicine.

And the links between things like thyroid and IBS are very rarely addressed in conventional settings. Thyroid touches every part of our body and it's so vital to rule a thyroid imbalance in or out as a cause of your symptoms. As your hypothyroid progresses, symptoms may only worsen. Not just the classic fatigue but the more subtle symptoms like the GI issues we just talked about.

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In drug-based Western medicine, the solution is to watch and wait, to see if other symptoms pop up before you're placed on any life-altering medications like thyroid replacement hormones. By that time, your body may not be as able to reverse the condition as it would have before.

Acting early is the best way to support your body in hypothyroid, which doesn't necessarily mean going on thyroid medication. Not at all. And you know me, I'll be diving into self-care for thyroid in a ton of detail so hold tight, my love.

I want to pause here to talk about how hypothyroid is a feminist issue and I want to start by giving a nod to the amazing professor Wendy Kozol who is my women studies professor at Oberlin College back in the 90s. We called it women's studies and not gender studies.

Dr. Kozol opened my eyes to health and health disparities as complex and deeply feminist concerns. And not just for women identified mammals, but for humans of color, differently abled folks. Her work and teachings really shaped the direction of my career in the last many, many years since I took her classes back in Oberlin. Thanks, professor Kozol, you are amazing.

So I've talked before on the show about how I with all of my privilege wasn't listened to or believed at the doctor's office, how I went without a proper diagnosis for my GI concerns, depression, anxiety, for I don't know, 25 years or so, before I took my health into my own hands. Studies show very clearly that women identified humans are not listened to in our healthcare system.

Our symptoms are dismissed, belittled, and even made fun of. The Western medical system, and I've talk about this before, is a system of black and white thinking. The way we test thyroid is based on some faulty lousy old science that leaves so many people undiagnosed by only testing

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TSH, thyroid-stimulating hormone, which only gives you a tiny window into thyroid health.

Until your thyroid gets so beat down that your TSH climbs up to 4.5 on a lab value, you're told that you're totally fine and you're offered an antidepressant if anything. Folks with a TSH above 1.5 are worked up for hypothyroid in my clinic because most of those folks feel like crap.

But no matter how you feel, in a numbers-based system that values objective truths more than a woman's subjective experience of living in her own human body, when our experience isn't enough, when a number on a piece of paper is more important than the fact that you can barely get out of bed in the morning, that is a feminist issue.

That is blatant hypothyroid symptoms and a TSH of 4.4 won't get you the diagnosis or thyroid help you need from the average Western trained conventional clinician for a condition that is seven times more likely to affect humans assigned female at birth. I mean, I want to make all sorts of Liz Lemon noises when I say that out loud.

Our voices are dismissed, ignored, we are condescended to. The medical system is predicated on a paternalistic doctor knows best framework that leaves folks with hypothyroid symptoms to wonder if they're just making it up, imagining it. I've literally heard clinicians say that a patient's over-exaggerating her symptoms for attention, that she's being hysterical.

And sure, maybe that's the rare case, but I think people get super desperate when they go to clinician after clinician and aren't made to feel truly heard or seen. When we aren't believed by our healthcare provider, a person we want so much to trust and have faith in, I mean, if millions of people had gunshot wounds and went to the ER and were told, "Nah, that's not a bullet in your thigh. You must just be depressed. Here's some Prozac, try to relax more," there would hopefully be a national outcry.



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But women who are endlessly fatigued are not given the full credence and workup we deserve, and this is a feminist issue. This leads us to downplay our symptoms when they're making us feel like soggy garbage, and this is why we need to educate ourselves, to advocate for ourselves, to know what test we need and what to make of the results, because so many of us are not getting the care we need until we take our health into our own hands.

Therefore, one of my primary life goals is to give you the information you need to start being your own thyroid sleuth. I'm going to take a minute to roll through the different tests that are important here and worry not, of course there's a PDF for that. Look in the show notes for the links so you don't need to scramble to write all of this down.

So we'll start with thyroid-stimulating hormone, TSH. I mentioned this one before. It's usually the only thyroid test that folks are given. It's only a small part of the picture though. TSH is the language your brain uses to talk to your body about how much thyroid hormone you need. When you're stressed, for example, you need more active thyroid hormone, so your brain signals your thyroid with TSH, thyroid-stimulating hormone, to release more T4, which can then be activated to T3.

And because my brain thinks in metaphor and analogy, I like to think of TSH as a measure of the volume, meaning like the loudness your brain needs to use to get your thyroid's attention. Like the volume on a stereo. I'm moving my hand like there's an invisible knob in front of me because I'm old and I remember when stereos had knobs.

