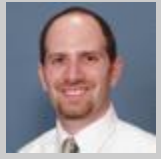


An Interview With Dr. David Brownstein On Iodine and Thyroid Health



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Today's post includes a very special guest, Dr. David Brownstein. Dr. Brownstein is author of many different books, including "Iodine, Why You Need It, Why You Can't Live Without It" and "Overcoming Thyroid Disorders". During this interview Dr. Brownstein is going to discuss the importance of iodine, and how it can help people with thyroid and autoimmune thyroid disorders.

Dr. Eric: How are you doing today Dr. Brownstein?

Dr. Brownstein: I am doing great and thanks for having me here.

Dr. Eric: I really have been looking forward to this interview, as I enjoyed attending your webinar on Overcoming Thyroid Disorders, and I'm sure you're going to share some great information here that will benefit people with both hypothyroid and hyperthyroid conditions, including autoimmune thyroid disorders such as Graves' Disease and Hashimoto's Thyroiditis.

When I was diagnosed with Graves' Disease I'm pretty sure iodine was very important in helping to restore my health back to normal, yet many medical doctors advise people with hyperthyroid conditions to avoid iodine. Why is this so?

Dr. Brownstein: Most doctors are under the impression that iodine is toxic to the thyroid gland. They believe that iodine will precipitate a thyroid problem or if one already has a thyroid problem, make it worse. This just isn't true. The NHANES and other data clearly show iodine level have been falling over the last 30-40 years and thyroid illnesses have been increasing. If iodine were a toxic agent to the thyroid, we would see iodine levels falling during this time period, not rising. That goes for hypothyroidism and autoimmune thyroid disorders such as Graves' and Hashimoto's disease.

Dr. Eric: There seems to be a great deal of controversy as to whether people with Hashimoto's Thyroiditis should supplement with iodine, even if they have a deficiency. I admittedly have been guilty of this as well, as I always was taught that people with Hashimoto's Thyroiditis should avoid iodine because it will worsen their condition. When I attended your seminar you told the audience you usually have had no problems giving your patients who have Hashimoto's Thyroiditis iodine supplementation. Can you please elaborate on this?

Dr. Brownstein: Animal studies show that you cannot cause Hashimoto's disease in an animal unless they are iodine deficient and they are given a goitrogen. That is what is happening to our human population; we are iodine deficient and we are exposed to an ever-increasing amount of goitrogens like bromide and fluoride.

Dr. Eric: If it's fine for people with Hashimoto's Thyroiditis to take iodine, then why do some people feel bad when supplementing with iodine?

Dr. Brownstein: Iodine can cause a detoxification reaction whereby the body releases bromide. I believe this is where many of the adverse effects are coming from. I explain this in my books. My experience has clearly shown that vast majority of patients with autoimmune thyroid disorders improve with iodine when it is used as part of a holistic treatment regimen.

Do some react negatively to iodine? Yes. Iodine is not for everyone, but, my clinical experience has clearly shown adverse effects to iodine are rare when it is used appropriately.

Dr. Eric: So then this should also be the case with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease too, as while most of my patients with hyperthyroid conditions do fine supplementing with iodine, I have had a few who were deficient in iodine, yet didn't feel great when first supplementing with it.

Dr. Brownstein: Absolutely. The entire country is in a state of iodine decline.

Dr. Eric: What are some of the reasons why many people are iodine deficient?

Dr. Brownstein: The number one reason is eating a poor diet full of refined flour-containing products such as bread, pasta, and cereal. The bromide in food and drink (many soda products contain it) competitively inhibit iodine and cause the body to excrete iodine. The second reason is that our exposure to bromine from multiple non-food sources is enormous. It is used as a fire retardant in clothing, computers, furniture, automobiles and other consumer items. Every one of the nearly 1,000 patients that I have tested for bromine has tested positive for high levels.

Dr. Eric: But why can't most people obtain all of the iodine they need by eating iodine-rich foods and consuming iodized salt?

Dr. Brownstein: In my book I showed that iodine is poorly absorbed from iodized salt. Couple in our increasing exposure to goitrogens and we are ripe for major health problems.

Dr. Eric: When I supplemented with iodine my TSH actually went well above the reference range after a few months, yet all of my other labs were fine and I felt pretty good. Eventually it did fall back within the normal range, but I'm sure some people with hyperthyroidism and Graves' Disease would be concerned about this. Is there any cause for concern if someone with hyperthyroidism supplements with iodine and the TSH goes higher than the reference range?

Dr. Brownstein: The elevation of TSH is a normal and expected response to iodine supplementation as the TSH stimulates NIS—the transport molecule for iodine. Within 6-12 months TSH levels decline as optimal iodine levels are restored intra-cellularly.

Dr. Eric: We both recommend the iodine loading test to determine whether someone has an iodine deficiency. But how can someone with a thyroid or autoimmune thyroid disorder specifically know how much iodine they need to take? Is this something they can do on their own, or do you recommend them speaking a doctor before supplementing with iodine?

Dr. Brownstein: I recommend working with a health care practitioner who is knowledgeable about iodine and thyroid disorders. I also suggest having your levels tested before and during supplementation. The iodine loading test is the best test we have for this.

Dr. Eric: In your book "Overcoming Thyroid Disorders", you estimate that up to 40% of the population may be suffering from a thyroid disorder. Can this be related to many people being deficient in iodine?

Dr. Brownstein: Absolutely. Iodine deficiency coupled with the increasing exposure to toxins like bromide and fluoride are negatively affecting the thyroid gland.

Dr. Eric: What are some of the other factors which can cause or contribute to the high incidence of thyroid conditions?

Dr. Brownstein: Nutrient deficiencies such as B-vitamins, vitamin A and mineral deficiencies can all contribute to thyroid problems. Furthermore, many commonly used drugs such as birth control pills or beta blockers also inhibit normal thyroid function. My book covers more items.

Dr. Eric: Dr. Brownstein, I'd like to thank you for taking the time for this interview. I highly recommend for anyone with a thyroid or autoimmune thyroid condition to get your books on Iodine and Overcoming Thyroid Disorders I

mentioned earlier. Plus you have some other great books, such as “The Soy Deception” and “The Guide To A Gluten-Free Diet”. You also have a blog which I highly recommend everyone visiting. Can you tell everyone where they can get some of your books and DVDs, and check out your blog?

Dr. Brownstein: My website is: www.drbrownstein.com.

Well thank you again Dr. Brownstein for taking the time for this interview, as I’m sure many people will find this information to be extremely valuable, and will also look forward to reading your blog and hopefully some of your books.

Thanks for having me, Dr. Eric.