

Statement on the appropriate management of thyroid disease

The Clinical Committee of the Society for Endocrinology and the British Thyroid Association strongly support the early detection of patients with thyroid disease, the recognition by the medical profession of the clinical consequences of thyroid disease, the use of specific and sensitive diagnostic tests, the treatment of all affected patients with effective and safe therapies, and the careful monitoring of treatment. Clinical members of the Society and Association strive at all times to deliver high quality health care to patients with endocrine disorders and in line with best practice, the Society and Association endorse specific national and international guidelines addressing the diagnosis and treatment of thyroid disorders, such guidelines being based on careful and systematic scrutiny of extensive properly conducted research and clinical experience, in order that members may deliver safe and efficacious treatments. UK endocrinologists have a long and internationally recognised track record in thyroid research, both clinical research investigating patient symptoms, signs and treatments, and laboratory research into the causes of thyroid diseases and the ways in which thyroid hormones act within the tissues. UK researchers work in close collaboration with researchers in similar fields throughout Europe and North America. Education of doctors is comprehensive in this discipline with thyroid disease being an important element of undergraduate medical student teaching, a significant component of the training curriculum for Specialist Registrars and a regular topic for review and discussion at meetings sponsored by the Society for Endocrinology. Many Hospital Trusts and all General Practices hold registers of patients with thyroid disease to allow for efficient monitoring and where appropriate screening for thyroid disease. The Clinical Committee of the Society for Endocrinology and the British Thyroid Association recommend the use of sensitive and specific blood tests as the only method for the precise diagnosis of thyroid dysfunction and for the monitoring of treatment with approved medications. Patients with normal thyroid function tests should not be exposed to inappropriate treatment or medications of unproven value or potentially harmful consequences. The UK endocrinology community (patients and carers) is particularly fortunate in having the support of a very active patient support group (British Thyroid Foundation). The Clinical Committee of the Society for Endocrinology and the British Thyroid Association are committed to increasing the public awareness of the prevalence of thyroid disease and its appropriate management.

Society for Endocrinology
British Thyroid Association