

PE1463/YYYY

Viv Hutchinson submission of 21 June 2019

This whole issue is largely one of health inequality for women as they make up the vast majority of sufferers. However it should be noted that men and children can also be profoundly affected. Thyroid disease affects health and well-being, both physical and mental, and can reduce the ability to contribute to society and the economy. The treatment in Scotland for many patients, particularly those with an underactive thyroid, is less than ideal and must be addressed as a matter of priority.

At least 10% of those with an under active thyroid are known to 'not do well' on the standard treatment regime, yet they are very seldom offered any alternative treatment, although alternatives exist and have been seen to be effective. What is the medical solution for them?

The blood tests for hypothyroidism do not give a full picture of thyroid hormone function, hence many sufferers are deemed 'borderline', are undertreated or may remain undiagnosed- Is this acceptable in 21st century Scotland?

I was diagnosed with Hashimoto's Thyroiditis in 2012. I was placed on levothyroxine and had blood tests taken once a year. I have now gained 6 stone in weight since then and find it very difficult to lose weight no matter how much I diet, eat and exercise.

This is only one of the symptoms. These are the following I suffer from:

Heat intolerance, cold intolerance, bone pain, pains in my feet when I stand up after sitting down, back pain, pins and needles off and on, headaches, pains in all of my joints, coccyx pain when I sit, difficulty walking when I have sat down for a while, aches all over my body, terrible mood swings in split seconds and cannot stop it, memory loss, brain fog, constantly feeling tired, fatigue even if I sleep for 8 hours I wake up tired. Nodules on my thyroid that should be checked yearly was last checked in 2013 when I was told it was not necessary. I also have low end scale vitamin D, B12 and magnesium which are all at lower end of the range when they should be upper end. I have dry skin and hair and lots more.

I have asked to be tested for TSH (Thyroid Stimulating Hormone), T4 Free T4, T3 and free T3 all vitamins and antibodies. I am normally tested for TSH only but this does not help if the T4 is not being converted to T3 therefore levothyroxine is ineffective as a treatment as its not doing what it should do. I was told Scotland only test T4 via my GP. But this is not sufficient, why do I have to suffer with all these symptoms and excessive weight gain even though I do not eat excessive or have changed my eating habits from when I was 9 and a half stones. I am constantly dieting and eat healthy food and around 1200 calories and I still gain weight. I have visited a dietician and she could not understand, when I produced my food diary why I was increasing weight when anyone without thyroid would easily lose 2 lbs a week. I feel I am being ignored and all I want is to be treated effectively so I can live my life normally. I am made to feel like I am a hypochondriac when I visit my GP. I feel no one wants to listen or help. I have visited an endocrinologist but they specialise in diabetes so this does not actually help the situation. I am self treating myself for low B12, Vit D and lots of other vitamins just to try to exist