

Discharge Instructions for Hypothyroidism and Myxedema (Child)



Your child has been diagnosed with hypothyroidism. This means the thyroid gland is less active than normal. Your child's symptoms may vary from mild to severe. Myxedema coma is the most severe form of hypothyroidism. It is rare and life-threatening.

Medicine

Make sure your child takes their thyroid hormone medicine exactly as directed. Your child will need this medicine for life.

- Never stop your child's treatment on your own. Your child needs this medicine to support normal brain development and normal growth. Without the right treatment, your child may have a permanently lower IQ and be shorter than normal.
- Have your child take the medicine at the same time every day.
- Keep the pills in a container that is labeled with the days of the week. This will help you know if you've given the medicine to your child.
- Give the medicine with a liquid. But don't use soy milk. It can make it harder to absorb thyroid hormone. It's important that your child fully swallows the pill.
- If your child or baby can't swallow a pill, crush the pill and give it in a small amount of water. You can also use a liquid form of the hormone.
- Give the medicine with the same food or drink each day. This will help control the amount of thyroid hormone in your child's system.
- After your child takes the medicine, wait for 4 hours before giving your child foods or drinks that contain soy.
- Wait for 4 hours before giving your child iron supplements, antacids that contain either calcium or aluminum hydroxide, or calcium supplements. Regular amounts of cow's milk are likely OK.

Other home care

- Keep a card in your wallet that lists:
 - Your name and contact information
 - The name and contact information for your child's healthcare provider
 - The name of your child's disease and what treatment they have had
 - The brand name and dose of your child's medicine
- Encourage your child to eat a high-fiber, low-calorie diet. This helps to relieve constipation and maintain a healthy weight.
- Encourage your child to exercise. Enroll your child in activities that are physically active.

Signs to watch for

During your routine visits, tell the healthcare provider if your child has any signs of too much thyroid hormone (hyperthyroidism), such as:

- Restlessness
- Fast weight loss
- Sweating
- Skin or hair changes
- Fast heartbeat

Follow-up care

- Follow up with your child's healthcare provider as directed.
- Make and keep appointments to see the provider and get lab work. Your child will need to have hormone levels checked for the rest of their life.

When to get medical care

Call the healthcare provider right away if your child has any of the following:

- Extreme tiredness
- Puffy hands, face, or feet
- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- Irregular heartbeat
- Confusion or changes in behavior
- Loss of consciousness

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