

## HOW TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF THYROID DISEASE

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you often experience feelings of fatigue, being unusually tired or sluggish? Sadness and low mood or anxiety? Have difficulty concentrating or remembering things, or an unexplained increase or decrease in weight? Together, these symptoms are known to be associated with thyroid disease. If you have these symptoms, you should consult your doctor.

Thyroid disease is any health condition that affects the thyroid gland, which is a small, butterfly-shaped organ at the base of the neck. The thyroid produces, stores and releases hormones that help control how the body uses energy, regulates metabolism, and contributes to many vital functions.

Treatment for thyroid disease helps patients return to balanced thyroid hormone levels, relieving symptoms and improving their overall quality of life. For hypothyroidism or an underactive thyroid, doctors usually prescribe medication to replace thyroid hormones. For hyperthyroidism or an overactive thyroid, treatment options may include medications, therapy using radioactive iodine, or surgery.

Advocates are concerned about the widespread lack of awareness regarding thyroid disease, which impacts an estimated 200 million people worldwide.

“Many people remain unaware of the symptoms, risks, and importance of thyroid health. As a group, we are strengthening our thyroid health advocacy and commitment,” said Dr. Aurora MacaDo ballug, president, Philippine College of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, speaking at the Thyroid Summit, which is a gathering of advocates from various sectors across the country.

Gaps in knowledge can mean delayed diagnoses and inadequate treatment, but the fundamental lack of data is also hampering the necessary interventions. People at risk for thyroid diseases include newborns and pregnant and breastfeeding women, especially those who are deficient in their iodine intake.