

thyroid problems

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I've been having some serious thyroid problems, and I'd be very appreciative if any medical professionals monitoring this list could offer some advice.

Background:

35yr old male, very fit, run 40mi/wk, lift weights, 10% bodyfat, very healthy diet.

After not having visited a doctor for many years, I decided at age 35 I should start going for a regular checkup. I asked for a full blood workup and my first doctor did nothing but a cholesterol test. He immediately wanted me to go on Crestor, without even considering why my cholesterol might be elevated. Remembering that a long time ago I had been told a thyroid test was borderline, I asked my doctor about doing one. He didn't like the idea and I pretty much had to force him to have the test done. All he had done was tsh. My tsh came back with a value of 10. He then prescribed 50mcg of Synthroid. That pretty much did it for me. During all this I had difficulty even talking to my doctor, and typically just got a call from a secretary to start some medication. I decided to start seeing an endocrinologist. I live in a small town and there are only two endo's here. I visited the first and she seemed to think my case was textbook. She ordered another blood test. My TSH was 3 but my antibody count was very high (that's all the info I got at the time). She felt that I had a goiter and said I should probably have an ultrasound, and said to come back in 6 months to test my thyroid hormone levels. She said that the antibodies indicated that I had hashimoto's.

Fortunately she left for another job a few weeks later. I ended up going to the only endo left in my town. He immediately wanted another blood test, but I had to strongly encourage the ultrasound that the previous endo suggested. The ultrasound revealed no problems. The blood test showed my tsh was now almost undetectable (.01). My dose was cut to 25mcgs. At this point I had lost almost 20 pounds and gone from 13% bodyfat to 10%. I had lost a lot of strength, developed a complete intolerance to heat, and had other problems associated with hyperthyroidism. After another 6 weeks I was tested again and my tsh was still undetectable. I was told by a secretary that I should increase my Synthroid dose to 100mcg's. Yes that's right...they totally

screwed up. Of course I knew that right away and told her that couldn't be right. She had to call the doctor who then told her I was supposed to stop taking Synthroid altogether. After 8 weeks off Synthroid I had yet another blood test. My TSH was still undetectable. The secretary simply called and told me I needed to start taking methimazole and have a radioactive iodine uptake test. I told her I wanted to talk to the endocrinologist about my test results before doing any of this, and she acted like that was impossible, telling me I "must" start taking the medication now. It was all I could do not to just hang up on her, but I ended up getting an appointment in the next couple weeks.

This all happened during in the months between July and Dec. of this year. None of the doctors have appeared to have any concern for how all of this is affecting me physically or mentally. Anyone who has had thyroid disorders knows what it does to you, let alone when your levels are fluctuating so drastically, over such a short period of time. Every doctor acts like any question I ask is absurd, even though all their treatments and diagnoses have seemed pointless so far. They all just seem to want to put me on medication and see what happens. My question is, does this seem like an abnormal case? Should I be seeking another endocrinologist. I have the option of going to a endo specializing in thyroid disease, in a larger city only 50 miles away. That is what I am seriously considering right now. Is it odd in such a short time to be diagnosed with Hashimoto's and then hyperthyroidism? It seems more likely to me that one of them, or both diagnoses' are incorrect.

I've also kept a log of how I have felt and what symptoms I have had, because it does get harder to know what feels normal as time goes on, having my hormone levels changed so drastically. Here are some notes that may help someone evaluate my condition.

Symptoms before starting Synthroid.

fatigue (extreme, never felt rested, could sleep any time of day and felt almost unable to function after mid-day)
dry skin, thick skin
high cholesterol (despite diet and exercise)
extreme sensitivity to cold
trouble losing weight
muscle cramps, especially associated with exercise, slow recovery from exercise
irritability
hair loss
allergies much more pronounced (compared to when on Synthroid)
frequent sore throats
goiter

After starting 50mcg's Synthroid

felt better within weeks
slept better, felt awake after sleeping for first time

didn't get excessively tired later in the day
much clearer thinking, not in a fog...this was shocking to me and so noticeably different
skin cleared up, skin got thinner
lost weight in difficult areas such as abdomen (keep in mind, I went from 13 to 10% bodyfat in this time, so I wasn't overweight to begin with)
allergy symptoms were almost non-existent
no muscle cramps, quick recovery from exercise
cold sensitivity completely disappeared
aerobic capacity seemed to improve significantly (noticed this running)
no sore throats

About the time my dose was dropped to 25mcg's

Noticed frequent headaches. I've never had headaches.
Very jittery, fidgety, couldn't sit still
heart pounding
complete intolerance to heat, difficulty maintaining previous levels of exercise
tremendous appetite
weight loss, from 180-158.lbs
very significant loss in strength and muscle mass

After going completely off synthroid.

I felt the return of the "brain fog".
Feel much more fatigued, same tired feeling all the time, and getting much worse later in the day
allergy symptoms have returned
still can't seem to gain back weight that I lost
seem to be less tolerant of hard exercise

The odd thing is that now I seem to have some symptoms I had before going on Synthroid, and some that I had when the dose was too high. I don't feel "right" but I don't feel exactly the same as I did when I was confirmed hypo or hyper thyroid, but somewhere in between. My TSH is still almost undetectable at this point.

Hopefully if you've read all that, you have some advice to offer. First off, is the care I have described so far, as bad as it seems to me? Am I unwarranted in seeking another endocrinologist? Is it odd, as it seems to me, that I was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism, very shortly after I was diagnosed with Hashimoto's and put on 50mcg's of synthroid?

Talking to "good" endo's, I was told that they almost always start with the lowest dose first, and it seems odd that I was even started at 50mcg's. Are there other diseases that I might ask about? Could Graves disease have caused a misdiagnosis the first time, or Hashimoto's a misdiagnosis the second time? Since my antibodies are confirmed very elevated (I think I remember hearing the number 10000, but I'm not at all sure about that), could that be throwing off the recent tests? Is it possible that the Synthroid dose was so excessive, that my TSH would

sci.med: thyroid problems

still be almost undetectable, after being off Synthroid for 8 weeks?

These are some of the questions I'm going to ask during my next appointment, but anyone else's input would be welcome.