Where 0.05 is very low volume of sound and 4.5 is a very high sound volume. So stay with me. So if your thyroid is hyperactive, it's like a Chihuahua. Your brain just barely whispers, uses a TSH volume of like, barely nothing like, 0.05 and your thyroid is like hi, I'm here, I'm active, what's up, I'm hyperactive, let's do metabolisms.



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And the opposite is true with hypoactive. Hypoactive thyroid is like a slug. It's slow moving, it doesn't metabolize very fast, and your brain needs to talk louder and louder and louder to get your thyroid to pay attention. To say it plainly, the higher the TSH number, the less your thyroid is active.

And the problem with TSH is well, it's actually not a problem with TSH itself. It's a problem with how we quantify trouble. That is the lab normal range for TSH goes from 0.05 way up to 4.5, and that massive range is based on some really crap science, and that leaves a ton of people undiagnosed, and therefore suffering alone with care and at risk of the side effects and symptoms of unmanaged hypothyroid.

And hypothyroid is no joke, but sadly, the interpretation of the TSH is rather laughable. And it's based on the NH's or nurse's health studies, which is not controlled for people with known hypothyroid, meaning in plain English, that the numbers are jacked.

When those studies have been repeated with proper controls, evidence shows that anyone with a TSH above two, 2.5 should be worked up for possible hypothyroid, especially when that human has symptoms. And that's when we should look at the rest of the thyroid hormones and we'll be talking about T4 and T3 today.

So time for another metaphor. Picture your metabolism as a flashlight. If you want to see in the dark, you need light. And for that, your internal flashlight needs batteries. Your brain is constantly scanning for low battery signals and when it detects low energy or low battery in your body system, that's when the brain tells the thyroid again in the language of TSH, to give the body some more power. That makes sense.

You know when you go buy those big batteries, like those D cell ones and they come in that stupid sharp plastic wrap stuff that you need a machete to get into? That's your T4. Sealed up potential energy. You can't put those

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plastic wrap batteries in a flashlight. That's just not possible. first, you need to expend a significant amount of cellular energy to get the plastic open.

That is, to convert T4, sealed batteries, into T3, an opened thing of batteries, gosh, I hope you can picture this. Okay, so the batteries here in T3 then needs to be put into the flashlight. The science words are the T3 needs to find and attach to a thyroid receptor. Once that battery, the T3 is in the receptor, the flashlight, you have energy. You have light. You can see and think clearly; your heart can beat appropriately.

Your mood can normalize, and you won't feel like such a sad tired little kitten. Your body can use fuel appropriately. The lights are on, my love. Having enough thyroid hormone feels amazing and it's like shining a light in the darkness. If you've dealt with hypothyroid or know someone who has, you're hopefully nodding yes right now. Being low thyroid's freaking exhausting and it's not in your head, my love. It's right in the middle of your throat, in that beautiful little thyroid gland.

The other part of a proper thyroid workup are thyroid antibodies and something called reverse T3, and I'll be diving into those on our upcoming Hashimoto's episode, but I'll just say, if you think your thyroid is off, get thee to a properly trained and licensed functional medicine provider for a full thyroid workup. And it's so worth it, my love.

So, you've gotten your thyroid test back. Your TSH is elevated above two, 2.5, your free T3 or your free T4, the batteries in that flashlight are low, and you have hypothyroid, or subclinical hypothyroid. What's a human to do? The first thing is to step out of blame. You didn't cause your hypothyroid and it's not your fault.

There's no personal blame or shame here. That kind of thinking doesn't serve you. So shake it off, this is what is, and I'm going to help you learn how you can help yourself. So, sometimes hypothyroid is genetic and

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sometimes it's environmental. I deeply believe that the chemicals and toxins we're all being exposed to at alarming rates play a huge role in the astronomical numbers of hypothyroid cases we're seeing these days.

Endocrine system toxins like those in air fresheners and anything that contains a scent not found in nature, like that fresh linen scented room spray or those frightening plug-in chemical thingys that release smells or those little car trees, or frankly, that passion fruit scent in your shampoo or lotion, anything that's labeled with a fragrance on a label versus saying this is made from essential oils of orange and tea tree or whatever, all those chemicals can send your thyroid into disarray.

Pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals in our food, milk, meat, water and air are all affecting us in ways we are not evolved to deal with. The constant pings of our phones and social media are stressing us out like never before, and we're not getting proper sleep with screens in our room and more noise and light pollution than ever.

