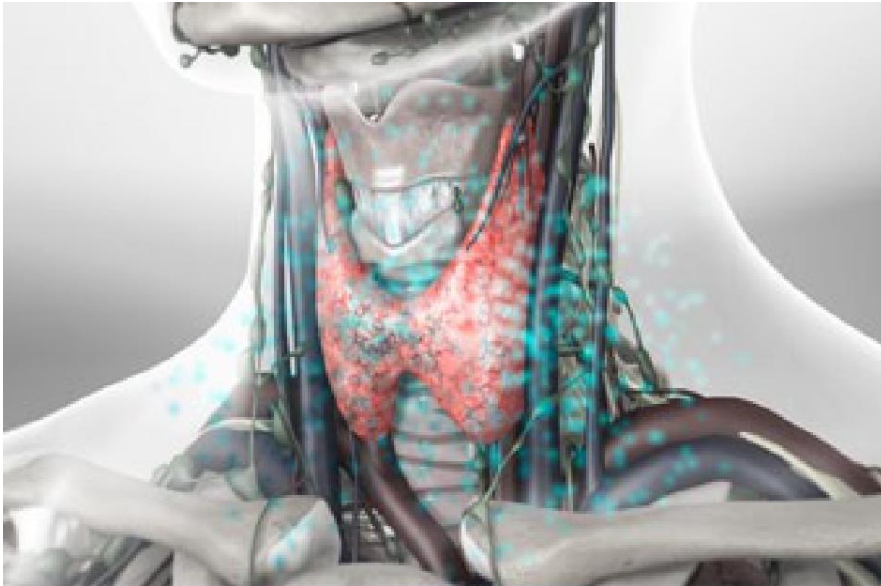




## Graves' Disease



### Overview

This is a disorder of the immune system. It affects the thyroid. That's a hormone-producing gland in your neck. Your thyroid makes hormones that help control many activities in your body. Graves' disease causes your thyroid to make more thyroid hormone than your body needs. We call that "hyperthyroidism."

### Causes

Graves' disease is caused by a malfunction in your body's immune system. That's the system that fights infection. With Graves' disease, your immune system stimulates cells in your thyroid to produce and release extra hormones. We don't know why this happens.

### Symptoms

Graves' disease can cause a wide range of symptoms. These can include things like anxiety, moodiness and fatigue. Your heart may beat rapidly and your hands may shake. You may have an increased appetite and weight loss. Many people with this disease have eye problems, too. Your eyes may bulge, and they may be painful and teary. You may have double vision. Ask your doctor for a full list of symptoms.

### Treatment

Graves' disease is most often treated with radioactive iodine, which destroys the overactive cells in your thyroid. It can also be treated with other medications and with surgery. Your healthcare provider will create a plan that's right for you.

