

# **6 Steps On How To Reverse Your Graves' Disease Condition By Taking A Natural Treatment Approach**

**By Dr. Eric Osansky**

If you are suffering from Graves' Disease or any other hyperthyroid condition, and want to find out more information about how to use natural treatment methods to help restore your health, then you need to read this breakthrough guide that shows you 6 steps to treat either condition through natural methods.

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## Introduction

Dear friend,

I'd like to thank you for acquiring this free guide on natural treatment solutions for hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease. Graves' Disease is an autoimmune condition which results in the formation of TSH receptor antibodies. The immune system attacks the TSH receptors and causes the thyroid gland to secrete an excessive amount of thyroid hormone, thus resulting in a hyperthyroid condition. I personally was diagnosed with Graves' Disease, and I had many of the common symptoms associated with it, which I will discuss later in this guide. Conventional treatment methods involve giving medications such as Methimazole or PTU, and/or a beta blocker, or in many cases radioactive iodine treatment.

### **A "Typical Story" Of Someone Who Has Graves' Disease**

Millions of people have been diagnosed with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease, with over 100,000 new cases being reported each year in the United States alone. Many more have a hyperthyroid condition but have not yet been diagnosed. Most of those who have been diagnosed seek out conventional medical treatment. Here is usually what happens:

First, a person doesn't feel too well, and the symptoms they are experiencing leads them to schedule an appointment with their primary care physician. They might not be aware that they have a hyperthyroid condition, but someone with hyperthyroidism or Graves' Disease will usually have symptoms such as palpitations, an increased heart rate and appetite, weight loss, tremors, sometimes increased bowel movements, and other symptoms.

Upon visiting their primary care physician, they will receive a general checkup, and most likely some blood work which will reveal that they have a hyperthyroid condition. Once receiving the positive labs, the medical doctor will typically refer the person to an endocrinologist, who most likely will run some additional blood tests, and perhaps an ultrasound and/or a radioactive iodine uptake test.

Not everyone has the "classic" symptoms associated with Graves' Disease. For example, I've worked with people with hyperthyroid conditions who didn't have an increased heart rate or palpitations,

and had problems losing weight. It didn't take me long to realize that everyone is different. This is even true for someone who has the "classic" hyperthyroid symptoms, as there are different factors which can trigger a condition such as Graves' Disease, which I'll discuss in this guide.

## **Who Am I, And Why Should You Listen To Me?**

My name is Dr. Eric Osansky, and I'm a chiropractic physician and functional medicine practitioner. I have a masters of science degree in nutrition and functional medicine, I'm a certified clinical nutritionist, and I have a few other certifications in nutrition and herbal therapy. And I also have a practice that focuses on thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions. However, it wasn't always this way, as when I graduated from chiropractic college in March of 1999 I was one of those doctors who focused on musculoskeletal conditions such as neck and back pain, and I did very little with nutrition and functional medicine at the time.

It wasn't until I personally was diagnosed with Graves' Disease years later and was helped through natural methods that I became motivated to help other people with thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions.

## **My Personal Hyperthyroid Story**

When I personally was diagnosed with Graves' Disease, I couldn't believe it. I always considered myself to be in excellent health, and I was stunned when I was diagnosed with this condition. Before I was officially diagnosed with Graves' Disease by an endocrinologist, I found out through a general medical practitioner that I had hyperthyroidism. Even though I'm a natural healthcare professional, it still was tough deciding whether I wanted to use conventional medical treatment methods, or "take the chance" with a natural treatment approach.

It was especially a tough decision because in general, Graves' Disease or any hyperthyroid condition is usually more serious than a hypothyroid condition. Don't get me wrong, as it stinks to have either one, but when treating these conditions naturally, there is a greater risk of treating a hyperthyroid disorder such as Graves' Disease, since most of the time you're dealing with cardiac symptoms such as a high pulse rate and/or heart palpitations, which sometimes can be severe.

Despite the risks, I personally chose a natural treatment approach, even though the endocrinologist I saw was somewhat conservative and recommended that I take Methimazole and a beta blocker, and didn't try to pressure me to receive radioactive iodine. Even though I'm a natural healthcare professional I still was skeptical as to whether natural treatment methods would help, and I told myself that if I didn't see an improvement in my symptoms within a reasonable amount of time that I would still stick with the natural treatment protocol, but at the same time would also begin taking the Methimazole.

And it was a tough decision to stay away from the drugs when dealing with a rapid heartbeat, palpitations, tremors, a voracious appetite, etc. Anyway, after a few weeks I began seeing some positive changes in my condition, although they admittedly weren't too dramatic. About six weeks after I began the protocol I took another blood test, and my thyroid hormone levels surprisingly improved. One month later I continued to feel better from a symptomatic standpoint, and I decided to take another blood test to see if there were any further improvements, which there were. While they weren't "normal", and I still had some symptoms, it seemed as if these natural treatment methods were truly working.

To make a long story short, both my symptoms and lab values continued to improve until I was no longer symptomatic, and my thyroid hormone levels and TSI antibodies were within normal range. In fact, not only was I not experiencing any symptoms, I felt great, had a lot of energy, and I became an instant believer in these natural treatment methods for people with thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions.

And while this is an example of how I personally restored my health after being diagnosed with Graves' Disease, over the years I have helped many other people with this condition, and I'm hoping to provide you with some valuable information in this guide which will benefit you as well. As you'll discover from reading this information, it's not a quick process, as it does take time to restore one's health, and one does need to take responsibility for their health. So anyone who is looking for a quick cure probably will want to stop reading right here.

## **Why I Wrote This Guide**

The reason why I wrote this guide is because after seeing how natural treatment methods helped me with my Graves' Disease condition, I began helping people who had Graves' Disease, as well as other autoimmune thyroid conditions such as Hashimoto's Thyroiditis, use natural treatment methods to restore their health back to normal. So I decided that I needed to let other people with thyroid and autoimmune disorders know that there were options other than taking drugs for the rest of their life.

And sure, not everyone who has an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease is a good candidate for receiving natural treatment methods. But there are many people who can benefit from a natural treatment approach, and who will not only feel better from a symptomatic perspective, but can prevent other future problems from developing. I'll talk about this more later in this guide.

## **CHAPTER 1: The Primary Goal Of An Effective Natural Treatment Protocol For Graves' Disease**

So what is the primary goal of an effective natural treatment protocol for Graves' Disease? Some people might think the main goal is to simply control the symptoms of the condition naturally. However, remember that Graves' Disease involves the immune system attacking the TSH receptors, leading to the excessive production of thyroid hormone. As a result, when I use natural treatment methods on someone with Graves' Disease, my goal is to try to restore the health of the immune system, which in turn will stop the immune system from attacking the TSH receptors, and this in turn will prevent the excess secretion of thyroid hormone.

But how can be accomplished? Well, it's important to find out what's triggering the autoimmune response, remove the trigger, and then restore the health of any compromised areas of the body (i.e. weak adrenals, a leaky gut, etc.).

### **The Four Essential Areas To Address:**

Although everybody is different and thus must be evaluated on an individual basis, when treating people with Graves' Disease through natural methods, in most people the following four areas are almost always addressed:

1. The Adrenal Glands
2. The Immune System
3. The Gastrointestinal Tract
4. The Detoxification Pathways

Even though we're talking about a condition which involves the thyroid gland, the thyroid gland is usually not the actual cause of the condition. So while it is important to restore the person's thyroid health, one usually can't expect to accomplish this by focusing all of their efforts on the thyroid gland alone. It is just as important, and usually even more important, to focus on other areas of the body. One of the main areas of the body which causes or contributes to a thyroid or autoimmune thyroid condition is the adrenal glands.

The reason why many people have adrenal problems is due to stress and poor eating habits. But how can stress lead to a condition such as Graves' Disease? First of all, chronic or long-term stress can

suppress immunity, which can make someone more susceptible to an infection (i.e. H. Pylori), which is a potential autoimmune trigger. However, chronic stress can also dysregulate immune system function by increasing something called proinflammatory cytokines, which is a factor with autoimmune conditions.

In addition, chronic stress can also decrease something called secretory IgA, which lines the mucosal surfaces of the gastrointestinal tract, and this also can increase one's susceptibility to an infection. This infection in turn can lead to autoimmunity. The literature shows a strong correlation between chronic stress and Graves' Disease.

How can problems with the gut lead to a condition such as Graves' Disease? Well, there are a couple of different methods. It is common for people with these chronic health conditions to have intestinal dysbiosis, which is an imbalance of the gut flora. Causes of intestinal dysbiosis include poor diet, antibiotic use, and even stress. Plus, many cases of intestinal dysbiosis actually begin in childhood due to the mother giving birth via a C-section and/or the infant not breastfeeding.

In addition, many people with an autoimmune thyroid condition have an increase in intestinal permeability, which is also known as a leaky gut. In a healthy gut the cells of the intestines are held close together by tight junctions. But due to numerous factors (i.e. gluten, an infection, NSAIDs, etc.), the tight junctions can break down, allowing proteins and other larger molecules to pass between the intestinal cells and go into the bloodstream, where they normally shouldn't be. The immune system sees these proteins and other substances as foreign, and therefore mounts an immune system response. This can in turn be a potential trigger for autoimmunity.

In fact, some theorize that a leaky gut is a component of all autoimmune conditions. I'm not sure if this is the case, as I have conducted testing for a leaky gut using both the classic lactulose/mannitol test, and the more modern Array #2 from Cyrex Labs, and I have seen people with elevated thyroid autoantibodies who tested negative for a leaky gut. However, although I don't test everyone for a leaky gut, most people who do get tested using the Cyrex Labs Intestinal Antigenic Permeability Screen do test positive. So although I'm not sure if everyone with Graves' Disease has a leaky gut, there is no question that a high percentage of people with these conditions have an increase in intestinal permeability.

Certain toxins can also potentially trigger an autoimmune response, and thus can lead to a condition such as Graves' Disease. Common toxins include heavy metals such as mercury and arsenic, bisphenol A (BPA), PCBs, glyphosate, and other toxins. In fact, there are tens of thousands of chemicals in our environment, many which can be harmful to our health.

Obviously we can't eliminate our exposure to all of these toxins. However, we can do things to help minimize our exposure to them. In addition, we can also eat nutrients and take certain supplements to increase glutathione levels, which in turn will help eliminate these toxins from our body.

So whenever someone is diagnosed with a condition such as Graves' Disease, it is important to look at these four areas. This isn't to suggest that other components can't play a role in your condition. For example, many people have imbalances of the sex hormones (i.e. estrogen and progesterone) which can be a contributing factor, or in some cases can directly cause their condition. Others will have nutrient deficiencies which can cause or contribute to a thyroid or autoimmune thyroid condition. But most natural healthcare professionals will usually begin with these four areas, and will of course address other areas if necessary.

### **Why Do Medical Doctors Resort To Antithyroid Medication And Radioactive Iodine Treatment For Hyperthyroid Conditions?**

If it is possible to restore the health of someone with Graves' Disease, then why do most doctors recommend conventional medical treatment for these conditions? After all, if given the choice of taking a drug to control the hyperthyroid symptoms, or being put on a protocol to completely address the cause of the problem and restore the person's health, most people would obviously choose the latter option.

So why don't most general medical practitioners and endocrinologists recommend natural treatment methods? It really comes down to the training they have received in medical school, as most medical doctors are simply taught to use prescription drugs to treat most conditions. Once again, in some cases drugs are necessary, and in some situations taking drugs can save lives.

But even in a situation where a patient with Graves' Disease needs to be on Methimazole and/or a beta blocker to manage the symptoms, this doesn't mean they can't be helped through natural treatment methods. And so keep in mind that I'm not suggesting for anyone who is currently taking drugs to stop and switch to natural treatment methods.

The point I'm trying to make is that while antithyroid medication and/or beta blockers might be necessary to take on a temporary basis, they don't do anything to address the underlying cause of the problem. All they do is help to manage the hyperthyroid symptoms. And while this is important, remember that Graves' Disease is an immune system condition, and taking these drugs won't do anything for the autoimmune component. And of course the same concept applies when someone receives radioactive iodine treatment, as this is also directed at the thyroid gland, and does nothing for the autoimmune condition.