Our adrenals are taking a beating and if you'd like a primer on adrenal health, head on back after you finish this episode to episode seven to learn more about your beautiful adrenal glands and how you can support them. Don't despair my loves, you know I've got you. There are some simple things you can do to support your thyroid and all of your body cells to optimize your wellness.

Please, any time you can, choose organics. Choose foods that's grown without chemicals and if budget's an issue, please look at the Environmental Working Group's list of the dirty dozen and the clean 15. It's this beautiful list that this non-profit EWG puts out every year of those foods that are grown with the most and least pesticides so that you can make the best budgetary decisions for your family based on those foods that are best avoided in their chemical called conventional - who's convention is that, but anyway, in the conventional or chemical-based manner versus organics.

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Consider taking a break from air fresheners, from anything that has that word fragrance in it, from any chemical scent that doesn't come from nature. The Environmental Working Group also has a really great website and I'll put a link in the show notes that's all about how to minimize your exposure to chemicals through our body's biggest organ, which is our skin.

What goes on your skin goes into your thyroid, my love, so think carefully when you're choosing that new eyeliner, that new lotion, that new laundry detergent, et cetera. I also think it's very important to filter our water, and my personal favorite water filtration system is the Berkey and I love it. Oh, and I have no financial connection to the Berkey company at all.

But I love the Berkey because it's gravity fed, which means that god forbid the lights and the power and the electricity should go out, if you've got access to a river, a stream, or snow, you can filter it without electricity and you can have clean, clear water, which is pretty amazing, I would say.

And before I jump into a list of the thyroid supplements and nutrients you want to make sure that you're getting on the daily, these are things that you can do before jumping to thyroid replacement hormones, the prescription thyroid medicine. Those drugs, particular the natural ones known as NDT or natural desiccated thyroid are on my shortlist of drugs I love.

But they're not necessarily for everyone and not everyone needs them right away. And it's important to do everything you can to support your thyroid holistically before jumping on a drug. So let's dive in to talking about what you can do for your thyroid other than and in addition to drug therapy. And yes, this is all in the PDF so just listen. Let it sink in and then go download the handout on my website to get all the details and with pretty pictures.

So the first step is to start taking out what you've been putting in. You know if you've been listening to the podcast that I love to start us off with a 30-day nutrition reset, also called an elimination diet. I don't love using the

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trigger truck word diet, but anyway. Starting with a 30-day nutrition reset can help you to find out what's sparking your symptoms.

We start by eliminating gluten, dairy, corn, soy, sugar, caffeine, processed foods, and alcohol, as these are often the biggest culprits in thyroid disruption. I would also take a break on foods with weird additives, preservatives, and chemical ingredients you can't pronounce. Lovingly pause these foods for at least 30 days to see how you feel, while adding in all the vegetables or organic grass-fed meat, nuts, seeds, seafood, and other delights that your body enjoys.

You might consider working with a functional medicine practitioner or functional medicine nutritionist to start the elimination process and to closely monitor what happens when you remove certain foods, followed by your response when you reintroduce them.

The second step is to heal your gut. Remember that your thyroid and your gut are constantly talking to one another and helping each other out. If one isn't working well, the other simply can't. Healing your gut should be a priority. Go back and listen to the leaky gut podcast and look at the articles on my website for more detail. Gut health is everything, my loves. It's why I'm obsessed with it.

Three is to reduce stress. So stress is going to get your hormones to flare up. I mean way up. Thyroid and adrenal health are deeply intertwined, and when you experience stress in your life, your adrenals start pumping out that adrenaline. Your cortisol goes up, your body goes into sympathetic dominance, fight, flight, freeze.

From the point of view of your brain, if you think you're about to be eaten by a tiger and either need to run or punch that 400-pound beast square in the schnoz, are you going to pause to have a healthy metabolic balance? I think not.

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And so we circle back once again to meditation, to mindfulness, to being our own watcher, to learning how to manage our minds so our minds don't manage us. This is why I meditate and journal each and every morning. This is why I do the yogas and the exercise to keep my body in parasympathetic dominance, the rest and digest phase as much as possible because keeping your stress down is key - I can't stress that enough - to maintain your thyroid function.

Sorry, I'm over here laughing at my own dad joke. That was really bad. Anyway, so I'll take a wee departure now from the purely nerdy scientific to the land of the witchy woo, with a nod to the chakras, an ancient system for understanding how energy flows through us and how energy blocks can lead to trouble like when the little strings from the tin can phone from your brain to your thyroid or your thyroid to your tummy get all tangled up.

