



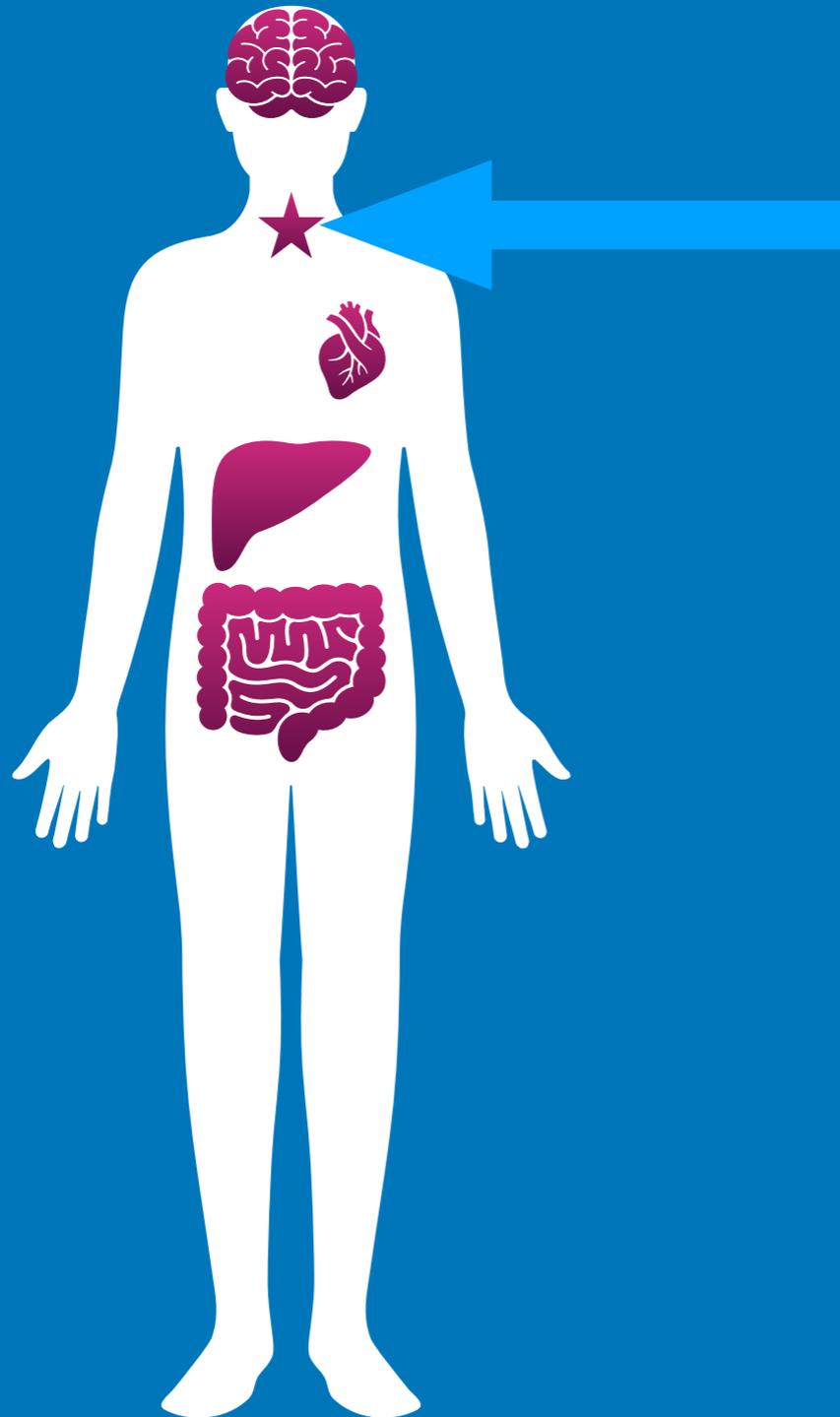
Lets talk about the **THYROID
and it's impacts on breastfeeding!**

By Emily McGregor, CLC

What is the Thyroid and why is it important to breastfeeding?

Thyroid dysfunction impacts roughly 5-7% of newly postpartum people.

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The Thyroid is an important gland found in the anterior portion of the neck the thyroid secretes and regulates hormones that play an integral role in lactation, in lactation these key hormones are predominantly prolactin and oxytocin.

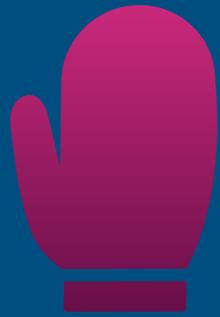
When the thyroid not functioning properly it tends to be either overactive, or under-active. There are other complications that may happen with the thyroid, but I will not be going in-depth with those today.

Because the thyroid is so important to the endocrine system, it impacts many organs when not working within normal limits. Some of these organs that are impacted are, the brain, heart, liver and the GI tract.

