Your thyroid is a small, butterfly-shaped gland in your neck, just above your collarbone. It is one of your endocrine glands, which make hormones. Thyroid hormones control the rate of many activities in your body, including how fast you burn calories and how fast your heart beats, along with how every organ in your body functions. Even though the gland itself is only about 2 inches long, when it’s not working right it can have a big impact on how you feel. Read on to learn about hypothyroidism, the most common type of thyroid disorder.

Hypothyroidism means your thyroid gland is not active enough. When your thyroid doesn’t make enough hormones, parts of your body slow down. You are more likely to experience hypothyroidism if you are:

- A female
- Over age 60
- Have an autoimmune condition
- Are pregnant or have had a baby in the past six months
- Have an iodine deficiency

A few common symptoms of hypothyroidism include:

- Fatigue
- Feeling cold frequently
- Constipation
- Weight gain
- Coarse, dry hair and skin

It’s important to note that these symptoms may look like other health problems. It’s always best to discuss any changes in your health with your health care provider. Blood tests can help diagnose hypothyroidism, along with a physical exam and a discussion about your health history. Your doctor will then work with you to develop a treatment plan. The goal of treatment is to return your level of thyroid hormone back to normal. You may need to take medicine that gives you a dose of thyroid hormones.

Stress may impact your thyroid function or cause any problem to worsen, so in addition to seeing a health care provider, take time to reflect on how you are managing your stress. It is possible to learn how to effectively manage thyroid disease so you are able to live your life to the fullest.

Is your team stressed?
Our series, Live and Work Mindfully, helps your team learn how to move through life at work and at home with less stress and more ease. Learn more about how this program can support you and your team!