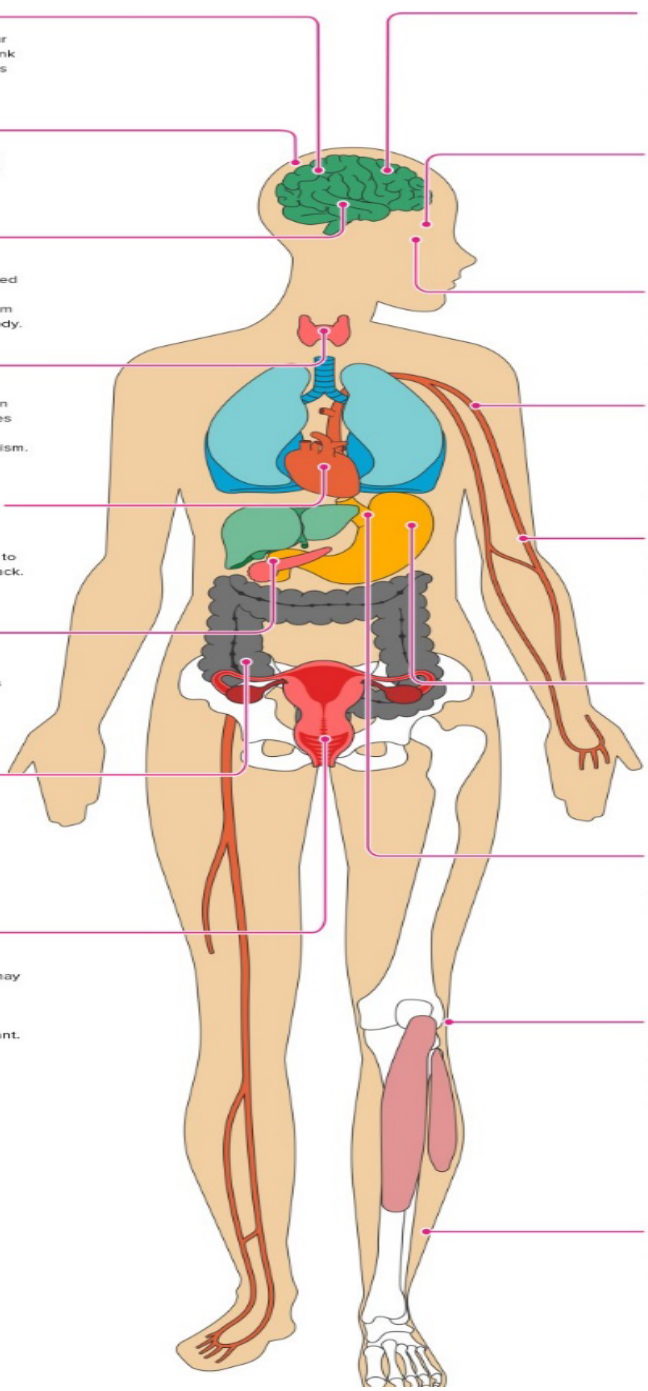
The Effects of Hypothyroidism on the Body

The thyroid is the butterfly-shaped gland in your neck. The gland produces hormones that regulate your body's energy use along with many other important functions. Hypothyroidism occurs when your thyroid is under-active or if your thyroid is surgically removed. When thyroid hormone production drops, your body's processes slow down and change. Hypothyroidism can affect many functions in your body



brain fog
Hypothyroidism can affect your memory and your ability to think clearly. This mental fuzziness is sometimes called "brain fog."

thinning hair
A lack of thyroid hormone can cause you to lose hair on your scalp, face, and body.

peripheral neuropathy
Hypothyroidism that isn't treated can interfere with how the nerves send signals to and from your brain, spinal cord, and body.

goiter
A goiter is an abnormally enlarged thyroid gland that can happen in people with diseases like Hashimoto thyroiditis, a common cause of hypothyroidism.

heart attack risk
Hypothyroidism may increase cholesterol levels and narrow arteries. This could contribute to an increased risk for heart attack.

gallstones
Hypothyroidism may increase your risk for gallstones, hard pieces made up of substances like cholesterol or bile that form in your gallbladder.

constipation
Slowed movement of food through your intestines can back up stool, making you constipated.

menstrual changes
Women with hypothyroidism may have irregular periods and changes in menstrual flow. Fertility can be affected too, making it harder to get pregnant.

mental health issues
Low thyroid hormone levels can contribute to depression and sadness.

eyebrow thinning
Hypothyroidism can make you lose eyebrow hair. The hair loss usually starts at the outer edges of your brows.

jaundice
Infants born with hypothyroidism may have jaundice, the yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes.

high blood pressure
Low thyroid hormone levels can increase blood pressure through interactions with the blood vessels and circulatory system.

slow metabolism
Too little thyroid hormone slows the body's metabolism, which can lead to weight gain.

stomach bloating
A lack of thyroid hormone slows the movement of food through your digestive tract, which can leave your belly bloated.

heartburn
Hypothyroidism slows digestion. This can lead to heartburn and other gastrointestinal issues.

dry skin
Low thyroid hormone levels directly affect the skin. This can cause a variety of changes, including dryness, thickening, and scaling.

weakness
Low thyroid hormone production can leave your muscles weak, achy, or stiff.

Jason Baker MD; The Effects of Hypothyroidism in the Body; https://www.healthline.com/health/hypothyroidism/effects-of-hypothyroidism#1; Accessed June, 2020

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