How Thyroid Affects Your Skin

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27 March, 2018

Most of the patients are not aware that thyroid disorders can involve other organ systems of the body also and skin is no exception. Not only this, skin issue may be the first presenting sign or even precede the diagnosis of thyroid disorder by many years, which is why we decided to educate our patients on this topic. **So, here is how thyroid affects your skin:**

- People with thyroid disorders usually have a cold and dry skin. We get a lot of patients who come to Dr Nivedita Dadu's Dermatology Clinic with itching all over the body due to the dryness that happens in thyroid disorder.
- Not only that, excessive dryness of skin may cause it to wrinkle early.
- Your skin may heal slowly or one could have a lot of sweating on palms and soles or yellowish discolouration of palms and soles depending on whether you have a hyper or hypothyroid.
- Hair is affected in almost all patients with a long-standing thyroid disorder. Thyroid patients usually have a dry, coarse and brittle hair which grows slowly. Hair loss could be both patchy or diffuse, a very characteristic of the thyroid is the loss of the outer third of the eyebrow (madarosis) and diminished body hair including pubic and axillary hair.

- Another reason why most people land up at a dermatologist’s clinic is the generalized pigmentation of the face, neck and body which is when their thyroid disorder gets detected.
- Nails grow slowly and tend to be thick and brittle.
- We have had a lot of patients visiting our clinic for urticaria or hives and only during the course of treatment or investigations we diagnosed their thyroid issue as the underlying cause of this itching.

Besides these, there are some less common skin problems also including:

- **Myxedema:** a diffuse swelling in which skin may appear dry, pale, waxy and firm to the touch and is usually seen on the shins.
- **Thyroid acropachy:** swelling of the hands and feet.

Patients with autoimmune thyroid disease are at increased risk for other autoimmune diseases like vitiligo and alopecia areata.