



Basal Body Temperature Thyroid Assessment and Monitoring

Basal body temperature (BBT) is used to monitor fluctuations in a woman's monthly cycle and to determine how well the thyroid is working. Historically, one of the most consistent ways of assessing one's thyroid function is by checking body temperature because this reflects the thyroid's influence on the body's metabolic rate.¹

A basal body temperature that is consistently less than 97.8° F over a period of one month may indicate low thyroid function. Other tests, primarily blood tests, have been developed to check thyroid function and are also important to conduct. However, these values may come back normal even though symptoms of hypothyroidism are present. We call this Sub-Clinical Hypothyroidism.

Signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism include any of the following: dry or thinning hair, fatigue, dry skin, short nails with white spots, poor circulation with cold hands and feet, shivering spells, fluid retention, difficulty losing weight, slow digestion, constipation, mental tiredness, depression, poor memory, habitual headache that is usually worse in the morning, ringing in the ears, disturbed sleep, achy, stiff joints, low/high blood pressure and a slow heart rate. In measuring your BBT you should consider if you have any of the above symptoms.

MEASURING YOUR BASAL BODY TEMPERATURE

Thyroid Testing

Shake down the thermometer below 95°F and place it beside the bed before going to sleep.

1. First thing in the morning.
2. Place a mercury style thermometer under the arm pit. The less movement you make, the more accurate the reading.
 - If you only have a digital thermometer. Do all the instructs and place it under your arm pit or month.
3. After 10 minutes record the reading.
4. Do these 5 consecutive days.

Normal temperature is between 97.8 and 98.2.

If consistently **less than 97.8°** F over a period of 5 days may indicate low thyroid function.

Above 98.2 may suggested hyperthyroid.

[For women who are menstruating, make day 1 the beginning of your menses. So, if you know where you are in your cycle, you can start on that day i.e., if you are on day 15 of your cycle, you would put your first day's reading under day 15. Your body goes up during ovulation. If you do not know where you are in your cycle, record your basal body temperature on a separate piece of paper until you begin your menses and then fill in the chart.

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Basal Body Temperature AM															

Reference

1. Hypothyroidism-The Unsuspected Illness, B. Barnes & L. Galton, 1976.