

Mayo Clinic Minute: How the thyroid affects the heart

Video	Audio
Graphic	The thyroid is a small butterfly-shaped gland in the front of the neck. It produces a hormone called thyroxine or T4 that controls virtually every organ system in the body.
Robert Smallridge, M.D. Endocrinology Mayo Clinic	“It can malfunction either to make too much thyroid hormone – we call that hyperthyroidism. But much more commonly, it can become underactive, and that’s a condition called hypothyroidism.”
	Dr. Robert Smallridge says when thyroid levels are unbalanced, it can affect cardiovascular functions.
	“If someone has low levels of thyroid hormone, the cholesterol level goes up. The cholesterol can then have an adverse effect on the heart and the peripheral vascular system, and it can lead to an increased risk of heart disease and strokes.”
Graphic	Hyperthyroidism, on the other hand, can increase the risk of atrial fibrillation.
	The good news is that thyroid hormone abnormalities can be managed.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Jason Howland.