



BASAL BODY TEMPERATURE TO ASSESS THYROID FUNCTION

Basal Body Temperature (BBT) is the temperature of the body after at least 15 minutes of rest. It's usually measured right after waking up and before any physical activity. BBT is one indicator of the activity level of the thyroid gland. The hormone thyroxine increases metabolic rate, which increases basal body temperature.

Since body temperature often rises overnight, you can wake up warmer than normal by morning. If your evening body temperature runs low and you therefore go to bed with pajamas, socks or extra blankets, please make an adjustment to get accurate testing: take a hot shower or bath just before bed OR take a hot water bottle to bed (NOT a heating pad that might get left on). Then use fewer nightclothes and blankets, so you'll wake up at a more normal temperature. A normal morning basal temperature is 97.8° – 98.2 °F. Below 97.6 °F indicates possible hypothyroidism. Below 97 °F, pronounced fatigue and other classic symptoms of low thyroid are common. Take your temperature and record it every morning for at least one week. Also record how you feel, in general, each day.

Menstruating women should include the second and third days of their period within the week of temperature-taking. This is because the body temperature is affected by changes in progesterone levels, and it has been found that these two days are the most accurate for assessing thyroid function by the BBT method.

Body movement causes body temperature to rise, so for the BBT to be reliable, follow the instructions below CAREFULLY.

A. A **mercury thermometer** is preferable since they're more accurate than digital.

1. Shake it down to at least 96° F (35.5° C) the night before and place it within easy arm's reach at the bedside.
2. Immediately upon awakening, and before getting out of bed, place the thermometer in your armpit with the bulb deep in the armpit and quietly lie still for 10 minutes. To avoid possible injury in the event you should fall back asleep and roll over, place the thermometer so it's angled downward, rather than sticking straight out from the armpit.
3. After 10 minutes, ACCURATELY read and record the temperature.

B. A **digital thermometer** can work if it's accurate. Confirm if possible with more than one thermometer.

1. The night before, place the thermometer within easy arm's reach at the bedside.
2. Immediately upon awakening and before getting out of bed, place the still turned-off thermometer probe in your armpit with the tip deep in the armpit. DO NOT turn it on. Quietly lie still for 10 minutes. Digital thermometers take a reading in a minute or less, and this isn't enough time for the probe to reach an accurate temperature for basal temperature readings.
3. After 10 minutes, turn the thermometer on, remembering to move gently and lie still. Once it beeps, read it and record it.

Men/Women: current age _____ Women: age at menopause _____ OR date of your last period _____

DATE	°F	NOTE ANY SYMPTOMS AND HOW YOU FELT TODAY

Name _____ Date _____