So for example, if someone's condition was caused by a leaky gut, which in turn was caused by a food allergen, their medical doctor most likely will either ignore the problem, or if the person is experiencing overt digestive symptoms then they most likely will recommend medication to manage the symptoms, or perhaps refer the patient to a gastroenterologist. Unless if the medical doctor has training in functional medicine they are unlikely to recommend dietary changes or anything else natural to help with any gastrointestinal issues. In summary, drugs can help at times, but they aren't the solution to the problem. This is especially true with an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease.

## CHAPTER 2: Conventional Treatment Protocols

Now that I've spoken about the goal of natural treatment methods for Graves' Disease, which is to restore the health of the immune system and help the person achieve overall optimal health, I want to briefly discuss some of the conventional medical treatment protocols. Once you have been "officially" diagnosed with Graves' Disease, your doctor will typically recommend one or more of the following treatments:

- **Antithyroid Drugs (Methimazole, PTU, etc.).** These are commonly prescribed drugs which helps prevent the thyroid gland from producing thyroid hormone. Although these drugs can be very effective in helping with the hyperthyroid symptoms, the problem is that they don't do anything for the actual cause of the condition. In other words, once a person with Graves' Disease stops taking antithyroid medication, their thyroid symptoms will most likely return. Of course just like any other drug, there is also the risk of certain side effects such as a depressed white blood cell count or liver damage, which is why most endocrinologists will monitor the liver enzymes.

Most people who are on antithyroid drugs for a couple of years will be taken off of them. Sometimes they can even go into a state of remission, although this is almost always temporary. So while the thyroid blood test results might come out normal after taking antithyroid drugs for an extended period of time, many of these people will become hyperthyroid again in the future. And the main reason for this is because this drug didn't doing anything for the actual cause of the condition. When a relapse occurs either the person is put on the medication again, or they are recommended to receive an even more extreme treatment method, such as radioactive iodine or thyroid surgery.

- **Beta blockers.** These are usually given to help control some of the symptoms related to the increased production of thyroid hormone. For example, taking beta blockers such as Propranolol will help to decrease the heart rate and palpitations. So the main goal is to help lower the elevated heart rate. Although beta blockers usually do a good job of managing the cardiac symptoms, side effects are common, and they also block the production of CoQ10. And so if you take a beta blocker it usually is a good idea to take a CoQ10 supplement.

- **Radioactive iodine (RAI).** This is the most commonly recommended treatment in the United States to permanently help someone with Graves' Disease. This treatment method essentially destroys the cells of the thyroid gland, which will of course usually help to eliminate the person's hyperthyroid problem. On the other hand, it won't do anything to address other areas that might be causing their condition, such as the adrenal glands, a leaky gut, etc.. This can leave the person susceptible to other conditions. Plus, because the person will no longer have a functioning thyroid gland, they will usually become hypothyroid, and then will be told to take synthetic or natural thyroid hormone medication for the rest of their life.

Although some people who receive this treatment do fine taking thyroid hormone medication, I commonly receive emails from people who received this treatment and regretted their decision. As a result, if RAI is recommended to you then I highly recommend getting a second opinion. Of course it's very common for endocrinologists to recommend this treatment, and so it wouldn't be surprising if more than one endocrinologist recommends RAI. Besides the fact that RAI doesn't address the cause of the condition, do you really want to receive a treatment which involves radiation?

- **Surgery to remove the thyroid gland.** Like radioactive iodine, this is yet another extreme procedure which is recommended by some endocrinologists. A complete thyroidectomy will help to rid the person of hyperthyroidism, but of course this procedure won't do anything to address the cause of the disorder. And if the thyroid gland is completely removed, the person will no doubt become hypothyroid and will then need to be on synthetic or natural thyroid hormone for the rest of their life.

Although a person who has had their thyroid gland completely removed will need to take synthetic or natural thyroid hormone for the rest of their life, this doesn't mean that natural treatment methods can't benefit them. For example, someone with an autoimmune thyroid condition who has their thyroid gland completely removed still needs to restore the health of their immune system to prevent other health issues from developing in the future. So while restoring one's thyroid health back to

normal isn't possible for someone who received a complete thyroidectomy, many people can still benefit from following a natural treatment protocol by addressing other imbalances.

Also, there are people who have only had part of their thyroid gland removed, and can still produce a sufficient amount of thyroid hormone naturally. In fact, my current staff person Kate had a partial thyroidectomy before she began working for me, and she never had to take thyroid hormone medication. The same concept applies with RAI, as while receiving this treatment method will make it less likely that you will respond to a natural treatment approach, some people can still have their thyroid gland produce thyroid hormone on its own after receiving RAI. So even if you have had thyroid surgery or received RAI this doesn't mean that you can't benefit from natural treatment methods.

## **A Brief Summary Of The Dangers Of Conventional Treatment Methods**

Once again, I'll be the first to admit that some people with thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions can't be helped by natural treatment methods, and therefore might need these conventional medical treatment methods. In these cases taking drugs might be necessary to help manage the hyperthyroid symptoms. And some people might even need to receive radioactive iodine treatment or thyroid surgery. The good news is that most people with Graves' Disease can be helped through natural treatment methods.

As for the dangers of conventional treatment with Graves' Disease, the number one concern is that just about all of the treatment methods I discussed in the previous chapter do not help with the actual cause of the problem. For example, someone with Graves' Disease who is on Methimazole or PTU will be covering up their symptoms, and not actually addressing the underlying cause of the problem. And of course if someone with Graves' Disease chooses to receive radioactive iodine as a treatment method, this will obliterate the thyroid gland, and the person will most likely become hypothyroid. This will lead to the person needing to take synthetic or natural thyroid hormone medication. And since nothing was done to actually address the underlying cause of the condition the person will be susceptible to developing other health issues in the future.

While I'm not going to argue that many people can live a somewhat normal life on thyroid hormone medication with minimal side effects, it doesn't make any sense to allow further damage of your thyroid gland to take place if you can be helped through natural treatment methods. Plus, while some people have no symptoms when taking thyroid medication, others do experience problems. Sometimes adjusting the dosage can help, while other times it doesn't help at all.

### **Here's Why I Prefer Natural Treatment Methods:**

I realize at this point you might be thinking that I simply have a biased opinion, and perhaps my opinion by itself won't convince you to seek a natural treatment approach for your Graves' Disease condition. To be honest, I do hold a biased opinion, not only because I'm a natural healthcare professional, but I personally dealt with Graves' Disease, which as you know was helped through natural treatment methods.

But at the same time, I'm not one of those "extremists" who think that every single illness or disease should be treated naturally. In fact, when I was initially diagnosed with my hyperthyroid condition, one of the first things I did was schedule an appointment with an endocrinologist. And while deep down inside I knew I was going to follow a natural treatment protocol, I honestly was considering taking antithyroid medication to help with my symptoms. Besides being unsure as to whether or not natural treatment methods could truly help restore my health back to normal, I was having a hard time dealing with the symptoms.

And to be fair, I thought the endocrinologist I spoke with was great, as she seemed to be conservative, and I respected her opinion. But I figured I'd give the natural treatment methods a try, telling myself I'll follow the natural treatment protocol and see what the results were. If I didn't feel as if the natural treatment protocol was effective then I probably would have gone ahead and started taking the antithyroid medication while still trying to address the cause of the problem.

Well, not only did I begin feeling better from a symptomatic standpoint after my first few weeks following the natural treatment protocol, but after approximately six weeks I obtained some updated blood tests. And while my lab results weren't normal, they definitely had improved. And so I stuck with the natural treatment methods and continued to improve, and many of my patients who have followed a natural treatment protocol for Graves' Disease have also received

great results, proving that I'm not an isolated case. You can see some of these success stories at the end of this guide.

So yes, I am without question biased. But due to my background I'm also aware of the dangers of conventional medical treatment methods, and as a result I decided to try a natural approach first. And even though I'm a licensed healthcare professional, at the time I was diagnosed with Graves' Disease I wasn't proficient when it came to treating thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions naturally, and so just like many people reading this guide, I too was skeptical about the safety and effectiveness of natural thyroid treatment methods.

## CHAPTER 3: Are There Risks With Natural Treatment Methods?

While I would like to tell you that natural treatment methods come without any risks, this isn't true. However, if you are under the guidance of a competent natural healthcare professional, then the risk of side effects is rare. And unlike some of the treatments out there which are used for Graves' Disease, such as radioactive iodine, it is rare for natural treatment methods to do any harm to the thyroid gland, or any other areas of the body.

In most cases, the risks come about when people try to treat their Graves' Disease condition naturally on their own. For example, a person who reads some books about natural thyroid cures and then walks into a health food store and purchases some natural supplements and herbal remedies is taking a much bigger risk when compared to someone who is following the advice of a competent healthcare professional.

Or someone might figure that in order to address the immune system component all they need to do is take some antioxidants, or some immune system support formula they see at their local health food store or while surfing the internet. Trying to treat any hyperthyroid condition on your own, even through natural treatment methods, definitely has its risks.

This is why I don't give specific recommendations with regards to what natural treatment protocol you should follow in this guide. While I will talk about diet and some of the nutritional supplements that can be beneficial later on in this guide, here are a few reasons why I don't tell you exactly what you need to do:

1. **As mentioned previously, following a natural treatment protocol on your own can be risky.** Trust me when I tell you that it is not worth risking an adverse reaction in an attempt to treat your own condition. As an example, when I was a student in chiropractic school, I figured I had the knowledge to do my own liver detoxification. So I went and purchased what I thought were quality liver detox supplements. The first night after I took them I had to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night, but I couldn't urinate! And I had to go really bad!

Eventually I was able to squeeze some urine out, but it was a really scary situation at the time. I went to the doctor the next

day, and he did a urinalysis and a prostate exam (my very first one!), and everything came out negative. Once I stopped taking the supplements for a few days my “urinary function” improved.

However, I thought that perhaps it was just a coincidence, so I was dumb enough to begin the detoxification again. And once again, I woke up in the middle of the night unable to urinate! I of course stopped taking the supplements, but with that incident I learned just how dangerous nutritional supplements and herbs can be if you don't know what you're doing.

2. **Everybody is different, and therefore will need to follow a different natural treatment protocol.** We're not talking about a smoking cessation protocol, where the same exact protocol will work for most people. Don't get me wrong, as there of course is some overlap with different natural treatment protocols, but if you were to take two people with Graves' Disease both would probably follow a different natural treatment protocol.

And the reason for this is simple...different people will have different triggers. For some people chronic stress and the adrenals are the main issue. For other people an infection such as H. Pylori is the main trigger. If you haven't attended my free webinar on "Graves' Disease Triggers" I recommend doing so in the future, as I discuss seven of the most common triggers. By being a valued email subscriber you will receive notification when this webinar takes place.

In addition, not everyone will be able to follow the same diet. For example, if someone has small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) then they probably will need to avoid foods high in FODMAPs, such as fermented foods. Another person might have problems with high oxalate foods and thus might need to avoid foods such as spinach, blueberries, etc. If someone has gallbladder issues then this needs to be addressed, etc.

3. **As you'll read later on, many of the nutritional supplements people buy aren't of the highest quality.** I understand that nutritional supplements and herbs can be expensive, but if your body can't absorb them properly then you are just throwing your

hard-earned money away. You've no doubt heard the saying "you get what you pay for", and it is no different when purchasing nutritional supplements and herbs. If you ask me, it is without question worth paying a little bit more to ensure that your body will actually absorb the supplements you buy. This doesn't mean that you need to purchase the most expensive supplements and herbs available, but you do need to make sure you are taking good quality supplements.

- 4. Taking nutritional supplements alone won't help to restore your health.** While taking the right nutritional supplements and herbs can no doubt be helpful, there are other factors to consider, which I will discuss in this guide. While some of these steps you can follow without being under the supervision of a natural endocrine doctor, for other steps I highly recommend consulting with an expert.

