

Thyroid Test

The blood test for thyroid function—TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone)—actually measures levels of a hormone produced by the pituitary, the “master” gland in your body. High TSH levels mean low thyroid function. For years, a TSH of up to 5.0 meant the thyroid was functioning normally. Recently, this number was dropped to 2.5. This means that thousands of people who originally were told their thyroid functions were normal most likely have a mildly underactive thyroid.

How to take your basal body temperature - your basal temperature is your body temperature taken the very first thing in the morning before you've moved out of your sleeping position. Once you get out of bed, the movement of your muscles heats up your body, so it's essential that you follow these instructions closely to get an accurate reading.

Instructions:

- 1.) If using a **Mercury Thermometer**, shake it down to 96 degrees or less before going to bed. In the morning, as soon as you wake up, put the thermometer deep in your armpit for 10 minutes and record the temperature. Lie back and relax, keeping your armpit closed over the thermometer.
- 2.) If using a **Basal Digital Thermometer**, in the morning, as soon as you wake up, place it under your tongue until it beeps. Do this before you get out of bed, have anything to eat or drink, or engage in any activity. This will measure your lowest temperature of the day, which correlates with thyroid gland function.
- 3.) The temperature should be taken for five days.
- 4.) For pre-menopausal women, the temperature should be taken starting the second day of menstruation. That is because considerable temperature rise may occur around the time of ovulation and give incorrect results.
- 5.) Do not perform the test when you have an infection or any other condition which would raise your temperature

Please note that this test will give a good indication of thyroid problems but is not definitive. Other factors can affect body temperature. Temperature may be disturbed by several factors such as taking readings at different times, alcohol, illness, a restless night, stress etc. If the readings have a base rate in a menstruating woman of 97.2°F / 36.2°C or less, or a constant reading below this in other women, men and children, an underactive thyroid is very likely.