(Devashree Gehlot, 2021).

Most common form is Hashimoto's disease

Common symptoms:



Dry skin, sensitivity to cold



Depression, fatigue, lack of energy



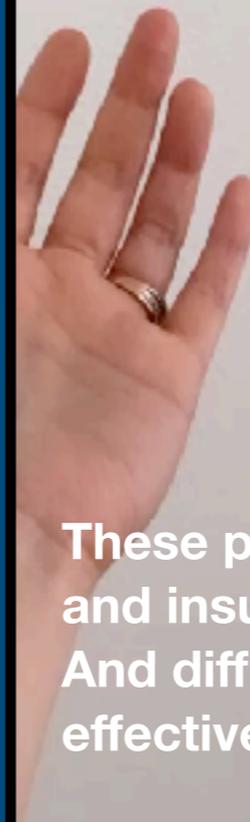
Forgetfulness



Constipation

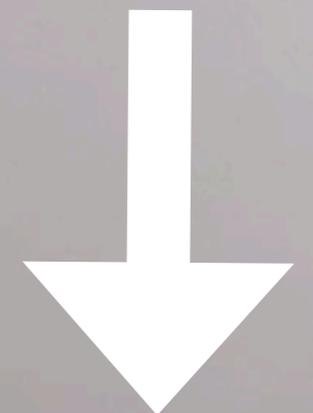


Lack of appetite
increased menstrual frequency and flow



These people are at risk for delayed and insufficient milk production. And difficulty removing milk effectively.

hypothyroid



(Devashree Gehlot, 2021).

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Most common form is Graves's disease



Common symptoms:

Racing heart

Muscle cramps



Feeling nervous or anxious



Excessive sweating, sensitivity to heat



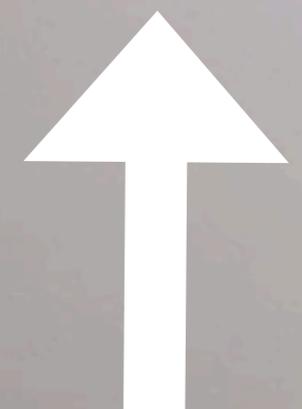
Rapid weight loss



Feeling run down

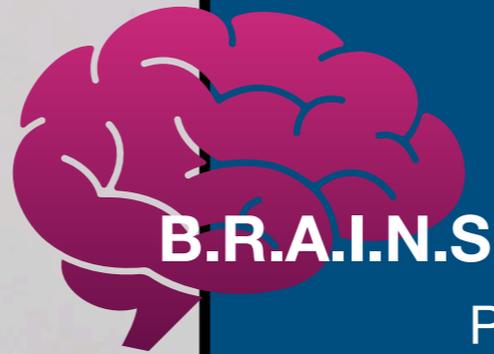
These people are at risk for having a negative impact on prolactin and oxytocin production levels. (levels are typically low)

hyperthyroid



(Devashree Gehlot, 2021).

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Considerations and Contraindications:

People that are more at risk for thyroid dysfunction in the postpartum are people who have type 1 diabetes, smoke or have a history of thyroid issues.

Some considerations around galactogogue and specifically Fenugreek:

“Galactogogue are foods or drinks given to the mother that are believed to increase milk supply.” -Healthy Children’s Project

Fenugreek according to Dr. Hale is the most popular galactogogue, and it does come with risks. Fenugreek has been known to decrease T3 production in a few studies. Fenugreek has also been known to reduce insulin levels which can be problematic for some people with thyroid issues.

When the common “go to” is a contraindicated galactogogue, then what?!

If not fenugreek, then what?!

While there isn't robust evidence that galactogauges are as effective as many consumers report them to be. There are other galactogauges that antidotally have been reported to be helpful!

*Galactogauges are ONLY helpful if there is proper milk removal. AND thyroid levels are actively being balance. Under the supervision of PCP

Hale's PhD (2018)

P. Theall (2016)



#notSponsored
LegendAIRY products are fenugreek free, and many recent clients of mine have reported seeing a noticeable difference in their milk production after using this product.





Efficient milk removal and more:

Consistent and effective milk removal, has been suggested to help increase milk supply. The most effective way to do this is by using hand expression, or a pump with the *correct flange size.

*Measuring the nipple to size it for a flange is essential in effective milk removal.



Introducing medications like Propylthiouracil PTU is the drug of choice for hyperthyroid. In cases for hypothyroid pitocin nasal spray might aid in natural oxytocin production.

According to Dr. Hale in *Hale's Medications and Mothers Milk*, he suggests PTU as an effective treatment. He suggests that there is limited data on Oxytocin nasal spray treatment and this treatment should be limited to the first week postpartum.

Hale's PhD (2018)

Resources:

All videos created by Emily McGregor for more fun videos check out @TheRosewaterDoula on Instagram

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