



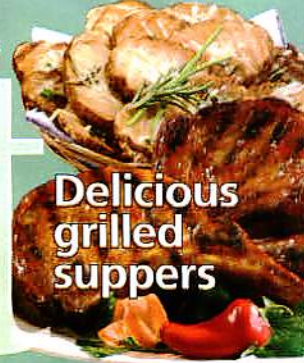
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"HOW I CONQUERED HYPOTHYROIDISM!"

Wife, mother and actress **Melora Hardin, 41**, reveals how she outsmarted the glandular slowdown that was sapping her health and energy

Actress Melora Hardin has a lot to juggle—shuffling her two daughters (Rory, 7, and Piper, 4) to and from school every day, promoting her new movie, *17 Again*, and squeezing in the occasional night on the town with her husband of 12 years, Gildart Jackson. With such a jam-packed schedule, the busy mom doesn't have time to be sidelined by fatigue, weight gain or brain fog. But those are the symptoms that Melora was facing when she was diagnosed with hypothyroidism, a glandular condition that affects at least 27 million women. Fortunately, it didn't take long for her to find a way to dodge those setbacks. "I decided to work on my thyroid naturally instead of taking [the drug] Synthroid," Melora shares in a chat with *First*. "It's something that Western medicine says can't be done, but really it can. With food, exercise and supplements, I've actually gotten it completely under control, according to my blood tests. That's very exciting."

Natural thyroid hormones can outperform synthetics

Bypassing Synthroid (a synthetic version of the hormone *thyroxine*, or T4) in favor of a natural thyroid healer is the way to health for many hypothyroid patients, agrees Sanford Siegal, D.O., M.D., author of *Is Your Thyroid Making You Fat?* (Grand Central Publishing). He explains that some women have trouble converting the T4 in Synthroid into *triiodothyronine*, or T3. That's problematic because T3 is four times more potent at regulating metabolism and energy. Case in

point: In a 1999 study in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, natural hormone products (similar to Armour Thyroid, a pig-derived hormone that Dr. Siegal prescribes to some patients) were found to be effective at remedying thyroid-related mood disturbances. Adds Dr. Siegal, "Some natural products contain both T4 and T3—that's why those products can deliver better results."

Melora's natural Rx of choice is Standard Process, a line of nutritional supplements that can be obtained through a health practitioner. "I take a whole bunch of that stuff," she says. The line includes a variety of products aimed at supporting the thyroid, including Thythropin PMG (a bovine thyroid extract designed to encourage production of T4 and T3 within glandular cells) and the healing nutrients iodine and selenium.

Dietary tweaks can reverse subclinical symptoms

For the 25 percent of us who have a technically healthy—but still slightly underactive—gland, a prescription for natural hormones may not be required. Instead, increasing intake of iodine can go a long way in restoring health, maintains Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* (Avery, 2007). "This trace mineral is needed to synthesize T4 and T3. Since it's these hormones that regulate energy and metabolism, even a minor iodine deficiency can trigger classic hypothyroid symptoms like sluggishness and weight

gain." To alleviate these symptoms, Dr. Teitelbaum recommends getting at least 150 mcg of iodine daily from food sources like ¼ cup of kelp or seaweed, four servings of dairy or a supplement like Now Kelp 150 mcg (\$3.50 for 200 tablets, at iHerb.com).

Melora also follows a thyroid-loving food formula that includes a serving of protein at every meal. "For breakfast, I'll have two eggs with a piece of whole-grain toast," says the Houston, Texas, native. "And lunch is usually a salad with a scoop of grilled salmon or chicken on it. Dinner is some kind of meat and vegetables and brown rice, or some fish and a salad." Dr. Teitelbaum explains that frequent doses of protein provide the thyroid with a steady supply of tyrosine, an amino acid needed to produce the gland-fueling hormones T4 and T3. "And opting for fish or eggs can deliver even more thyroid-revving benefits because those are excellent sources of selenium, a *micro mineral* that helps the body convert T4 into T3, the most active thyroid hormone."



J Squared Photography/Corbis Outline. Text: Bonnie Sieglar and Jennifer Joseph.