

# Wondrous Roots, Inc.

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*“...and if the root be holy, so are the branches...”*

## Iodine Deficiency & Its Many Devastating Effects on Health Rebecca Roentsch Montrone, BS

On Friday evening, July 14, I enjoyed the privilege of being part of *Wine, Women & Wellness*, a proactive women’s health event hosted by Dr. Rich and Kelly Gorsuch of *The Cheshire Wellness Center* on Roxbury Street. They had asked me what topic I would like to present in a 20-minute talk, and, as I said at the event, it took me less than 20 seconds to decide.

This is because in practice I see people suffering the effects of iodine deficiency every single day. A large percentage of people I see have a thyroid disorder of one kind or another; certainly more than do not. Hormonal health conditions – whether it be heavy periods, fibrocystic breast disease, fibroids, polycystic ovarian syndrome, infertility, or hormonal cancers such as breast, ovarian, endometrial, prostate – are all on the rise.

Iodine deficiency is strongly associated with all of these problems. Back in 2007-08, I started testing all of my clients for iodine sufficiency using a 24-hour urinary excretion test. After some 20 tests all came back “insufficient,” I had the opportunity to ask Dr. David Brownstein, author of *Iodine: Why You Need It – Why You Can’t Live Without It*, all of my pressing questions. First, I asked him what percentage in his many years of practice testing patients for iodine sufficiency were actually sufficient. He laughed under his breath and said, “Maybe two-to-three percent.” I offered, “Then I wonder why we actually bother testing...” and he agreed.

Wait a minute. Why is our population so iodine *deficient*?

To begin with, our soils are deficient. Then, In the 1960s iodine was used as a dough conditioner in commercial bread. In the 1980s iodine was replaced by bromine, a toxin that fills up the places iodine should occupy in the body. So. Although we are all familiar with iodized salt, most of us didn’t know we were getting iodine in our daily commercially baked foods. Further, iodine from bread was much better absorbed than that in iodized salt. When the iodine was displaced by bromine, not only were we not

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getting iodine automatically in our food, but the bromine toxin took residence as a “squatter” in the tissues of our body that need iodine.

Iodine nourishes the thyroid gland. The thyroid gland is supposed to be saturated with iodine. When a person sees his or her healthcare provider for routine testing, if thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) is elevated, the standard of care is a prescription for levothyroxine. Thyroid isn't making enough hormone? Just add synthetic hormone, and, *Voila!*

Ah... if were it were only so easy! Did you know that breast tissue concentrates more iodine than the thyroid does? Did you know iodine metabolizes estrogen down to its most benign, non-cancer-causing form and then locks THAT form into all of the estrogen receptors, blocking access to the toxic, cancer-causing forms?

I have seen heavy periods and fibrocystic breasts clear in a matter of a month using supplemental iodine/potassium iodide. This same “Lugol’s Solution” has been documented to resolve breast cancers at a dose of 50 mg daily in the absence of any other treatment. When I asked Dr. Brownstein how to know how much to use with someone, he answered, “I just keep increasing until the light bulb goes on.” He takes six times the daily dose I do. He interjected, “*UNLESS* a woman has breast cancer; then you go straight to 50 mg.”

Why hasn't your doctor told you about the importance of iodine?

First, this is a missing part of medical education, and then there are the complexities working with patients who want to use iodine. When a person starts replenishing iodine, TSH levels can soar for many months, because TSH has another function, and that is transporting iodine into the thyroid gland. However, the person will be feeling much better, and any other tested thyroid numbers will be good. It is much easier to say to a patient, “Your numbers are great; you're fine!” But, you whimper... “I'm still cold, bald, constipated, exhausted, and I can't remember anything!”

There is also what David Brownstein has coined “Iodophobia.” One of the big “scares” is, for example, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, which is an autoimmune attack on the thyroid gland. The fear is that using iodine will add “fuel to the fire.” The answer to that problem, actually, is selenium. So the two work together and simply need to be used together.

Iodine – you need it, and you can't live without it!