

ask



Dr Roshan Jain

Your *mental and emotional health* questions answered

Q I am 28 years old and have been diagnosed with under active thyroid condition. I have been advised daily Thyroxin. I want to know if this affects my mental health and functioning. What additional care would you advise?

An underactive thyroid, also known as Hypothyroidism, is a condition in which your thyroid gland doesn't produce enough thyroid hormones. These hormones are essential for metabolism, energy levels and maintaining heart rhythm. Low levels of hormones can upset chemical balance in your body. Over time, this can produce health problems including infertility, obesity, as well as mental slowing and depression in its early stages.

If you have already suffered depressive illness, then you may be at higher risk of relapse to illness during underactive thyroid state. In any case, depression is treatable, provided you intervene early with remedial measures including exercise, relaxation and antidepressant medication when necessary.

As long as you maintain thyroid hormone levels, you will be protected from health consequences. The good news is that accurate thyroid function tests are available to diagnose and treat hypothyroid state. Treatment with synthetic thyroid hormone is usually simple, safe and effective. Monitoring of hormone levels is usually done with TSH test first and followed by thyroid hormone (T3 and T4) test if needed. This simple blood test is effective in determining and monitoring the dosage of medication.

Q Our 16-year-old son is becoming difficult, hostile and defiant. He is above average academically but has had behavioural problems at school. He goes to any extent to possess expensive things, even stealing money when required. He shows no remorse on being caught. He seems to lack goal or ambition. He keeps awake until early morning and sleeps through the day. We are struggling to cope with him. Please help.

Teen years can be difficult for both the individual and parents. Adapting to bodily changes, expectations, peer pressure and uncertainty can be stressful for many. This can manifest as lack of goal and ambition, or as behavioural disturbances including defiance and domination. This is a time, when they most require guidance, trust, independence and space, in equal measures. Allow them to do things and learn from them.

In the current age, we are possessed by possessions! This is one ailment that is causing misery world over. Technological wizardry and never ending advances have taken away our ability to be content.

Upgradation of our material things has become essential. We live by the others and unsurprisingly are engaging in an

eternal quest for happiness through material possessions. Children are learning acquisitiveness from the world and their family.

Treat your son as a friend and that may enable him to talk through things. He may not be ready for some mature judgments and decisions, but continue setting limits and expectations. It is important that he receives consistent message from both parents. Although you worry about him, do not threaten, yell, compare or spy on him, as this will cultivate fear, insecurity and low esteem in him. You should be the one who he approaches for solutions to his problems. Communication is the key and must be done correctly and consistently.

I recommend that he take up a competitive sport, and get him interested in reading and travel, as these will widen his horizons. Learning a musical instrument could also be beneficial, as it will help to enhance concentration and focus.

Our doctors will answer all queries on emotional and mental health. Got mind trouble of your own? Drop us a mail at bpositiveQA@apollolife.com

Or write to

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