

Focus on hyperthyroidism

Hyperthyroidism is a condition in which the thyroid gland is overactive and makes excessive amounts of thyroid hormone. The thyroid gland is an organ located in the front of your neck which releases hormones that control your metabolism (the way your body uses energy), breathing, heart rate, nervous system, weight, body temperature and many other functions in the body. When the thyroid gland is overactive (hyperthyroidism), the body's processes speed up and you may experience nervousness, anxiety, rapid heartbeat, hand tremor, excessive sweating, weight loss, and sleep problems, among other symptoms.

The signs and symptoms of hyperthyroidism

The symptoms of hyperthyroidism include the following:

- Fatigue or muscle weakness
- Hand tremors
- Mood swings
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Rapid heartbeat
- Heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat
- Skin dryness
- Trouble sleeping
- Weight loss
- Increased frequency of bowel movements
- Light periods or skipping periods.

Possible causes of hyperthyroidism

A number of conditions, including Graves' disease, toxic adenoma, Plummer's disease (toxic multinodular goitre) and thyroiditis, can cause hyperthyroidism.

Graves' disease

Normally, your immune system uses antibodies to help protect against viruses, bacteria and other foreign substances that invade your body. In Graves' disease, antibodies mistakenly attack your thyroid and occasionally attack the tissue behind your eyes (Graves' ophthalmopathy).

Signs and symptoms of Graves' ophthalmopathy include:

- Protruding eyeballs
- Red or swollen eyes
- Excessive tearing or discomfort in one or both eyes
- Light sensitivity, blurry or double vision, inflammation, or reduced eye movement
- Hyperfunctioning thyroid nodules (toxic adenoma, toxic multinodular goitre, Plummer's disease).



This form of hyperthyroidism occurs when one or more adenomas of your thyroid produce too much T-4. An adenoma is a part of the gland that has walled itself off from the rest of the gland, forming noncancerous (benign) lumps that may cause an enlargement of the thyroid.

Thyroiditis

Sometimes your thyroid gland can become inflamed for unknown reasons. The inflammation can cause excess thyroid hormone stored in the gland to leak into your bloodstream.

How to register on the chronic programme

Once you have been diagnosed with hyperthyroidism, please ask your doctor to contact our Chronic Medicine Department on **0860 11 78 59** to register you on the Chronic Medicine Management Programme.

The chronic medicine consultant will liaise with your doctor regarding your treatment. Once the diagnostic criteria have been met and blood results have been submitted, the treatment will be approved. We will let you know whether the treatment falls within the Momentum Medical Scheme formulary or if you will need to pay a co-payment.

Once you receive authorisation, you can take your prescription to your designated service provider to get your medication, and the claim can be submitted. A designated service provider (DSP) is a healthcare provider (doctor, pharmacist, hospital, etc) that is a medical scheme's first choice when its members require diagnosis, treatment or care for a Prescribed Minimum Benefit condition. If you voluntarily choose not to use the DSP and choose to rather use a different hospital, doctor or pharmacy, we may charge a co-payment.

The authorisation usually expires after 12 months. If there is no change in the medicine you need to take, your doctor or pharmacist can contact us on **0860 11 78 59** to renew the authorisation. The same process applies when there are any changes or additions to your authorisation.

For more on your chronic benefits and where to obtain chronic medicine and treatment, [click here](#).

Hospitalisation

If you need to be hospitalised for hyperthyroidism complications, log in to the **Momentum App**, contact us via the web chat facility on momentummedicalscheme.co.za, email us at preauthorisation@momentumhealth.co.za, send us a WhatsApp message or call us on **0860 11 78 59** to request pre-authorisation. We will allocate a case manager to follow up regarding your hospital stay.

Treatment plan

Once you are registered on the programme, you will have access to a treatment plan, which may include cover for tests, doctors' visits or other benefits considered medically necessary by your doctor – these will be reviewed by our clinical team to ensure appropriateness.



Compliance

You need to:

- obtain your chronic medication on a monthly basis,
- make sure that you take your medication according to the dosage and quantity prescribed by your doctor, and
- make sure that you do not miss a dose - this is not only important for compliance, but it can have serious implications for your health and wellbeing.

Please make sure your claims have the appropriate ICD-10 code

It is important for all claims to include the appropriate ICD-10 codes (diagnostic codes), so we can identify the claim correctly and pay it from the Chronic Benefit.

We may pay claims from your Day-to-day Benefits if:

- the claims are submitted without the relevant ICD-10 codes.
- you have exceeded the frequency limit on consultations or tests.
- treatment is not clinically appropriate.

Contact us

You can contact us via the web chat facility on momentummedicalscheme.co.za, email us at member@momentumhealth.co.za, send us a WhatsApp message or call us on **0860 11 78 59**.

Glossary of terms

Designated service providers: Momentum Medical Scheme uses a network of designated service providers, such as Associated GPs and Specialists, as well as State facilities, depending on the circumstances, to diagnose and treat our members for the Prescribed Minimum Benefits.

A **formulary** is a list of medicines covered on your option, from which a doctor can prescribe the appropriate medication for your chronic condition.

ICD-10 is the diagnosis code.

Prescribed Minimum Benefits is a list of benefits for which all medical schemes in South Africa have to provide cover in terms of the Medical Schemes Act 131 of 1998 and the Regulations thereto. In order to access these benefits:

- Your medical condition must qualify for cover and be part of the defined list of Prescribed Minimum Benefit conditions.
- The treatment needed must match the treatments in the defined benefits.
- You must use the Scheme's Designated Service Providers. See the definition of Designated Service Providers on page 2 for more information.

If you voluntarily choose to use non-designated service providers, the Scheme will pay benefits up to the Momentum Medical Scheme Rate and relevant co-payments will apply. If you use non-designated



service providers in cases of an emergency medical condition, it is deemed involuntary and co-payments are therefore waived.

If your medical condition and treatment do not meet the above criteria to access these benefits, we will pay according to the benefits on your chosen benefit option.