In summary, please do not try to treat your Graves' Disease condition on your own naturally. After all, we're talking about your health here, and if you want to truly get to the underlying cause of your condition and restore your health, while at the same time address other problematic areas so you are less likely to suffer from a relapse, then take my advice and consult with a competent natural healthcare professional.

## **CHAPTER 4: STEP #1: It All Starts With Attitude**

Okay, let's begin talking about how someone with Graves' Disease can restore their health back to normal naturally. This first step might seem like a simple one to accomplish, yet this is usually the biggest obstacle when most people with Graves' Disease think about taking a natural treatment approach. And I'm not just talking about having a positive attitude, even though this is important as well. Your success with any natural treatment program really comes down to your overall attitude with regards to restoring your health.

First of all, many people have the misconception about what health really is. Some think that simply exercising three or four days a week and eating what they perceive as being healthy meals is the "recipe" for good health.

While exercising regularly and eating healthy (both to be discussed in greater detail later in this guide) are no doubt important in restoring and then maintaining one's health, perhaps the key factor to keep in mind when beginning any natural treatment program is that you need to take responsibility for your own health. This might sound like common sense to you, but you'd be surprised as to how many people with Graves' Disease expect their natural treatment protocol to consist of taking one or two thyroid and/or immune support supplements and that this alone will help to restore their health.

In fact, there are many people without a serious health condition who think this way, as many think they can "bypass" eating healthy meals and snacks and be healthy simply by taking a daily multimineral vitamin. I wish it were that easy to restore and maintain one's health, but it can be a difficult process, and that is why many people choose the "easy way" out and take medication, as not much effort is required to pop a few pills each day.

### **Should You Trust Your Medical Doctor?**

Obviously some people choose not to follow a natural treatment protocol simply because they don't know what to do, and what steps to take, which is in all likelihood one of the reasons you are reading this guide. After all, most of us have been brought up to trust our medical doctors, myself included.

I laugh sometimes when I think back to the weeks before I was ready to enter chiropractic college in 1995, as I was concerned about being brainwashed into thinking that all drugs are “evil” and everything should be treated naturally. Now to be frank, there are a good number of natural healthcare professionals who think this way, but I do realize there is a time and place for medical treatment, and there are times when I will refer my patients to a medical doctor. In fact, many of the patients I work with are still seeing an endocrinologist or a different type of medical doctor.

However, it does make it difficult to trust one’s medical doctor when many are dependent on both the pharmaceutical industry and the health insurance companies. So while many people with Graves’ Disease will follow the advice of their primary care physician and/or endocrinologist without thinking twice, you should realize that in some cases, doctors aren’t doing what is best for the patient, not because they are inherently evil, but in most cases they don’t know what else to do.

So getting back to the importance of attitude, it is extremely important to have a good attitude and an open mind when you are considering a natural treatment protocol for your hyperthyroid condition. This doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t also be cautious, as while there are many medical doctors that don’t have the patient’s best interest in mind, there are also natural doctors that won’t do what is best for you.

But if you go through this process with a negative and skeptical attitude, thinking that there is no way that natural treatment methods can restore your health back to normal, and that you’re just wasting your time, then you probably ARE just wasting your time.

In summary, be positive, and keep an open mind throughout this process, and you’ll be surprised just how effective natural treatment methods can be. And if you decide that natural treatment methods are not for you, then that’s okay too.

## **CHAPTER 5: STEP #2: Educate Yourself**

You obviously are educating yourself at this very moment by reading this guide. And besides this guide, there are physical books and other resources to demonstrate how safe and effective natural treatment methods can be with regards to thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions. In fact, I don't expect anyone to make a decision to choose a natural treatment approach after reading this guide alone.

What I recommend for you to do is the following: in addition to reading this guide, read at least two or three other books on natural treatment methods for thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions, and read at least two or three books that discuss conventional treatment methods. If you haven't done so already I of course highly recommend checking out my book entitled "Natural Treatment Solutions For Hyperthyroidism & Graves' Disease", which you can find on Amazon or Barnes and Noble. If you still are undecided what to do after taking this approach, speak with a natural healthcare professional who focuses on endocrine conditions, even if it's just for an initial consultation.

While it is true that doing this can be time consuming, and will cost you some money, just remember that your hyperthyroid disorder is a serious condition. It is therefore worth spending some time and money to find out what treatment option is the right one for you.

I know it's easy for me to tell you this when it's not my time or money spent. But let's not forget that I have been in a similar situation. And even though I'm a natural healthcare professional, when I was diagnosed with Graves' Disease I still did a good amount research, read a bunch of books, and as you know, I consulted with both an endocrinologist and a natural healthcare professional.

Even though I was skeptical about whether natural treatment methods could really do anything for a condition as serious as Graves' Disease, the way I looked at it was that there wasn't much to lose by following a natural treatment protocol, but there was everything to gain if these natural treatment methods worked.

### **Look At The Best And Worst Case Scenarios**

If you have Graves' Disease and decide to give natural treatment methods a try, then the worst case scenario is that the natural treatment methods don't work, and you end up having to receive radioactive iodine treatment or thyroid surgery. But even if this happened you would at least have the peace of mind that you tried to do everything possible to preserve the health of your thyroid gland. On the other hand, the best case scenario involves restoring your thyroid and immune system health so you don't have to take drugs on a long term basis, or risk becoming permanently hypothyroid by receiving radioactive iodine or getting thyroid surgery.

In summary, before deciding how to treat your Graves' Disease condition, do what is necessary to educate yourself. While it might take a few weeks or even a few months to fully understand both the risks and benefits of each type of treatment method (although this guide should give you a better understanding of this), taking the time to do this will allow you to make an informed decision, so that however you decide to treat your condition you won't have any regrets down the road.

## **CHAPTER 6: STEP #3: Begin Eating Healthier**

Another step you can take on your own is to eat healthier. Many people think they eat healthier than they actually do, as over the years I have had many of my patients tell me that they eat relatively healthy, only to have them fill out a one-week food diary and see just how poor most of their eating habits were. Don't get me wrong, as some people eat extremely well, although this represents the minority of people I consult with. Prior to consulting with me, many of my patients who were eating poorly changed their diet after reading this guide and/or some of the articles on my website.

Part of the problem is that different resources will offer different opinions with regards to which foods they consider to be healthy. For example, you might watch a health segment on a television show that tells you whole wheat pasta and whole grain cereals are healthy choices. Then you might read a book that tells you to avoid any product with wheat or dairy. Then you might browse through a health magazine that tells you to avoid gluten products altogether.

First of all, there is little argument that the best foods to eat are whole foods. So ideally, you want to do everything you can to avoid eating refined and processed foods.

For example, some people think that eating a lean turkey sandwich from their favorite local sandwich shop is a healthy choice. And while I personally love turkey sandwiches, when you consider that the turkey is processed, contains a ton of nitrates, and is then placed on bread made of white flour, plus has other ingredients that are best to be avoided, and then you throw on some of the condiments, and perhaps add a side of chips, then you really aren't eating too healthy of a meal.

Now granted, such a meal might be healthier than going to your local fast food burger joint and getting a greasy burger with fries. But just because it's healthier than other fast food choices doesn't make it an overall healthy choice.

Keep in mind that I'm not asking you to give up fast food forever, but only to begin making healthier choices and minimize your intake of "junk food". For example, if you eat fast food five times each week, perhaps you can begin making changes by only eating out two or three times each week. Sure, it would be nice if you can eventually

eliminate the fast food altogether, but reducing the amount of “bad foods” you eat is a good starting point.

## **Keeping Your Blood Sugar Levels Under Control**

Another issue many people have is that due to their poor eating habits they create a lot of problems with their blood sugar levels, which over time can lead to adrenal problems, and eventually to even more serious conditions, such as insulin resistance and diabetes.

One of the reasons why you should try to cut down on the refined foods is because it spikes up your blood sugar levels. On the other hand, eating vegetables, fruits with a low glycemic index, nuts and seeds, and healthy proteins will not cause a spike in your blood sugar levels.

Besides the quality of the foods you eat, how frequently you eat will also have a big effect on your blood sugar levels. For example, some people skip breakfast, which for most people is a big mistake. Not only do you not want to do this, but you ideally should make breakfast the biggest meal of the day, consisting of a good amount of protein and healthy fats such as coconut oil or avocados.

I personally make my own smoothies where I add 1/4 cup of frozen organic berries (blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, etc.), one cup of organic leafy green vegetables, 1/4 cup of organic carrots, 1 tbsp of coconut oil or an avocado, two cups of purified water, a small scoop of quality protein powder, 1 tsp of olive oil, and sometimes I'll also add one or two raw organic eggs.

I know some people will claim that they just aren't hungry upon waking up in the morning. If this describes you, try to have a small smoothie or something else that is healthy within 30 to 45 minutes of waking up. Whatever you do, don't go a few hours without eating anything upon awakening. And no, coffee doesn't count!

Besides eating breakfast, you also want to eat every two to three hours during the day. In fact, I would advise you that once you wake up in the morning, until you go to bed, don't go more than three, and ideally two hours between eating. And try to include some protein or high quality fat with any meal or snack you eat.

I mentioned earlier how problems with your blood sugar levels can in

turn cause problems with your adrenals, and eventually lead to other conditions. Another consequence of “spiked” blood sugar levels is that it has a negative impact on your immune system. In other words, if you were to eat a refined, sugary snack, one of the effects of having “spiked” blood sugar levels is that it also will weaken your immune system during this time.

So you can imagine the effect it will have on your immune system if you are constantly eating refined foods. This effect on your blood sugar levels and immune system also applies when you consume beverages that have a lot of sugar. You can probably imagine why this is not a good thing for someone who has an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease. With your immune system already being compromised, the last thing you want to do is further stress it out. So it goes without saying that in addition to eating healthy foods, you want to avoid the sugary drinks and instead drink plenty of purified water.

### **Should You Avoid Gluten?**

There are books and other resources out there that will recommend for everyone with an autoimmune thyroid condition to eat a gluten free diet on a permanent basis. And one of the reasons is that gluten can cause a leaky gut, which in turn can trigger an autoimmune response in those who are sensitive to this common allergen. In fact, many people notice a significant improvement in their condition just by avoiding gluten alone. Some will even see a significant lowering of their autoantibodies upon avoiding gluten. On the other hand, some people completely eliminate gluten from their diet and don't notice any improvement in their symptoms or blood tests.

I personally don't think that everyone with an autoimmune thyroid condition needs to avoid gluten on a permanent basis. However, I do think that most people should at least consider going on a gluten free trial for a minimum of four to six weeks. If they notice a difference in how they feel after this time then it's probably a good idea to avoid gluten for a longer period of time. After all, if someone has a condition such as leaky gut syndrome that is caused by a gluten sensitivity problem, then it will usually take longer than four to six weeks to heal the gut. While some people who are sensitive to gluten might be able to eventually incorporate it back into their diet again in the future, some people do need to avoid it on a permanent basis.

It is important to understand that not everyone with a gluten sensitivity problem will experience overt symptoms. So why not just test everyone to determine if they have a gluten sensitivity? Well, many of the tests for gluten aren't completely accurate, and those that are more accurate are very expensive. Cyrex Labs offers some pretty comprehensive testing for gluten, as they have something called the Wheat/Gluten Proteome Reactivity & Autoimmunity panel, which evaluates a dozen of the markers of gluten. While testing for gluten is an option, usually I just recommend eliminating it from the diet, although at times I will consider testing for a gluten sensitivity.

Of course just because a certain food is gluten free doesn't mean that it is healthy and won't cause digestive problems. So don't make the assumption that just because a product doesn't contain gluten means that it is healthy, as your body could react to other substances and ingredients as well. Many people who avoid gluten eat too many of the other gluten free grains (corn, rice, millet, etc.) and sometimes develop sensitivities to these foods.

### **Is Eating Organic Food Necessary?**

You might wonder whether it is necessary to eat organic food. These days you can buy just about any type of organic food, from organic meats, to organic cereals, organic pizza and potato chips, etc. And of course there are also organic fruits and vegetables, which is what you should be eating if at all possible. It is obviously more expensive to purchase organic foods, and while you should try eating as many organic foods as possible, you don't need to eat a 100% organic diet in order to receive good results when following a natural treatment protocol.

