Hyperthyroidism

What Is Hyperthyroidism?

Hyperthyroidism, or an overactive thyroid, happens when your thyroid gland produces too much thyroid hormone. This small, butterfly-shaped gland in your neck controls your metabolism, energy levels, and body functions.

When thyroid hormone levels are too high, your body speeds up, leading to physical, emotional, and metabolic symptoms. If left untreated, hyperthyroidism can lead to serious complications, including heart disease, osteoporosis, and thyroid storm (a life-threatening condition caused by extremely high thyroid hormone levels).

What Are The Symptoms Of Hyperthyroidism?

If you have hyperthyroidism, you may experience:

- **Unexplained weight loss**, even if you're eating more
- **A fast or irregular heartbeat (palpitations)**
- **Excessive sweating and heat intolerance**
- **Shaky hands or fingers (tremors)**
- **Feeling anxious, irritable, or nervous**
- **Difficulty sleeping (insomnia)**
- **Fatigue and muscle weakness**
- **Frequent bowel movements or diarrhoea**
- **Thinning hair or hair loss**
- **A swollen thyroid (goitre)**, which may cause neck discomfort

- **Bulging eyes, double vision, or irritation** (a symptom of Graves' disease)

If your hyperthyroidism is not treated, it can lead to serious complications, including heart problems, osteoporosis, and severe thyroid dysfunction (thyroid storm).

What Causes Hyperthyroidism?

There are several possible causes of an overactive thyroid, including:

- **Graves' disease** – An autoimmune condition where your immune system attacks your thyroid, making it produce too much hormone
- **Toxic multinodular goitre** – A thyroid gland with multiple overactive nodules
- **Thyroid nodules** – A single overactive lump in your thyroid that produces excess hormone
- **Thyroiditis** – Inflammation of the thyroid, often caused by viral infections or immune disorders, leading to a temporary hormone release
- **Excess iodine intake** – Too much iodine from food, supplements, or medications (e.g., amiodarone) can trigger hyperthyroidism

When Should You Consider Thyroid Surgery?

At Birmingham ENT Clinic, we offer thyroidectomy (thyroid surgery) for patients who may not be suitable for or have not responded to other treatments. You may be advised to have surgery if:

- Your symptoms are not controlled with other treatments
- You have a large toxic multinodular goitre, which may be causing breathing or swallowing difficulties
- You have a thyroid nodule that may be cancerous
- You are pregnant or have active Graves' eye disease, where other treatments may not be safe

- You want a permanent solution rather than long-term medication

What Type Of Thyroid Surgery Is Available?

Our expert thyroid surgeons offer:

- **Total thyroidectomy** – This removes the entire thyroid gland, eliminating hyperthyroidism. You will need to take lifelong thyroid hormone replacement therapy (levothyroxine) to maintain normal hormone levels

- **Hemithyroidectomy (lobectomy)** – If only one thyroid nodule is causing problems, we can remove just one side of your thyroid. This may allow the remaining thyroid tissue to function normally

What Happens After Thyroid Surgery?

After surgery, you will be carefully monitored. Most patients:

- Go home within 1–2 days after the procedure

- Can return to light activities within a week

- Will need thyroid hormone replacement therapy (levothyroxine) if their entire thyroid has been removed

Your surgeon will provide a detailed recovery plan and ongoing follow-up care to ensure your hormone levels remain stable.

What Happens If Hyperthyroidism Is Not Treated?

If you do not seek treatment, hyperthyroidism can lead to:

- **Thyroid storm** – A life-threatening condition with high fever, rapid heart rate, confusion, and severe weakness

- **Heart problems** – Increased risk of atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat), high blood pressure,

and heart failure

- **Osteoporosis (bone loss)** – Hyperthyroidism can make your bones weak and increase your risk of fractures

Seeking early treatment helps prevent these complications.

Why Choose Birmingham Head And Neck Clinic For Thyroid Surgery?

At Birmingham Head and Neck Clinic, you will receive:

- **Expert thyroid surgeons** – Specialists in thyroid surgery for hyperthyroidism, goitre, and nodules
- **Advanced diagnostic testing** – Ensuring accurate diagnosis and the best treatment plan
- **A full range of treatment options** – Including surgery when other treatments are not suitable
- **Surgical expertise in thyroidectomy** – Performed by high-volume thyroid surgeons to improve safety and outcomes
- **Comprehensive post-surgical support** – Helping you recover smoothly and maintain hormone balance

We provide expert-led, patient-centred care to help you take control of your thyroid health.

Contact Us

If you have hyperthyroidism and are considering thyroid surgery, contact Birmingham Head and Neck Clinic today. Our team of thyroid specialists is here to help.