The fifth chakra, our emotional center is said to reside in our throats and is the connector between the cognitive mind, our thoughts, and our hearts or emotions. When we don't express our thoughts, opinions, and truth, there can be a blockage that builds up at that place between heart and mind. The throat chakra, and vice versa if we are blocked at this energy node, it's hard to speak up for ourselves and our experience. And can also be hard to listen to others and opinions that don't jive with ours with an open heart.

Clinically, I see this so often. The predominance of folks I see with hypothyroid answer with a resounding yes. When I ask if they feel like they don't speak their truth, don't own their truth, don't give it voice. I may be a nerdy epidemiologist, my loves, but I'll tell you, all these years of working with women and other humans with hypothyroid has really shown this pattern to be true, and that meditating with the thought, "I speak my truth with ease," can help.

And it sure can't hurt. I'll also note that so many of the throat chakra strengthening recommendations like singing and humming also stimulate the vagus nerve, which is super vital for your overall health and does play a

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role in gut health and thus, thyroid health. Of course I have an article all about the vagus nerve and I'll link to it in the show notes, and I must point out, it's almost like this all of this ancient knowledge and modern science are pointing us to the same conclusions.

Where were we? Right, key thyroid health nutrients. Did you like that segue? Was that even a segue or did I just jump into it? I think I leapt. Feet first. Okay, so thyroids need certain nutrients to make the molecules they send racing through your body. And because your thyroid is always humming along in the background, we need to make sure we're getting enough of these nutrients on the daily.

From food, yes, absolutely, but once you're dealing with hypothyroid, supplements are a great way to make sure you're hitting those nutritional milestones. And yes, don't worry, it's all in the handout. So let's start with iodine. This is a tricky one that I won't get too mired in. There's actually a lot of controversy about iodine replacement in thyroid.

But in short, you can't make thyroid hormone without iodine, but you also can get too much iodine, which can be dangerous. I aim for 150 micrograms of iodine a day as a bare minimum, which is what the World Health Organization recommends. My favorite sources are seafood, cranberries, and eggs.

Pregnant humans need at least 220 micrograms a day and breast or chest feeding folks need at least 290 to 300 micrograms a day. Selenium is the next most important nutrient for thyroid and is needed for T4 to T3 conversion, to help you open that annoying pack of batteries so you can power up your internal flashlight and let your beautiful light shine.

Selenium is also very important for balancing iodine and preventing excess iodine from hurting your thyroid cells. A super good quality multivitamin like



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my go-to, which is Mitocore will have some selenium in it and you can supplement by eating four to five organic Brazil nuts a day.

Other foods that are high in selenium include mushrooms, seafood, especially oysters and tuna. Don't eat too much tuna because it has a lot of mercury in it. Beans, sunflower seeds, meat, poultry, and liver. Yes, I said organ meats again. Liver is a great source of selenium so mix it up, my loves. And if you don't like any of those foods or don't tend to eat them, it might be wise to get a selenium supplement and to aim for about 200 micrograms a day.

Magnesium plays a role in over 300 biochemical reactions. It supports the immune system, maintains normal muscle and nerve function. Magnesium has a role in the production of energy and helps regulate your heartbeat. Overall, magnesium is vital in the maintenance of optimal health and emotional wellness.

Sadly, most Americans and many worldwide are chronically low in magnesium because our soil is sadly bereft from so many years of lousy farming practices. Folks are also eating more processed foods, which are lower in naturally occurring minerals like magnesium. Great food sources of magnesium include pumpkin seed kernels, which are very tasty, roasted almonds, spinach, cashews, avocado, and my favorite, dark chocolate.

Thiamine, vitamin B1, plays a big role in converting carbohydrates into energy. Getting adequate amounts of thiamine is associated with restoring energy in patients who experience fatigue as a symptom of hypothyroid. It also aids in the digestion of fats and proteins. This vitamin is essential for releasing hydrochloric acid in the stomach, which we talked about previously, which is vital for the digestion of proteins, including meat, beans, and eggs.

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To metabolize thiamine, you need stomach acid. Something many hypothyroid patients won't have adequate amounts of, in turn, causing a deficiency. Great sources of thiamine include pork, brown rice, flaxseed, seafood such as muscles and salmon, beans once again, and green peas.

Iron is a vital thyroid nutrient and iron deficiency is super-duper common, especially in humans who regularly have periods and thus, lose blood on the monthly. Your period needs iron to make thyroid hormones, and it also needs iron to convert inactive T4, the closed-up pack of batteries, into the active T3, the liberated batteries.

The bummer is that many folks with hypothyroid don't absorb iron well. So hypothyroidism can cause iron deficiency and iron deficiency can cause hypothyroid. That's a bummer, right? But remember, my loves, that iron overdose is a possible thing. Please, make sure you get your iron tested before supplementing, and remember that iron deficiency symptoms can look an awful lot like hypothyroid symptoms. So as always, test, don't guess.