When it comes to eating meat, I definitely recommend eating organic, as while it no doubt will cost more to buy organic grass-fed beef, chicken, or turkey, you won't subject yourself to the hormones and/or antibiotics that are frequently present in non-organic meat. If you eat eggs, then I also recommend purchasing organic eggs, preferably pasture-raised.

With regards to fruits and vegetables, you don't have to eat 100% organic fruits and vegetables. What I recommend to do is to visit the website for the Environmental Working Group ([www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)), and obtain two lists called the "Dirty Dozen" and "Clean Fifteen". The Dirty Dozen list will reveal the top 12 fruits and vegetables with the

most pesticides, and the Clean Fifteen list will reveal the top 15 fruits and vegetables with the lowest amount of pesticides. These lists are updated each year. Obviously it is best if you eat all organic foods, but I realize that not everyone can afford to buy everything organic, and so these lists should help you to minimize your consumption of fruits and vegetables with high amounts of pesticides.

I will warn you that there is such a thing as “organic junk food”. So for example, while it might be better to eat an organic sugary cereal that doesn’t contain any artificial ingredients when compared to a nonorganic brand that has artificial ingredients and preservatives, this still doesn’t mean that the organic sugary cereal is a healthy choice for breakfast. I also mentioned pizza before, as while it's better to eat organic, gluten free pizza than to go to a local pizza place, this still isn't something you want to have on a regular basis, and ideally should be avoided while restoring your health. So just because something is organic and/or gluten free doesn’t mean that it will “do your body good”.

## **Should Everyone With Graves' Disease Follow An Autoimmune Paleo Diet?**

Many people who have an autoimmune condition follow an autoimmune paleo diet. This is similar to a “standard” paleo diet, with a few additional restrictions. While a standard paleo diet allows the consumption of eggs, nuts and seeds, along with the nightshade vegetables, an autoimmune paleo diet excludes these foods. So essentially the person is allowed to eat meat, fish, vegetables, fruits, certain coconut products, and some spices. But is this the ideal diet for everyone with Graves’ Disease?

Before answering this question I’d first like to talk in greater detail about the similarities and differences between a “standard” paleo diet and an autoimmune paleo diet. Here are the main foods which are allowed on a standard paleo diet:

- Meat (beef, pork, chicken, lamb, etc.) and fish
- Eggs
- Fruits
- Vegetables (including the nightshades)
- Nuts and seeds

Foods which are excluded in a “standard” paleo diet include all grains, legumes, and dairy products. And of course anything refined should also be avoided. A standard paleo diet is restrictive with regards to what foods you can eat, although keep in mind that it is nutrient dense, and the goal isn't to restrict calories. As a result, while some people do struggle initially to follow a paleo diet, after awhile many of these people do perfectly fine and wish they had followed this sooner. Many people do better upon avoiding grains, legumes, and dairy products. However, when someone also needs to avoid eating eggs, nuts and seeds, along with the nightshade vegetables, this makes it even more challenging. And of course it's even more challenging for a strict vegetarian or vegan to follow an autoimmune paleo diet, as they won't be consuming any meat or fish.

### **Why Is An Autoimmune Paleo Diet So Restrictive?**

Why are so many foods excluded from an autoimmune paleo diet? Well, there are a few different reasons. An autoimmune paleo diet excludes foods people with autoimmune conditions are commonly sensitive to such as gluten, dairy, eggs, and corn. These foods can cause inflammation and/or exacerbate an existing inflammatory condition. Gluten can directly cause an increase in intestinal permeability (a leaky gut), which is a factor in many, if not all autoimmune conditions. Other foods such as all grains, legumes, and the nightshade vegetables are restricted because they contain compounds which not only affect the absorption of nutrients, but like gluten, can also have a negative effect on the permeability of the gut. So it's not just gluten which potentially can cause a leaky gut, but other foods can potentially cause this as well. Essentially those foods which are excluded from an autoimmune paleo diet are those foods which can cause gut inflammation and/or an increase in intestinal permeability.

I must admit that I do like the autoimmune paleo diet, and I commonly recommend for my patients with Graves' Disease to at least start out with this diet. However, there are a few “flaws” with this type of diet:

**1) Some people do fine eating one or more of the restricted foods.** A good example of this is eggs. There are many people who are able to eat eggs without a problem, especially egg yolks. And eggs are an excellent source of nutrients. With regards to dairy, although I recommend for people to avoid dairy while trying to restore their health, some people with Graves' Disease do okay when

consuming certain dairy products. This is especially true with raw dairy products. I've also had some people with Graves' Disease eat small amounts of gluten free grains and still receive good results. And I've had a few patients eat soaked nuts while following the protocol and do well. The problem is that it's difficult to predict who will do fine eating some of the restricted foods, which is why many healthcare professionals recommend for all of their patients with autoimmune conditions to completely avoid all of these foods.

**2) It is possible to be sensitive to the "allowed" foods.** Someone can be strictly following an autoimmune paleo diet and then find out that they are sensitive to another food they are eating which is permitted. For example, they might have a sensitivity to chicken or beef, or even a vegetable or fruit they are eating on a frequent basis. And while sometimes a person will experience negative symptoms upon eating these foods, other times there won't be any overt symptoms. This admittedly can be frustrating, as a person might be following a strict autoimmune paleo diet and might be feeling better from a symptomatic perspective. But upon doing some retesting they notice their numbers aren't improving. For example, someone's thyroid panel might worsen even though they are feeling better, and while this doesn't mean this is due to a food allergen, it is possible. Perhaps a better example is someone who initially tests positive for an increase in intestinal permeability, and upon getting this retested a few months later the results show that their leaky gut has gotten worse. Once again, this might not necessarily be attributed to a food sensitivity, although it very well might be.

**3) Some people find the diet to be too restrictive.** I find this to especially be true with many patients who have Graves' Disease. The problem with Graves' Disease is that the increased metabolism usually leads to weight loss, which can be extreme in some cases. While some people with an autoimmune hyperthyroid condition will lose a small amount of weight (i.e. 5 to 10 pounds), others will lose 20 pounds or greater. As an example, when I was dealing with Graves' Disease I lost over 40 pounds. Many people find it difficult to gain weight when dealing with Graves' Disease, and following an autoimmune paleo diet doesn't make this any easier.

Of course everyone is different, and many of my patients with Graves' Disease do fine when following an autoimmune paleo diet. On the other hand, others struggle with the restrictive diet. What I typically will do is recommend for my patients with Graves' Disease to follow

an autoimmune paleo diet for the first month, and if they are doing well after the first month then I'll encourage them to continue with it. However, if they are struggling, then I'm fine with them reintroducing some of the healthier "forbidden" foods (i.e. eggs, soaked almonds, tomatoes, etc.), as I'd rather them do this than completely ruin the diet by eating junk food. And so there are times when I'm fine with people reintroducing one or more of the excluded foods and see how they do. When taking this approach I will always have them reintroduce one food at a time for three consecutive days. For example, if someone wants to reintroduce nuts, I'd have them start with almonds, and preferably soak them overnight to help reduce the antinutrients. Then I would have them eat some almonds for three consecutive days and to pay close attention to any symptoms they might experience.

## **CHAPTER 7: STEP #4: Consider These Nutritional Supplements For Your Graves' Disease Condition**

Millions of people take nutritional supplements, and without question, the right kind of supplements can help with your recovery. The first topic I would like to discuss in this chapter has to do with the quality of nutritional supplements. Unfortunately, when most people purchase nutritional supplements they don't consider the quality of the product.

This definitely described my parents when I was younger, as I can remember my sister and I taking Flintstones' Vitamins on a daily basis. Similarly, many adults are fooled into thinking that a simple "One A Day" vitamin supplies all of their nutritional needs. And while I'm not trying to criticize any particular brand out there, the fact remains that most brands of nutritional supplements, even the well known ones, are not of the highest quality.

So why does quality make a difference? There are a couple of reasons, but perhaps the most important reason is that high quality nutritional supplements will have better quality ingredients, and therefore will typically be absorbed better. And when dealing with a condition such as Graves' Disease, you want to be certain that whatever supplements you take are being absorbed.

If any person, whether they are a doctor, fitness coach, employee of a health food store, or anyone else tells you that you can get everything you need nutritionally out of a single capsule or tablet, please don't listen to what they tell you. Also, remember that not all supplements and herbs are created equal, which is why it usually is worth paying a little more money if it means getting a quality supplement. Of course this doesn't mean that you should choose your supplements based on price alone, as there are some high-priced nutritional supplements and herbs that are of low quality as well.

**Supplements and Herbs for Graves' Disease:** I'm not going to discuss specific dosages with regards to nutritional supplements and herbs, mainly because everyone is different and therefore has different requirements. But here is a list of some of the supplements and herbs that many people with Graves' Disease can benefit from taking:

- Bugleweed
- Motherwort
- Lemon Balm
- Hawthorn
- L-Carnitine
- Selenium
- Eleuthero
- Magnesium
- Probiotic supplement
- Vitamin D3
- Omega 3 Fatty Acids

## **Herbs For Managing The Hyperthyroid Symptoms**

As you know by now, when someone with hyperthyroidism or Graves' Disease is following a natural treatment protocol, the goal should be to address the underlying cause of the condition. However, while this is being accomplished it is important to manage the hyperthyroid symptoms. While many people choose to do this with antithyroid medication such as Methimazole or PTU, or beta blockers such as Propranolol, others choose to manage their symptoms naturally. And so I'd like to briefly discuss some of the most common herbs used to manage the hyperthyroid symptoms.

**Bugleweed.** This herb has antithyroid activity, as it reduces the thyroid hormone levels, which in turn causes a decrease in the cardiac symptoms associated with hyperthyroid conditions. *Lycopus virginicus* and *Lycopus europaeus* are the two main species. Most of the research studies involving bugleweed which I have come across have involved *lycopus europaeus*. These studies show that bugleweed is effective in mild forms of hyperthyroidism, although in my clinical experience I've had patients with moderate to severe forms respond to a 1:2 extract ratio. On the other hand, for some people this isn't potent enough, and in these cases taking antithyroid medication may be necessary to lower the thyroid hormone levels while addressing the cause of the problem.

**Motherwort.** This herb can greatly help with the cardiac symptoms of hyperthyroid conditions. It can help to reduce the heart palpitations, decrease the heart rate, and also has antiarrhythmic activity. While bugleweed is specifically used for hyperthyroid conditions, motherwort can be beneficial for other conditions, such as digestive disorders, bronchial asthma, amenorrhea, and even externally in

wounds and skin inflammation. So in addition to its effects on the heart and circulatory system, pharmacological studies have confirmed its antibacterial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and analgesic activity.

**Lemon Balm.** I'm admittedly biased towards bugleweed and motherwort since I took those two herbs when I was diagnosed with Graves' Disease, although I didn't take lemon balm. However, lemon balm can benefit many people with hyperthyroid conditions. It has antithyroid activity, as it may block the binding of TSH to its receptor by acting both on the hormone and receptor itself, and might also inhibit the TSH receptor antibodies binding to the TSH receptors. Studies also show that lemon balm has been used as a mild sedative, spasmolytic, and antibacterial agent, and might even have antitumoral activities.

**Hawthorn.** Although I usually recommend motherwort to help manage the cardiac symptoms associated with hyperthyroidism (elevated pulse rate and palpitations), I also will recommend hawthorn at times. This can also be helpful in those people with cardiac arrhythmias. Research shows that hawthorn also has anti-inflammatory, gastroprotective, free radical-scavenging, and antimicrobial activity.

### **Supplements Which Decrease Pro-Inflammatory Cytokines and Increase Regulatory T Cells**

Another important role of taking supplements is to decrease pro-inflammatory cytokines, which as the name implies promote inflammation, and you also want to increase regulatory T cells, which help to suppress the autoimmune response. I have a few blog posts on my website which discuss these in greater detail, but cytokines are immunomodulating proteins, peptides, or glycoproteins that are involved in cellular communication. They are regulators of host responses to infection, immune responses, inflammation, and trauma.

