



Thyroid & Adrenal Research Institute

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Heart Disease: are you putting your patients at risk?

Heart disease and stroke kill about 17 million people a year, which is almost one-third of all deaths globally. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that by 2020, heart disease and stroke will become the leading cause of both death and disability worldwide [1]. Thyroid disease directly affects and alters the normal function of the heart and results in significant complications [2]. Subclinical hypothyroidism is insidious and in some instances heart attack can be the only initial manifestation [3]. A 20 year longitudinal analysis conducted by Dr. Walsh and his colleagues in Western Australia showed a significant increase in the incidence of coronary artery disease associated with subclinical hypothyroidism. The study also found that in the patients with hyperthyroidism the overall death rate was increased four-fold and cardiovascular mortality six-fold and suggested further studies to determine if screening for thyroid function is essential for the management of coronary artery disease [4]. Netherlands-based researchers in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* stated that **subclinical hypothyroidism is strongly and independently associated** with aortic atherosclerosis and myocardial infarction especially in women. They also recommended screening for thyroid function to help prevent cardiovascular illness [5].

Fortunately, thyroid dysfunction can be easily diagnosed. **NiTek**, a company focused on non-invasive technology, has recently developed **Thyroflex, the machine that identifies thyroid dysfunction with high sensitivity and specificity; it is an inexpensive and easy to perform 4 minute test.** The results are instant and give the treating doctor a tool to help them make treatment decisions that will be of great health benefit to their patients. Based on recent findings we strongly suggest thyroid function evaluation with **Thyroflex** in patients with following presentations:

- Cardiovascular symptoms & signs
- Fatigue and weakness
- Unintentional weight gain
- Hypersomnia
- Hypersensitivity to cold
- Dry skin and coarse hair
- Memory problems
- Depression
- Face puffiness
- Hoarseness of voice
- Irregular menstrual cycle
- Constipation

References:

1. World Health Organization. WHO definitive atlas on global Heart Disease & Stroke epidemic. 10.2004
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3. Mark Star, MD. Hypothyroidism, the EPIDEMIC. The Heart. Page 128
4. John P. Walsh, MBBS, PhD, an endocrinologist. Thyroid Problems Increase Risk of Heart Disease and Death. American Thyroid Association. Victoria, BC, Oct. 1, 2004
5. Ruth SoRelle. Subclinical Hypothyroidism. American Heart Association, Inc. 2000; 101:e9012

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