If your labs do come back with low ferritin levels or actual anemia, as shown in your CBC or complete blood count, you can get iron from food or supplements. Heme iron, which is the kind in animal foods is much better absorbed than non-heme iron, which comes from plants.

My favorite iron sources are liver, both beef and chicken, other organ meats, oysters and clams, along with lentils, leafy greens, dark-colored green vegetables, and my beloved stinging nettle leaf tea, which is one of my favorite herbs on the planet, which needs to be steeped overnight to get all the iron out of it.

And little pro tip, I love to put nettles in my bone broth before I cook it down because that way it steeps for like, one billion hours. Taking vitamin C with your iron helps to absorb it, so your grandma was right when she put lemon

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juice in that broccoli. My favorite iron supplements are Strong Women Syrup and a pill called Ferrochel, which is well absorbed and is unlikely to give you the constipation and gassiness that often comes with cheapo quality iron supplements.

Zinc supports a healthy gut and a healthy thyroid and is vital for the conversion of T4 to T3 and the production of TSH. Adding zinc can help with this vital step in thyroid hormone balance and can lift energy, immunity, and mood.

Zinc always needs to be balanced with copper. Daily, we need at least eight milligrams of zinc and 900 micrograms of copper in this ratio. Great food sources of zinc and copper include seafood such as oysters, lobsters, and crab. You guessed it. Liver is a fabulous source as well as grass-fed meat and poultry, beans, and nuts, particularly almonds and pistachios.

Not to sound too Argentine again here, but it's super hard to get enough zinc and copper as a vegetarian or a vegan. You need to eat an awful lot of nuts and seeds to get enough in a day so for those folks on the vegetarian or vegan train, I'd recommend a well-balanced multivitamin or a thyroid specific nutrient blend that contains copper and zinc.

And finally, vitamin C, B12, and B2. Of these, I most often see deficiencies in B12 amongst my patients. Remember, vegans cannot get B12 from their diet and must supplement. Anyone with depression or other mood issues must absolutely get their B12 tested and I have an article about B12 deficiency on my website.

Low B12 is such an energy killer and it's such a mood masher. I don't mess around with that one for sure. Please get tested. Foods highest in B12 in this order are clams, lamb liver, beef liver, duck liver, oysters, caviar - just saying caviar makes me feel fancy, but there actually is like, completely affordable caviar. It's just not the fancy kind. Mackerel, herring, chicken

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liver, mussels, crab, sardines, and salmon. It's much more fun if you say it salmon.

Vitamin C rich fruits include papaya, strawberry, pineapple, orange, kiwi, cantaloupe, raspberry, blueberry, and cranberries. Vitamin C rich vegetables include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, bok choy, bell peppers, kale, and cabbage. And my favorite vitamin C rich herbs include hibiscus and rosehips. Both of those are super delicious and are such a great way to get your daily vitamin C.

I throw them right in my smoothie or carry them around in my water bottle all day long. Those two herbs can be rather cooling, which is delightful in the summer, but in the winter, you might want to put a little cinnamon or something in there to balance that cooling property.

Alright my loves, that was a lot. I hope you made it through in one piece. Don't allow your brain to start spinning in overwhelm or despair. Everything is fine. Your thyroid is no worse off having heard all of this than it was before you turned this episode on. All that's changed is your awareness, and that's a beautiful thing. To be empowered with more information.

If you're living with thyroid symptoms, please get tested. Start these nutrients, balance your diet, manage your mind so that stress doesn't throw your body into a tailspin. Meditate like your health depends on it. And if your primary clinician won't order all the thyroid tests you want and need, find someone who will.

This is too vital to mess around with and your health matters deeply. I believe that you're dealing with the symptoms you say you are. I trust you and your experience of your own human body. Hypothyroid is a deeply feminist issue and it's up to us to advocate for ourselves, to educate ourselves and each other, and to get the health we need to keep on rabble-raising and living our best, most energetic lives.

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Thank you for listening, my love. I'm excited to hear all about what you thought of this episode so follow me on the social media, sign up for my newsletter on my website to be the first to be in the know about new podcasts and vlogs and stay in touch. I love you.

And remember, when one of us heals, we help heal the world. With love, strength, and in good health, I'll talk to you next week here on *Feminist Wellness*.

Thank you for listening to this week's episode of *Feminist Wellness*. If you like what you've heard, head to [VictoriaAlbina.com](http://VictoriaAlbina.com) to learn more.