There is also something called nuclear Factor Kappa B (NF-kB), which is a transcription factor, and activation of NF-kB is associated with pro-inflammatory cytokines such as IL-1 and TNF alpha. In other words, when an autoimmune response is triggered, the immune system will activate pro-inflammatory cytokines, which in turn will activate NF-kB. This in turn will contribute to the inflammatory process. Some studies suggest that NF-kB can also have anti-

inflammatory roles as well. What's important to understand is that the activation of NF-kB is a normal process, but it's the chronic activation of this transcription factor which leads to problems. And so one of the goals is to downregulate NF-kB.

As for regulatory T cells (Tregs), they are widely regarded as the primary mediators of peripheral tolerance. Tregs originate in the thymus, although they also can derive from peripheral CD4+ T cells. A healthy immune system will have an abundance of these Tregs. Autoimmunity also involves an imbalance of the Th1 and Th2 pathways, and also involves Th17 cells. When dealing with someone who has an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease, the goal should be to increase the number and activity of the Tregs, while at the same time doing things to help suppress the Th17 cytokines.

So what supplements will decrease pro-inflammatory cytokines and inhibit NF-kB, while at the same time increasing regulatory T cells? Some of the more important ones include Vitamin D, omega 3 fatty acids, turmeric, and resveratrol. Drinking green tea also can help, and probiotics can modulate the immune system. And so you definitely want to make sure you have healthy vitamin D levels, take a probiotic supplement and eat fermented foods, drink some green tea, and consider supplementing with an omega 3 fatty acid supplement. Taking turmeric and/or resveratrol aren't always necessary, but they can also help greatly to modulate the immune system.

### **Should Iodine Be Taken In Those With Graves' Disease?**

There is a great deal of confusion when it comes to taking iodine when someone has an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease. Although I'm "pro-iodine", I'm also cautious with iodine supplementation, as I realize that iodine isn't for everyone. Before someone takes iodine I recommend testing first to confirm that they have a deficiency. If a deficiency is confirmed then they need to begin with small amounts, and other nutrients which are important to take when supplementing with iodine include selenium, vitamin C, magnesium, and the B vitamins. Most endocrinologists will recommend for people with hyperthyroid conditions to avoid taking iodine out of fear that it will increase the production of thyroid hormone. Although this is possible, this usually isn't the case unless if very high doses of iodine are taken.

## **The Risks Of Taking Nutritional Supplements and Herbs**

Although taking supplements on your own might not come with the same risks as with taking prescription medication, there are still risks associated with taking certain supplements. This is especially true with some herbal remedies that are available at health food stores. And if you are combining these with medication such as Methimazole or Propranolol then you especially want to be cautious. This is yet another reason why I highly recommend that you consult with a competent natural healthcare professional before taking any nutritional supplements or herbal remedies.

## **Getting Rid Of Sweet Cravings**

Some people want to avoid sugary types of foods, but their cravings are so severe that they have a hard time avoiding them. Part of the solution lies with not bringing these sugary foods into your home. After all, if you don't have them in your house as a temptation, then you are less likely to consume them on a frequent basis.

There are certain nutritional supplements and herbs which can help with one's sweet cravings. I commonly recommend an herb called Gymnema, which helps to balance the blood sugar levels and is very effective in reducing, and in many cases completely eliminating sweet cravings. Chromium is an important nutrient which can help to increase insulin sensitivity and decrease sweet cravings. Alpha lipoic acid is yet another supplement which can also help to balance the blood sugar levels and therefore help with sweet cravings.

## CHAPTER 8: STEP #5: Other Factors To Consider

In this chapter I'm going to discuss some of the other factors that are important if you want to use natural treatment methods to help restore the natural function of your thyroid gland, restore the health of your immune system, etc. There are five specific factors I'd like to discuss, all of which are important to your recovery:

**Factor #1: You need to get quality sleep.** This is extremely important, as in order to restore your health back to normal you should be getting at least seven to eight hours of "quality" sleep each night. Of course for many people with Graves' Disease this is easier said than done, as many people with these conditions have difficulty falling and/or staying asleep. Having elevated thyroid hormone levels alone can cause sleep issues, but there are other factors to consider.

One big factor in getting quality sleep is regulating your blood sugar levels, as if you're accustomed to eating a lot of refined carbohydrates, especially within a few hours of going to bed, this can affect your cortisol levels, which can prevent you from falling asleep, and/or cause you to wake up during the night. So in addition to eating healthier, you also want to avoid eating within a few hours of bedtime. If you really feel hungry late at night, eating a small snack that is high in protein is fine.

Sometimes certain nutritional supplements and herbs can help aid in someone's sleep. For some people, taking a small dose of melatonin 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime can not only help some people fall asleep, but it can also result in a deeper, refreshing sleep. Valerian root and L-theanine can also help some people to sleep better. Make sure you consult with a competent healthcare professional about these or any other natural sleep remedies. While it's usually fine to take these supplements on a temporary basis, the goal is to get you to the point where you don't need to rely on taking supplements to help you sleep.

**Factor #2: Exercise regularly.** Many people with autoimmune thyroid conditions want to exercise, but they just can't find the energy to be active on a regular basis. In addition, most people with hyperthyroid conditions need to be cautious about overexerting themselves due to the increased pulse rate and heart palpitations. As a result I would make sure not to overexert yourself, as for many people with Graves' Disease I recommend just doing some light

walking while following a natural treatment protocol. However, since hyperthyroidism affects both the muscle mass and bone density I do think it's a good idea for most people with Graves' Disease to also do some light weight lifting. If you're not already in an exercise routine it probably would be a good idea to schedule one or two sessions with a certified personal trainer.

**Factor #3: Improve your stress handling skills.** In many cases, stress can actually be the cause of someone developing an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease. One reason for this is due to the impact that stress can have on the adrenals and the immune system. While our bodies are able to handle acute stress situations, they weren't designed to handle chronic, prolonged stress over a period of weeks, months, and sometimes even years. Stress can cause dysregulation of the immune system, and can also cause a decrease in secretory IgA, thus making someone more susceptible to developing a leaky gut, which in turn is a factor in autoimmunity.

Just like many of the other topics discussed in this guide, dealing with stress isn't something that I can adequately cover in a few paragraphs. There are a number of good books on stress management that you can get from your local library, or purchase from a bookstore or online, such as "Stress Management for Dummies", and "The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook", just to name a couple. You can also find some good information on dealing with stress in some of the thyroid recovery books that are out there. An "advanced" book on stress management is "Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers", by Robert Sapolsky, which is an excellent book. Another excellent book is "Adrenal Fatigue", by Dr. James Wilson. These two books aren't really about stress management, but instead they go into the physiology of the stress response, and discuss how stress affects the adrenals. I do have some articles on stress management on my website.

Of course just reading books on managing stress alone won't be enough, as you do need to take action. In this day and age, just about all of us have things that stress us out on a daily basis, whether it's our job, relationships, finances, and of course dealing with your Graves' Disease condition can be a very big stressor. It's safe to say that you can't eliminate the stress in your life, but if you're determined then you can learn how to handle these stressors much better, which is not only important in your recovery, but in preventing a future relapse as well.

**Factor #4: Don't give in to "peer pressure".** Hopefully you have someone in your life who will be supportive of your decision to treat your Graves' Disease condition naturally. But don't be surprised if there are people who you are close with who don't approve the choices that you make. After all, we're brought up in a world where most people simply "pop a pill" for just about any ailment. So when a close friend or family member finds out that you're eating healthier, taking quality nutritional supplements, improving your stress handling skills, and doing everything else that is required to restore your health, there is an excellent chance they won't understand the choices that you have made.

And while everyone is entitled to their opinion, if they keep their opinion to themselves then that's fine. But it's when they try telling you that you're "nuts" for following such a protocol that people can be convinced they are crazy for deviating from the norm, and they just might talk themselves into receiving radioactive iodine or getting thyroid surgery.

You of course can direct people like this to this guide, as perhaps if they read this information they will realize how amazing our body really is, and that under the right circumstances it is possible to restore your health back to normal, without resorting to extreme methods such as radioactive iodine. For those friends and family members who remain stubborn, you just need to keep strong, and remember that most people are not health conscious. As a result, it would be ludicrous for you to begin taking advice from those who eat unhealthy, don't exercise, and perhaps even drink or smoke.

**Factor #5: Take responsibility for your health.** After consulting with a competent natural healthcare professional about your Graves' Disease condition, if he or she determines that you are a good candidate for a natural treatment approach, it will be important for you to take charge of your health. In other words, while they will tell you what you need to do in order to restore your health, you still need to be proactive.

A big reason why many people don't see the benefits of a natural treatment approach is simple...many won't take responsibility for their own recovery. Just remember that there is no magic pill or nutritional supplement that will restore your health. If you want to receive great results, then it is up to you to follow the advice of the natural healthcare professional you consult with.

## **CHAPTER 9: STEP #6: Work With A Natural Healthcare Professional**

If the information I have provided with you so far has convinced you to at least speak with a natural doctor about your hyperthyroid condition, then there are a few things you will need to know in order to choose a competent natural healthcare professional who focuses on endocrine conditions. Here are a few tips to help you with your search:

**1. Search for a natural healthcare professional who has a great deal of experience working with Graves' Disease patients.** There are numerous types of natural healthcare professionals out there, and while some of them see a decent amount of patients with autoimmune thyroid disorders, very few of them have a practice that focuses on these conditions. This isn't to suggest that someone who uses natural treatment methods to help people with many different conditions can't be competent when it comes to dealing with autoimmune thyroid conditions. But if you can find a natural healthcare professional where at least 80% of his or her patient base consists of people with autoimmune thyroid conditions such as Graves' Disease, then you can be confident that they have seen cases like yours.

**2. If possible, try to consult with a licensed healthcare professional.** To be fair, there are some competent doctors who can't be licensed in certain states. For example, many states won't license naturopathic doctors, but if you can find one that specializes in endocrine conditions then I personally wouldn't hesitate to consult with one just because they don't have a license. As long as they have graduated from an accredited naturopathic college then there is no reason why they shouldn't be able to help you.

In addition to naturopathic doctors, some chiropractic physicians receive advanced training to deal with endocrine conditions through natural methods. So if you come across a doctor of chiropractic who has a great deal of experience helping people with endocrine conditions, then don't hesitate to set up an appointment to speak with him or her.

Although most medical doctors are opposed to natural treatment methods, there are some medical doctors who practice functional

medicine. And so another option is to try to find a functional medicine doctor who focuses on endocrine conditions. There are also other competent healthcare professionals who have experience working with thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions, including some acupuncturists, pharmacists, etc.

**3. Be aware of self-proclaimed natural experts.** When searching for a natural healthcare professional, you do need to be careful that you don't choose someone who simply labels themselves as a natural healthcare expert, but has no real credentials or experience. Take the time to do a little bit of research. This is why it's beneficial to see a doctor who is licensed, as you can simply contact the state board to confirm that they are licensed, and if they do have a license, you can then make sure that their license is in good standing. But of course just because someone is a licensed healthcare professional doesn't mean they have experience working with conditions such as Graves' Disease.

**4. Make sure they keep up with the latest research.** Unfortunately, most healthcare professionals don't keep up to date with the latest research. Healthcare is always changing, and new clinical trials are being conducted daily, and so you ideally want to choose a natural healthcare professional who frequently attends conferences on nutrition, functional medicine, endocrinology, immunology, etc.

**5. Try to get proof that they have helped people with autoimmune thyroid conditions.** Due to patient privacy laws (i.e. HIPAA) this can be tricky, as a healthcare professional can't simply give you the names and contact information of people they have helped. Of course if you were referred by a friend or a family member who was helped with a similar condition, then you can be confident that the doctor they worked with has experience dealing with autoimmune thyroid conditions.

One way a healthcare professional can disclose whether or not they have experience dealing with such conditions is to have patient testimonials. A list of patients who willingly give their success stories might not be as good as talking with someone personally, but it is better than nothing. Keep in mind that some state boards don't allow doctors to post testimonials on their website, so don't use this as your only means of choosing a natural healthcare professional.

