To Our Patients Taking Thyroid Hormone

*Dr. Chappell would like you to have the following information concerning treatment with thyroid hormone.*

1. BRAND NAME: Obtain your thyroid medication by brand name. Synthroid, Levoxyl or Tirosint are acceptable forms of levothyroxine, but you should be consistent. There is a recent medical report that generic thyroid hormone is equivalent to brand name. We disagree with this report since some important information was not included in that report. We, therefore, encourage our patients to continue their thyroid hormone by these brands.
2. MISSED DOSE: If you miss a dose of thyroid hormone, it is okay to take it later in the day or even take two pills the following day to make up for the missed dose. The 7-day pill dispenser is often helpful and is available at your pharmacy.
3. MEDICATION INTERACTIONS: Some over the counter and prescription medications can prevent thyroid absorption. These include minerals – especially iron (including multivitamins), calcium and aluminum antacids (Tums, Maalox, Mylanta, Amphogel, and Basalgel) and magnesium. Others include fiber products (Metamucil, Citurcel, fenofibrate and Tricor), resins (Wellchol and cholestyramine) and soy products. If you are taking any of these, please do NOT take your thyroid hormone within three hours of these preparations. Estrogens, birth control pills and Evista have also been found to affect thyroid hormone levels but do not need to be taken separately. Please notify your doctor if you have added any of these medications to your daily regimen.
4. FOOD INTERACTIONS: It is preferable for you to take your thyroid hormone on an empty stomach (at least 2 hour separation from food intake).
5. IODINE AND NON-PRESCRIPTION THYROID: Over-the-counter iodine and non-prescription “thyroid” is of no benefit for your thyroid problem. No one in the United States is iodine deficient since table salt is iodized. Therefore, supplements containing seaweed, sea salt or kelp will be of no benefit and potentially may worsen your thyroid problem. Consumption of regular iodized table salt or sea salt and foods such as dried seaweed and kelp are okay in moderation.
6. THYROID WARNING LABELS: Thyroid warning labels on over-the-counter medications do not apply to patients taking a stable dose of thyroid hormone. Many over-the-counter decongestants and cold remedies have thyroid warning labels. These labels are intended for people with untreated hyperthyroidism. It is okay to use these preparations while you are taking thyroid medication.
7. PREGNANCY: Pregnancy can increase the requirement for thyroid hormone. If you become pregnant contact our office as soon as possible.