

Broda-Barnes Test for Thyroid Function

Measuring an person's temperature before rising in the morning gives a good indication of thyroid function.

In the 1940s, an American Doctor called Broda-Barnes became interested in studying the thyroid gland. He quickly concluded that conventional blood tests for thyroid function are often inadequate and unable to detect sub-clinical hypothyroid. He discovered that measuring an individual's temperature before rising in the morning, gave an exceptionally good indication of thyroid function.

The theory behind this test is that, in the absence of an infection, the body's temperature is essentially determined by thyroid function. Low thyroid function is usually reflected in a low body temperature.

Doing the Test at Home

- Use an old-fashioned mercury or digital mouth thermometer.
- Place it by your bed at night
- Take your temperature for 2-4 weeks
- If you are having periods, reading will be most accurate on days 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 of your cycle (i.e. when you are menstruating) as a woman's body temperature fluctuates through her cycle.
- When you wake, lie still in bed, and place the thermometer in your mouth for ten minutes or until it beeps. Note down the result in the table below.
- If your average temperature over the period is less than 36.6°C then it is likely that your thyroid may need some extra support.

N.B. If you have been drinking alcohol, your basal temperature will be lowered; this will not give an accurate picture your true temperature.