**6. Find a natural healthcare professional who won't hesitate to refer you out, if necessary.** The fact remains that not everybody who has a thyroid or autoimmune thyroid condition can be helped through natural treatment methods. As a result, you want to choose someone who will refer you out to another healthcare professional if they are unable to help you. The last thing you want to do is choose someone who accepts everybody as a patient, and never refers anybody out. Sure, healthcare is a business, and doctors need to make a living too, but they still need to have a "patient first" mentality.

**7. Choose the best natural healthcare professional available, even if it means traveling to see them, or consulting with them over the phone.** While it would be great to have a natural healthcare professional who focuses on autoimmune thyroid disorders practicing in your town, if you can't find anybody local, don't hesitate to travel somewhere else to seek quality care. Or better yet, to save you from the hassle and expense of driving or flying back and forth, see if they would be willing to consult with you over the phone or through Skype.

These days more and more doctors are offering "telemedicine" to their patients. Although it might sound crazy to work with a healthcare professional without seeing him or her face-to-face, as long as you have received a physical exam in person then just about everything else can be handled remotely.

I'm a perfect example of how a person with an autoimmune thyroid condition can be helped remotely, as when I was diagnosed with Graves' Disease, the natural healthcare professional who helped me practiced in a different state, and she was not within a reasonable driving distance. Rather than fly back and forth to consult with her, she was willing to do phone consultations, and so she helped me treat my autoimmune thyroid conditions naturally without ever meeting with me face to face. However, I did receive an initial exam from a local endocrinologist.

Even though at the time I wanted to speak with someone in person, and there were other natural healthcare professionals in my area that I could have consulted with, I wanted to make sure the person I spoke with had experience dealing with autoimmune thyroid conditions. So I decided that I preferred speaking with a natural healthcare professional over the phone that I knew was competent, compared to a local doctor who I was unfamiliar with.

And while I was first hesitant to work with someone remotely , there are a few benefits of phone consultations when compared to in-office visits:

**1. The convenience factor:** It is definitely more convenient to consult with a natural healthcare professional over the phone, as you don't have to drive anywhere, deal with traffic, drive in increment weather, you can be in your pajamas if you'd like, etc. This is of course assuming you schedule the appointment while you're at home, although you can also schedule it at work, or pretty much anywhere you have access to a phone or Skype.

**2. The waiting factor:** When visiting a doctor's office, very rarely does the patient get back to see the doctor right away. In some offices they make you wait in excess of an hour. With a phone consultation, while the doctor might not call you exactly at the scheduled appointment time, you at least can do something productive while waiting. Of course I always think that appointment times should be respected, as I hate waiting more than five to ten minutes past my appointment time for any doctor. As a result, I'm usually on schedule during a phone or Skype consultation.

**3. More flexible appointment times:** This isn't always the case, but some doctors that schedule phone consultations are willing to have early morning and/or late evening appointments, which can be especially convenient if you work an 8-5 shift. Of course if there is a local doctor in your area that you can see face to face then that's great, but I just wanted to demonstrate some of the benefits of a phone or Skype consultation.

Just as a reminder, before you consult with a natural healthcare professional over the phone about your condition, you should ideally have already received a physical exam for your Graves' Disease condition. While a natural doctor who lives in a remote location can easily order lab tests and then review them, look over your case history, and give his or her recommendations, they obviously can't give you a physical exam over the phone, which anyone with an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease really should have.

At the very least you want a competent natural healthcare professional to perform a neck and throat exam, and if they suspect nodules they might need to take an ultrasound, which of course

needs to be done in person. The doctor who conducts this physical exam does not need to be a natural healthcare professional, although it could be if you're lucky enough to have a competent one in your area.

I personally don't think it's a bad idea to have your physical exam conducted by an endocrinologist, as they usually have the technology that is needed should they suspect thyroid nodules, or in rare cases, thyroid cancer. Just remember that most endocrinologists won't be supportive of your decision to consult with a natural healthcare professional. As for actually finding a natural doctor who focuses on endocrine conditions here are a few suggestions:

You can visit [www.holisticmedicine.org](http://www.holisticmedicine.org) and actually search for a holistic doctor who specializes in endocrinology. I will caution you that while most of these doctors do practice more holistically than the average medical doctor, when it comes to treating an autoimmune thyroid condition such as Graves' Disease, many will not have the goal of restoring the health of the person.

Another website to visit is [www.naturopathic.org](http://www.naturopathic.org). You can do a search to see if there is a naturopath that practices in your area, or one who will consult with you remotely. When conducting a search, you'll notice that some will have an "area of emphasis", and what you're once again looking for is a doctor that focuses on endocrine conditions. I'm not suggesting that you can't be helped by a naturopath that lists endocrine conditions as one of their specialties, along with many other conditions. But I personally would rather work with a doctor who sees nothing but endocrine patients day in and day out.

You of course can also do an online search in an attempt to find a competent natural endocrine doctor that can help you. For example, go to Google, Yahoo, Bing, or whatever your favorite search engine might be, and type in some of the following keywords:

- Natural Endocrine Doctor
- Natural Thyroid Doctor
- Natural Graves' Disease Treatment

### **How To Narrow Down Your Choices:**

What I recommend for you to do is to come up with a list of at least three to five natural healthcare professionals who focus on endocrine conditions. Be certain that you visit each one of their websites to make sure they focus on endocrine conditions, as I once again would be cautious if they list a bunch of different conditions they can help with, most of which are not endocrine related.

Once you have your list of three to five natural healthcare professionals, you obviously need to narrow down the choice to one doctor that you will choose to consult with. In order to do this, I recommend asking them some questions. Now to be frank, many won't answer questions directly. And most won't speak with you over the phone for free, although some will make themselves available through email. Others should at least have an assistant working with them who can relay your questions back and forth. If you can't get any of the following questions answered without paying a consultation fee, then I would probably move onto a different doctor.

Here are some of the questions you can ask when searching for a natural endocrine doctor:

1. Does the doctor focus solely on patients with endocrine conditions?
2. Has the doctor treated many people with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease?
3. How many years has the doctor been in practice?
4. Does the doctor feel comfortable using natural methods to treat Graves' Disease?
5. Does the doctor address the underlying cause of the condition, or do they just use herbs and/or homeopathic remedies to manage the symptoms?

You might think of more questions than this, as these are just some of the more important ones you should ask. The doctor you contact might not answer all of them, but they should at the very least answer the first four questions.

### **Yes, I Currently Accept New Patients...But...**

My primary goal here isn't to pitch my consultation services. But just in case if you were wondering, I do currently accept a limited number of

new patient consultations each month, and I regularly consult with patients throughout the United States, as well as those who live internationally. So if you are comfortable working with a doctor remotely I would be happy to consult with you. I have even put together an affordable program for people with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease, but you also have the option of just doing an individual consultation without going through the program.

However, I do have a couple of requirements. First, for anyone who consults with me over the phone, I do require that they have already received a physical exam by an endocrinologist, or a different type of medical doctor. Second, I require all of my new patients to attend one of my free natural thyroid health webinars. By attending the webinar you will not only learn some valuable information that will benefit your health, along with the benefits of my program, but it will also give you a good idea as to whether or not you'd be a good fit for my program. If you're on my email list you will receive notification of any upcoming free natural thyroid health webinars. Or you can simply visit my website at [www.naturalendocrinesolutions.com](http://www.naturalendocrinesolutions.com) and click on the "Free Webinars" link.

By the way, even if you're not interested in working with me I still highly recommend attending one of my free webinars on hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease. The first 40 to 45 minutes of the webinar consist of some great content, and then after presenting the content I discuss my program.

## **Chapter 10: Can Thyroid Eye Disease Be Helped Naturally?**

Graves' ophthalmopathy, also known as thyroid eye disease, is common in people with Graves' Disease, and involves the thyroid antibodies attacking the tissues of the eyes. Graves' ophthalmopathy is clinically relevant in approximately 50% of patients with Graves' disease, with severe forms affecting 3%-5% of patients. In fact, many people consult with me not due to the high pulse rate, palpitations, or the other symptoms associated with Graves' Disease, but instead are primarily concerned with their eye symptoms. And most people want to know if following a natural treatment protocol can help to reverse this condition.

Before I discuss some natural approaches to help with thyroid eye disease, I'd first like to talk about the conventional medical treatment approach to this condition. Although radioactive iodine is commonly recommended to people with Graves' Disease, RAI can worsen ophthalmopathy. If the condition is severe then steroids might be given, such as prednisone, but sometimes a wait-and-see policy is recommended in mild Graves' ophthalmopathy, and the reason for this is because the condition can resolve spontaneously.

So if someone with Graves' ophthalmopathy is looking to take the conventional medical approach, they are essentially looking at 1) taking steroids, or 2) playing the waiting game. Nothing is done to address the cause of the condition, which is the autoimmune component of Graves' Disease. Although I'm not opposed to people taking steroids, there are natural options which might help with the inflammation. And while they might not be as potent as the prescription drugs, they of course don't come with the side effects.

### **Address The Inflammation and the Autoimmune Component**

If someone has Graves' ophthalmopathy and is looking to follow a natural treatment protocol, the treatment approach won't be much different when compared to the one given to someone who has Graves' Disease without thyroid eye disease. In other words, supplements and herbs which are specific for the eyes such as eyebright and lutein usually won't help with this condition. In the chapter where I spoke about supplements, I mentioned how the goal is to decrease pro-inflammatory cytokines, downregulate NF-kappB, and to increase regulatory T cells. Well, doing this should also help with the symptoms of thyroid eye disease.

But will taking the supplements I mention truly make a difference with thyroid eye disease? The effectiveness depends on the severity of the condition. Pro-inflammatory cytokines are associated with autoimmune conditions such as Graves' Disease, and studies show that the cytokines of the IL-1 family and Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) play a big role when it comes to Graves' ophthalmopathy. So I mentioned how supplements such as vitamin D, omega 3 fatty acids, turmeric, resveratrol, and green tea can help with this. Numerous studies also show that selenium can help with thyroid eye disease.

But of course removing the autoimmune trigger is also important. While taking certain supplements and herbs can help reduce the inflammatory component and suppress the autoimmune response, they of course won't remove the trigger. As a result, you need to detect and remove the autoimmune trigger, as doing this along with following the advice I gave in this guide will help to improve the health of the immune system and reduce the TSH receptor antibodies, which are what's responsible for the symptoms of thyroid eye disease.

### **Can A Natural Treatment Protocol Reduce Eye Bulging?**

Some people with Graves' ophthalmopathy have bulging of the eyes, also known as exophthalmos. I commonly will have people ask me whether natural treatment methods will help to reduce the eye bulging. It really does depend on the severity of the condition, as someone with a mild case of exophthalmos might see improvements after following a natural treatment protocol, but if they have a moderate to severe case then it's unlikely to completely normalize through natural treatments. This doesn't mean that these people can't benefit at all from a natural treatment approach, but I don't want to set up any unrealistic expectations.

So if you have Graves' ophthalmopathy, hopefully you understand that the key to overcoming this condition is to address the autoimmune component of Graves' Disease. The primary goal is to detect and remove the autoimmune trigger, decrease the inflammatory component, and improve the health of other compromised areas of the body. Supplements and herbs which might help include fish oils, vitamin D3, turmeric, resveratrol, and selenium.

## **CHAPTER 11: The 5 Biggest Mistakes People With Graves' Disease Make**

What I'd like to do now is discuss five of the biggest mistakes most people with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease make. Some of these mistakes will be a review of what has already been covered, but I think it's important to reinforce some of this information so you are sure not to make any of these mistakes.

**Mistake # 1: Covering up your symptoms with medicine and not getting to the cause of the problem.** This is what many people with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease will do, as they will take drugs that usually don't do anything for the cause of the condition, but instead just cover up the symptoms. Of course this isn't your fault, as we are brought up in a world where people are trained to take a pill whenever they have a health issue. We don't trust our bodies' natural ability to combat many of these illnesses.

Once again, this doesn't mean I'm completely opposed to conventional medicine, as in some cases it is necessary to take antithyroid drugs and/or beta blockers to manage the hyperthyroid symptoms. But even if you take this approach it makes sense to find out what the cause of your condition is, and attempt to restore your health so you won't have to take medication on a long term basis, or be concerned about receiving RAI or thyroid surgery.

