

MEDIA RELEASE

May 2022

'BEFORE YOU PLAN A FAMILY, HOW IS YOUR THYROID HEALTH?'

May is the time of the year for the Australian Thyroid Foundation's (ATF) **Thyroid Awareness Month**.

Recent research from **The Lancet – March 2022** emphasises the consequences and risks of an inadequate amount of thyroid hormone at conception, during pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding.

'Without an adequate amount of thyroid hormone mothers can be exposed to hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, including gestational hypertension and preeclampsia or eclampsia, **which affect around 10% of pregnant women and are the leading causes of maternal and neonatal mortality worldwide**. Mothers who suffer from hypertensive disorders during pregnancy are at increased risk of long-term cardiovascular consequences and hypertensive disorders in subsequent pregnancies. Evidence also indicates a risk of reduced cognitive ability to their offspring.

Knowing if you are genetically predisposed to Hashimoto's or Graves' Diseases, which are both thyroid autoimmune disorders is important to be aware of, to ensure all appropriate tests are ordered. Autoimmune disorders may predispose mothers to a thyroid problem during pregnancy, says **Professor Creswell Eastman, ATF Principal Medical Advisor.**

'Unnecessary risks to a pregnancy and the mother's health during pregnancy and ongoing is something that can be avoided and prevented. Raising awareness and ensuring thyroid tests are ordered by GP's, when couples are planning a family and when the pregnancy is confirmed are both essential.

As statistics show **over 1 million Australians** are living with an undiagnosed thyroid disorder, awareness and testing can prevent unwarranted outcomes for mothers and their babies, says **ATF CEO Beverley Garside.**

Pregnancy preparation and the mother's health during pregnancy is something that is extremely important for all families. The ATF want to ensure the best outcomes for both mothers and babies are possible through awareness and education.



THE AUSTRALIAN
THYROID
FOUNDATION LTD

25th
Anniversary

25 Years of Support, Education, Awareness and Advocacy

For more information:

References: Alexander EK et al., "2017 Guidelines of American Thyroid Association for diagnosis and management of thyroid disorders in pregnancy and the postpartum". *Thyroid* Volume 27:315-389. Eastman CJ and Blumenthal N. "Gestational Subclinical Hypothyroidism", Chapter 7, *In Thyroid Diseases in Pregnancy* Edited by F Azizi, Springer Books 2022

www.health.nsw.gov.au/kidsfamilies/MCFhealth/maternity/Pages/iodine-supplements-factsheet.

References: Toloza F et al 2022: "Association between maternal thyroid function and risk of gestational hypertension and pre-eclampsia: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet* March 4, 2022
Stagnaro-Green A 2022. Commentary: "Thyroid disease in pregnancy: a touch of Clarity". *Thyroid*, Vol 32 (4) 2022.
Chen J, Zhu J, Huang X, Zhao S, Xiang H, Zhou P, Zhou T, Xu Z 2022 "Subclinical hypothyroidism with negative for thyroid peroxidase antibodies in pregnancy: Intellectual development of offspring". *Thyroid* 32:449-458.

More information is available on the ATF website: <https://www.thyroidfoundation.org.au/Pregnancy-&-Your-Thyroid-Health/>

About the Australian Thyroid Foundation

The ATF has been supporting and educating its members and the general public about the importance of Good Thyroid Health for **over 25 years!** The ATF is very proud to have reached this milestone and we look forward to continuing to reach out to future generations with support, education, advocacy and awareness.

For all media enquiries, please contact:

Beverley Garside
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Thyroid Foundation
M: 0416 269 982 | E: beverley@thyroidfoundation.org.au

Mailing Address: PO Box 7161 Norwest NSW 2153

Mob: (+61) 447 834 724 **Email:** info@thyroidfoundation.org.au **Web:** www.thyroidfoundation.org.au

ABN: 28 080 557 642