



World Thyroid Day - 2016

The European Thyroid Association (ETA) (www.eurothyroid.com) in collaboration with the American Thyroid Association (ATA) (www.thyroid.org), the Asia & Oceania Thyroid Association (www.aothyroid.org) and the Latin American Thyroid Society (www.lats.org) are this year commemorating the 9th Annual World Thyroid Day (WTD), May 25, 2016. Established in 2008, the goal of WTD is to substantially promote awareness about thyroid diseases.

Thyroid disease has in our time become a major public health concern worldwide, the multiple risks to thyroid function including not only individuals' genetic background but also such environmental hazards as inadequate iodine intake, polychlorinated biphenyls, radiation exposure from nuclear fallout and medical radiation, perchlorate in rocket fuel, cigarette smoking and others. Thus, prevention but also timely diagnosis and treatment constitute the best way in which we can all, patients and clinicians alike, substantially alleviate the global burden of thyroid disorders.

Some Key Facts:

- Hashimoto's thyroiditis is the most common cause of an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism). In Europe and the United States it variably affects 2-4 percent of the population, while it occurs more often in women than in men.
- Congenital hypothyroidism: 1 per 3,000 - 4,000 newborns are affected by congenital hypothyroidism in North America, Europe, Japan and Australia, (Genetics Home Reference website).
- Thyroid cancer is the 16th most common cancer worldwide (the 8th among women): for example, in 2013, there were an estimated 637,115 people living with thyroid cancer in the US (SEER Stat Fact Sheets).

- The incidence rate of thyroid cancer has increased by at least 150% since 1970.

This is a Day that essentially belongs to the people—to thyroid patients, pregnant women, those children exposed to inadequate iodine intake, in a word, to all who suffer from thyroid ailments and deserve a better standard of care, as well as to all those who devotedly tend to patients with thyroid disease. Because a well-functioning thyroid gland greatly enhances quality of life, it is, as mentioned above, the aim of WTD to conserve thyroid wellness by disseminating knowledge about thyroid diseases while stressing the vital need for their prevention, detection and treatment.

This year on May 25th, as every year, a large number of open door events and media activities will take place and press releases will be issued throughout Europe and in many parts of the world specifically to increase awareness about means of prevention—which can, throughout the year, be further communicated via regular educational programs—along with recognition of the need for greater availability of grants to support much-needed research.

WTD is a Day of both action and the call to action for the benefit of thyroid patients everywhere.

The ETA, a globally recognized leading association dedicated to thyroid care, is proud to once again celebrate WTD and supports every initiative for its promotion and development. As each year at this time, all members are encouraged to send to the secretariat reports and photos showcasing the various WTD activities so that they may be featured in the next issue of our Newsletter.

[Joining forces for our Thyroid Patients!](#)

Leonidas Duntas

On behalf of the
Public Health Board

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