**Mistake # 2: Believing everything your endocrinologist tells you about treating your hyperthyroid condition.** This is not meant to criticize your endocrinologist, as I do think that most people with a hyperthyroid condition should consult with a licensed endocrinologist in order to receive a physical exam, rule out anything serious such as thyroid cancer, and to at least see what treatment options they give you. But what you need to remember is that most medical doctors, including endocrinologists, DO NOT have a natural mindset.

In fact, if you were to tell your endocrinologist that you were thinking about natural treatment methods to help with your hyperthyroid condition, they most likely would be strongly opposed. This of course is understandable if you were treating the condition naturally on your own, but even if you told them you were working with a natural healthcare professional who focuses on endocrine conditions, they probably would still advise you against it.

My goal here is not to downplay the seriousness of hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease, but at the same time, covering up the symptoms with antithyroid drugs or damaging your thyroid gland by receiving RAI is a serious matter in itself. The point I'm trying to make is that just because your endocrinologist tells you that antithyroid medication such as Methimazole, or radioactive iodine treatment are the only ways to treat your hyperthyroid condition, doesn't necessarily mean that this is true.

And if they tell you that there are risks to natural treatment methods, they are absolutely right, as I already have discussed this. In most cases, being under the supervision of a natural healthcare professional who has experience working with these conditions is safe, assuming you do what is necessary to manage the hyperthyroid symptoms. In some cases this might mean taking medication, while in other cases you might be fine taking herbs such as Bugleweed and Motherwort. Thousands of people die every day due to conventional medical treatments, and so while there might be risks to taking a natural treatment approach, there is no question that conventional medical treatments also come with many risks. Of course only you can decide which treatment option is best for you.

**Mistake # 3: Thinking that YOU can't restore your health.** This ties into the previous mistake, as many endocrinologists will tell you that there is no solution for your hyperthyroid condition, and you will have to manage it by taking drugs or receiving radioactive iodine. Once again, I'm not suggesting that everyone who has hyperthyroidism or Graves' Disease can have their health restored back to normal.

But in many cases, people who were told by their endocrinologist that the only "cure" is to receive radioactive iodine had their health restored through natural treatment methods. So don't give up hope, as most people with these conditions can avoid radioactive iodine and thyroid surgery and successfully restore their health back to normal. I'm not suggesting it's an easy process, but in most cases it's better than the options provided by your endocrinologist.

**Mistake # 4: Not looking into natural treatment methods.** Even if you choose to go through the conventional route of treating your hyperthyroid condition, you should at least consider following a natural treatment approach. Because you are reading this information you obviously haven't made this big mistake, as while you

might be skeptical, which is perfectly normal, at the same time you are looking for more than just something to manage the symptoms and cover up the cause of the problem.

Besides reading this information, and any other information you have read on natural treatment methods, I encourage you to take this one step further and at least set up an initial consultation with a natural healthcare professional who focuses on endocrine conditions. This doesn't mean you have to follow their advice. But it's always good to get a second opinion, and so assuming you have already consulted with an endocrinologist, what do you have to lose by speaking with a natural healthcare professional who focuses on endocrine conditions?

**Mistake # 5: Having a closed mind.** Once again, by reading this information it shows that you don't have a closed mind, and that you are open to alternative treatments. Millions of people have been diagnosed with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease, and unfortunately, most of these people are too close minded to consider natural treatment methods.

Now to be fair, many people aren't even aware there are natural treatment methods available to help with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease. But let's face it, we live in a world where people usually follow the advice of their medical doctor, without considering the side effects and long term consequences of taking drugs. This is especially true in the United States, but it's true in other countries as well. I personally have consulted with numerous patients for different conditions who were taking 10 to 15 different medications and never considered natural treatment methods. The sad part is that some of these medications were prescribed to help manage the symptoms that were caused by other medicines they were taking!

Of course I would never tell these or any other patients to just stop taking their medication and to replace them with healthy food and nutritional supplements and herbs. However, after becoming educated, some people will begin weaning off some or all of these drugs under the guidance of their medical doctor, and will switch to a natural treatment approach. And while many people who take numerous medications for their hyperthyroid condition and other health issues feel lousy, most who do try natural treatment methods are happy they made the transition.

## CHAPTER 12: Take Action Now

I'd like to wrap this guide up by summarizing the steps I recommend for you to take in order to treat your Graves' Disease condition naturally, should you make this choice:

**Step # 1: Continue to educate yourself about natural treatment methods.** I encourage you to continue educating yourself about treating your Graves' Disease condition through natural methods. Just be careful, as while there is a lot of great information on the internet, a lot of it is also misleading, and some information is completely inaccurate. Be especially careful when reading information that wasn't written by a healthcare professional.

This doesn't mean that there isn't good information written by nonhealthcare professionals, as some people who are not healthcare professionals seem to have greater knowledge with regards to endocrine conditions than some medical doctors. A good example of this is Mary Shomon, who has written some great books about thyroid health and is very knowledgeable about these conditions. Elaine Moore is another good example, as she has written a wonderful book on Graves' Disease. Nevertheless, you do need to be cautious.

In addition to the content on my website, I also conduct free webinars on hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease which help people to better understand the benefits of natural treatment methods. Just visit [www.NaturalEndocrineSolutions.com](http://www.NaturalEndocrineSolutions.com) and click on the "Free Webinars" link. If you don't want to wait for a live webinar, you can simply request a recorded webinar presentation so you can watch the webinar at your convenience. Just to warn you, I do talk about my consultation services at the end of the webinar, but even if you're not interested in this I'm pretty sure you will find the information I present during the webinar to be valuable.

**Step # 2: Get examined by an endocrinologist.** Although you of course can skip this step, I do think it's a good idea to at least get a physical exam from a competent endocrinologist. Plus it also is a good idea to find out if you actually have Graves' Disease, and not a condition such as subacute thyroiditis, which is a non-autoimmune hyperthyroid condition and is temporary. Plus, going to an endocrinologist can help to confirm or rule out the presence of thyroid nodules, as well as thyroid cancer.

**Step # 3: Consult with a natural healthcare professional that primarily deals with endocrine conditions.** I of course have mentioned this numerous times in this guide, and since I'm a natural doctor I obviously have a somewhat biased opinion. But even if you ultimately choose to use conventional medicine to treat your hyperthyroid condition, it still won't hurt to at least speak with a natural healthcare professional who has a good deal of experience treating hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease through alternative methods. Although you might be skeptical at this time, after speaking with a natural doctor you might decide to give natural treatments a try.

**Step # 4: Keep an open mind.** Once again, by reading this information you obviously do have an open mind. Just remember that you have options, and to use the information you gather together to make an informed decision.

I'd like to thank you for requesting this information. I hope you found this guide to be valuable, and I also hope that I have convinced you to consider a natural treatment approach for your Graves' Disease condition, and to at least speak with a natural healthcare professional who focuses on endocrine conditions. After all, you only have one thyroid gland, and if your condition can be treated naturally then it makes sense to consider this option.

Sincerely,

Dr. Eric Osansky, D.C., MS, CCN, CNS

P.S. For more information on natural thyroid health, please visit my website at [www.NaturalEndocrineSolutions.com](http://www.NaturalEndocrineSolutions.com). This website consists of many articles, blog posts, and videos which discuss natural treatment solutions for thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions. Since you're on my email list you'll receive an email update whenever I create a new article, blog post, or have one of my free natural thyroid health webinars.

## Patient Success Stories:

Here are some of my patients with thyroid and autoimmune thyroid conditions who have benefited from following a natural treatment protocol.



I was diagnosed with Graves' Disease, and I began to notice changes in my symptoms pretty quickly after beginning the natural treatment protocol. After the first month my palpitations and anxiety type symptoms almost disappeared and I was sleeping better at night. The second month results were even better. I felt so good that I began tapering off my antidepressant medication that I had been taking for years. After the third month all of the symptoms that I had experienced prior were no longer present. My energy levels were better than they had been in a year and my thyroid lab results were within the normal range.

### **Melissa Noi**

Aurora, Colorado

Accountant



I was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism in September, 2012, but I didn't consult Dr. Osansky about my condition until fall of 2013. I was under the care of an endocrinologist during that year, and he put me on Methimazole. The drug worked to some extent during that year, but I never really felt like my old, active self, and I knew I didn't want to take the drug forever. The testing that Dr.

Osansky did when I first consulted him was much more thorough than any of the testing my endocrinologist had done. Dr. Osansky wanted to get at the cause of my hyperthyroidism, not just treat my symptoms. I began Dr. Osansky's treatment regimen while still taking the Methimazole, but after about 6 months I was able to wean off the drug and eventually stopped taking it completely. I felt much better after getting off the drug and just taking Dr. Osansky's recommended tinctures and supplements. I had more energy, my thinking was clear, I was sleeping well, and my heart didn't jump around in my chest anymore. My thyroid blood tests improved with the drug, but even after stopping the drug and just following Dr. Osansky's treatment, my tests still continued to improve, and all my tests have been within the normal range for the past eight months. If you are suffering from hyperthyroidism, I'd definitely give Dr. Osansky's methods a try. If you follow his recommendations I don't know how your condition couldn't improve. In addition, Dr. Osansky is very supportive and responsive whenever you have a problem or question. He's always there for you.

**David Mitchell**

San Francisco, CA  
Teacher



When I first began, I was at my wit's end. I was about a year into my disease, and had already hired and fired two other holistic doctors. Although they both did help me greatly by cleaning up my diet and lifestyle, their methods did not help my Graves' disease, so I had to keep searching. That's when a simple internet search found Dr. Eric. Just the fact that he had Graves' disease himself and is now free of it, filled me with so much hope, that I just knew he was going to be the one to give me back my health for good. I think it's very important to find the right holistic doctor. There are so many out there that just aren't thorough, or knowledgeable enough. Dr. Eric has chosen to specialize in one area, and because of that, he is able to help people regain their lives through knowledge and experience.

Immediately I began feeling better. My heart palpitations which were of the greatest concerns began to decrease, as well as the other symptoms. It took a few months, but there were some days where it felt like I had no disease at all. I had to remind myself to keep eating right, and continue following the protocol,

and to not let my guard down. It was such a freeing experience to finally have someone who knows what to do behind me, and watching over me. Even though he was 3000 miles away, I never felt like I was without a safety net. My blood tests improved to the point that I am now free of Graves' disease. It is completely gone, and now I know why I was sick and how to stay healthy. I had leaky gut from a previous candida infection that wreaked havoc on my digestive system, and ultimately my whole being. I killed off the candida, and treated the leaky gut and Graves' disease at the same time. I now have my health, and it's not going anywhere ever again!!! The best part? My doctors said it was impossible to get rid of!! And I proved them wrong!!!

**Cindy Jakes**

Pinole, CA

Independent Hair Stylist



I was diagnosed with “hyperthyroidism with no known cause” at age 32. I had experienced all of the typical hyperthyroid symptoms, with heart palpitations finally getting me in to see my doctor. I was then put on the anti-thyroid drug, methimazole. It was 5 years later when my endocrinologist asked me if I was ready for a radioactive iodine treatment to destroy part of my thyroid. Right then, I knew I had to find another solution. I didn't want to permanently destroy my thyroid and I didn't want to be on medication for life either. The medication did an okay job of masking my symptoms, but it worried me that it was only a mask. I found hope in Dr. Osansky's approach to try to figure out the underlying causes that were keeping my thyroid overactive. In my case, he helped me figure out that a lot of my issues were gut related. After I started a whole foods diet, cut out the foods that caused irritation, started Dr. Osansky's supplement recommendation and did a few other lifestyle changes, I received great results. I felt so relieved and happy that I finally figured me out! My blood tests became normal and now I am off my anti-thyroid medication and doing well. Dr. Osansky gave me the tools I needed to help me restore my health. I would definitely recommend trying a natural approach to achieving better health. The effort I put forth paid off in a big way. I now have a better understanding of my body, adapted to a healthier lifestyle for my family and I, and I have the tools and knowledge to go forth healthy and happy without medication.

**Melanie Boeck**

Temecula, CA

Active mom of 3 (formerly a Radiologic Technologist)



When I first began working with Dr. Eric some of the symptoms I experienced included a rapid heartbeat, dizziness, irritability, no energy, weight loss for no reason from 98 lbs to 87 lbs, overly sensitive, crying without any reason, difficulty sleeping, feeling hot most of the time even in room temperature, mood swings, eyes protrusion, stress level was high. The first 3-6 months of faithfully following the natural treatment protocol, I started to see & feel the improvement in my condition. And, as the months progressed, my whole lifestyle changed, my food intake changed to gluten-free & healthier, mostly organic foods, my exercise routine (been doing it more frequently & creatively), & my stress level gradually went down through meditating, breathing exercise, & thinking more positively. Admittedly, at first, it was very hard on me, but I did the best I can & followed doctor's recommendations. Through these changes, along with the supplements combined, thankfully, at present, my heartbeat is back to normal, I feel more relaxed, my energy is back to normal (& mostly feel more invigorated than ever), I sleep very well, my body temperature is back to its normal state, weight ranges from 100-102 lbs, eyes' protrusion almost back to normal size, and I'm more optimistic than ever before. My family doctor, Dr. Snell, who is outstanding as well, told me most people could not stand the symptoms of Graves Disease so they receive the RAI. What Dr. Osansky did was to prescribe a protocol that allowed me to avoid the Graves Disease symptoms so I could heal. The symptoms were horrible and I felt trapped with RAI as the only alternative. We prayed about this situation and found Dr. Osansky who provided a natural alternative which allowed me to keep my thyroid gland and lead a normal life.

**Norina Medved**

Kissimmee, FL



Through my own research, I discovered that there are many side effects to radioactive iodine treatment. However, every visit to the endocrinologist ended with them stating that this was the only treatment for Graves Disease. In fact, one endocrinologist yelled at me and stated that I had to have the procedure done by November because of the dangerous side effects of the medication. I found Dr. Osansky's website and read all his articles. I was immediately convinced that he could help me because one of his articles described his symptoms and it seemed as though he was describing my symptoms. I wanted a doctor who had this experience and could tell me what to expect.

Since starting the natural protocol, I feel full of energy. I look forward to seeing my students instead of dreading each day. My eating habits have totally changed. I can actually function when I get home. I used to sleep during the two week Christmas holidays, but this year I actually painted, cleaned and exercised. It has truly been a lifestyle change. My blood tests show tremendous improvement. In fact the same endocrinologist who yelled at me sent me a letter indicating that I should immediately start lowering the Methimazole.

**Norma Lopez**  
Houston, TX  
School Teacher



I have hyperthyroidism and felt terrible when I first started the treatment. I had no energy and all I wanted to do was sleep all of the time. After beginning treatment I feel great and have more energy, and I feel better than I felt since my early 20s. And I'm sleeping again throughout the night. I was very skeptical about natural treatment methods at first. But I'm almost back to normal again and I feel great, and I'm glad I made the decision to try the natural protocol. I couldn't have made a better decision. I'm so thankful for Dr. Osansky because he really changed my life. Natural is the way to go.

**LaSharrie Lias**  
Hurtsboro, AL  
Travel Clerk



I saw Dr. Osansky for a hyperactive thyroid/Graves Disease, and suffered from this for over five years before I found Dr. Osansky. At first I did not notice any changes, as I had heart palpitations which caused me to wake up at night and I couldn't go back to sleep. After only a few weeks of following Dr. Osansky's suggestions I began to sleep better, and have gained back my energy and strength. My blood test results normalized, even though my endocrinologist told me when he first saw me that nothing I ate or did would change my condition, I would not let him schedule having my thyroid gland destroyed. Even when I had "storms", I said "no" to this procedure. I kept searching for help from naturopathic doctors until my registered dietician friend gave me Dr. Osansky's webpage. My endocrinologist sent me a letter saying he does not need to test my blood for a year unless I have any problems. I wish I had found Dr. Osansky sooner!

**Alice M O'Neal**  
Vancouver, WA  
Retired



I had struggled with my health for many years—TB, endometriosis, migraines, fibromyalgia pains, 2 frozen shoulders, fatigue, food allergies, poor digestion and malabsorption, sluggish thyroid, to name a few. Then suddenly I began losing weight and was experiencing bouts of sustained rapid pulse and strong heart palpitations that prompted me to go to the doctor pronto and have it checked out. I was diagnosed with hyperthyroidism and was prescribed beta blockers to protect my heart from dangerous cardiac symptoms until more tests could be done and a treatment plan given. My endocrinologist gave me little hope. I told him I was not going to hurry into surgery or radioactive iodine ablation. I wanted to keep my thyroid and began searching for a natural alternative to keep it and restore it to health if at all possible. That's when I found Dr. Osansky and joined his thyroid restoration program. That was the best decision I could have made. He skillfully began to untie the knots my state of health had evolved into. He went to the core cause and no conventional doctor had ever been able to do this for me. Not only was my thyroid completely restored, my lab results began coming back in the normal range and my overall health improved 100%! I am no longer

taking any medications. I feel younger and stronger at 62 than I did at 42. Following Dr. Osansky's treatment protocols was a challenge and required a great deal of commitment and determination, but it paid off and turned my life and health around for which I am eternally grateful. I would recommend Dr. Osansky to anyone facing hyperthyroidism in a heartbeat. His care was professional, targeted and extremely detailed, he definitely knows his stuff.

**Diane Branson**

Fairmont, MN  
Entrepreneur



Since following the natural treatment protocol I have all of the energy that I had before Graves' Disease, and not being on the meds feel wonderful. Being able to do all of the things that I used to do is fantastic, as we all take so many things for granted in life, and our health/body is very sensitive so what we feed it is so important, good in good out. Little by little my blood work came back to the normal range (within 4 to 6 months) but you have to follow the protocol.

**Michael Addario**

Albany, NY  
Manager



Six years ago I was diagnosed with Graves Disease. I was 28 years old, and I discovered that I had a resting heartbeat of 160 beats/minute and my thyroid was enlarged which caused me to have difficulty swallowing. I am overall a very healthy individual, and had never before experienced any kind of serious health condition. My medical practitioners were surprised that I hadn't had a stroke since my heart was so completely out of control. I was immediately put on

Propranolol (beta blocker) for my heart to get out of immediate danger, and began taking Methimazole (Tapazole) on a regular basis in the hopes of regulating my hyperthyroid. This would begin an irregular and erratic journey of taking a wide variety of doses of Tapazole over the next 4 years since my thyroid would not regulate, or subside, even with heavy doses of medication.

Throughout this time, I was desperate to try to get off the medication and treat my thyroid naturally— so I tried a variety of types of therapies such as long-term acupuncture and acupressure treatments, homeopathic remedies, lymphatic massages, cranial sacral therapy, raindrop essential oil treatment, Roling treatment, individualized naturopathic diets, along with daily yoga classes, meditation and rebounding. While these therapies were assisting some of my symptoms (bulging eyes, fast heart rate, irritability, memory loss, anxiousness), they were not getting to the root of my condition since my overall state of well-being continued to worsen over time. I also read many books on thyroid conditions and found a variety of ideas concerning vitamin/mineral treatments (with generic recommended doses) which could help my condition. I only later discovered just how dangerous the path of self-medication/self-treatment could be, since we all have different bodies, different needs, and one generic recommendation does not fit all. Throughout this time I was also still requiring the assistance of medication, since my thyroid was constantly in a state of flux and simply would not regulate.

After 4 years of attempting to regulate my condition, I was simply feeling powerless and unable to cope with the daily stresses of feeling like I was not in control of my condition, or of my body. I was no longer able to deal with the feeling of overall failure since I felt I had 'lost' the battle in attempting to heal my thyroid. So I finally succumbed to the pressures of my endocrinologist to do the Radioactive Iodine treatment. I had long resisted this treatment since it went against my personal beliefs regarding wellness, however I could simply no longer take the day-to-day unknowns of my thyroid activity. I was desperate to be able to get to a place of normalcy, which was assured by my Endocrinologist since the RAI would essentially obliterate my thyroid and I was told that I would require medication to treat my future damaged-thyroid (hypothyroid), for the rest of my life. I longed for this type of day-to-day regularity, so I finally did the RAI, which was a harrowing experience.

However, a few weeks before the RAI treatment, I was researching the ramifications of RAI and I came across Dr. Osansky's book on the Internet. I bought the book, hoping that it may help me post-RAI treatment in my recovery, since I had already decided to go through the RAI because I simply could not take the promise of 'just one more' natural treatment program to help. I had already spent years investing my time and money in these types of promises by other naturopathic therapists. Little did I know that it would actually be the solution I had always been looking for.

Only 1 month after completing the RAI (a large dose of 5.44 MBq-14.7mCi which is a 'medium-to-high' dose since my thyroid was quite enlarged), I started Dr. Osansky's natural treatment protocol. I soon discovered that I had had undiagnosed Celiac disease for many years, which had resulted in a leaky gut, and had greatly affected my thyroid activity. I was shocked that after all of the

practitioners I had been to over the years, no one had been able to recognize or target these severe issues. So once Dr. Osansky was able to discover where my body was at through a variety of blood testing (through my own family doctor), urine testing, saliva testing, and hair mineral analysis (all through mail-order laboratories), I was prescribed a personalized natural treatment protocol, which included a variety of whole food supplements along with a personalized diet. At the same time, I was also still following the recommendations made by my endocrinologist and taking daily doses of medication (Levothyroxine/Synthroid) for my newly obliterated thyroid (hypothyroid) post RAI, along with Prednisone for my bulging eyes.

However, as I followed a natural treatment protocol over time, it became apparent that my hypothyroidism began to stabilize itself and my thyroid was becoming normalized. I started feeling the positive effects of the natural treatment protocol within weeks of starting the program, and 10 months later I did not require any medication at all since my thyroid had completely stabilized, and I had felt the best I had felt in years. The effects of my well-being was beyond belief. My endocrinologist was quite confused (and still is to this day!) as to how my thyroid was able to regulate itself since I had such a severe hypothyroid soon after the RAI. Over time I have tried to inform her of my new diet and whole food supplements that have assisted me, but she insists that I am just one very rare case of a success story, since I no longer require any medication of any kind which is an incredible feat considering my history of severe (and long-term) hyperthyroidism to severe hypothyroidism.

Now here I am, at 34 years old and I have been medication-free for the last year and a half, and I am also 14 weeks pregnant! My thyroid has remained stable so far throughout my pregnancy without the aid of any medication and my Endocrinologist continues to be amazed at my stable condition. I will continue to stick to a natural treatment protocol in order to ensure I continue to experience this overall wellness in my life. Wellness IS possible!!!

I cannot recommend his program enough. It has simply changed my life, and has also begun to change the lives of my loved ones. As they have witnessed my progression to wellness, they have also adopted many strategies I use with regard to maintaining a healthy diet and overall wellness strategies as recommended by Dr. Osansky. I am a teacher in Canada's High Arctic, and even with such limited access to fresh foods in this part of the world (since it is a very small remote fly-in community of 1200 people), I am still able to consistently follow a natural treatment protocol. So if I can do it in this part of the world, I feel that anyone can!

I hope that with my story, you may not have to go through the harrowing experience of the RAI treatment, and instead start a natural treatment protocol as soon as possible, since your path to recovery would be that much quicker with a healthy, and undamaged thyroid. And your own path to wellness would be that much smoother. But even if you have had Radioactive Iodine treatment, there is still hope for you yet! I am living proof that the thyroid is still able to function properly with the right support from natural treatment methods in Dr. Osansky's program post-RAI treatment.

I cannot express the feeling of empowerment that comes with feeling totally in control of your own health, your own wellness, and your own body. To this day, I am extremely grateful to have come across Dr. Osansky's book for I cannot imagine where my health would be at this point in time without it. I am extremely thankful each and every day. So I hope that you too, will be able to find your own path to wellness.

**Tessa Lochhead**

Pond Inlet, Nunavut Canada  
(Elementary School Teacher)