



THYROID TRIAL

NEWSLETTER 2
APRIL 2014



TRUST is a research project from five European universities investigating current treatment practices for people who suffer from a mildly underactive thyroid gland. The study is entitled Thyroid Hormone Replacement for Subclinical Hypo-Thyroidism Trial (TRUST). Experts in ageing, thyroid problems and vascular disease from around Europe, work together in the TRUST project: Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing and Leiden University Medical Centre, the Netherlands; Universität Bern, Switzerland; University College Cork, Ireland; University of Glasgow, Scotland.

BACKGROUND

Subclinical hypothyroidism means that the thyroid gland, which is found in your neck, may not be producing the right amount of thyroid hormones that your body needs to do its job well. Thyroid hormones are important as they help regulate different parts of the body, including the circulation, heart, muscle and brain. A mildly underactive thyroid, a condition also known as subclinical hypothyroidism affects around one in six people over the age of 65 and has been linked to various health problems, such as heart attacks and strokes, in later life. Subclinical means that there are no noticeable symptoms. Without a blood test, it is impossible to know that you have subclinical hypothyroidism.

Right now, there is no common way to treat people with subclinical hypothyroidism. Researchers hope to find it with the TRUST study. TRUST researchers will follow 3,000 older people over a five year period in an attempt to better understand how to treat people who suffer from subclinical hypothyroidism. Half of the subjects will be treated with a hormone replacement drug, thyroxine, while the other half will be given a placebo; both groups will then be monitored to evaluate how they respond to the treatments.

We are inviting people over the age of 65 who have had a recent blood test at their doctors the results of which suggest that they may have subclinical hypothyroidism and therefore may be suitable to take part in the TRUST Study.

SCOTTISH UPDATE

The TRUST Study in Scotland has now been recruiting for over a year and we are very grateful to all the GPs and their patients who have volunteered to be involved. The nurses have found that patients have been very positive about their experience in the TRUST study and quite enjoy the questionnaires. Up until now we have only recruited people from the Glasgow area but we are



the process of negotiating with three neighbouring health boards – Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and Arran and Dumfries and Galloway. We are very encouraged by their enthusiasm. This should help increase recruitment and get us closer to our target of 750 by the end of 2015.

We warmly welcome a new member to the nursing team, Fiona McIntosh (on the right seen here with Linda Wilson (left) and Lesley Farrell). Fiona has extensive research experience and will be an asset to the group. We have also sadly said goodbye to staff members Ann Wright and Maxine Fernon, and we wish them well in their new posts.

COLLABORATION WITH IEMO 80+

By signing the Memorandum of Understanding, the collaboration between the IEMO 80+ Thyroid Trial and the TRUST Thyroid Trial was officially confirmed on November 4th in Glasgow. Two studies with one research question: what is the safety and efficacy of thyroid hormone supplementation in older adults with subclinical hypothyroidism? Whereas the TRUST Thyroid Trial will be performed in four universities throughout Europe (Glasgow, Bern, Cork and Leiden) among 3000 participants aged 65 or older, the IEMO 80+ Thyroid Trial will be performed in three University Medical Centers in the Netherlands among 450 participants aged 80 years and older. Both trials use identical research infrastructures and share local procedures, which enhances the efficiency to perform the trials. Effects for the 80+ participants of both studies allows for giving a specific advice regarding the treatment of subclinical hypothyroidism in the 80+ population. Both trials have started recruiting participants in 2013.



Contact information

Mairi McDade
Project manager
Scotland
+44 (0)141 201 18522
Mairi.McDade@glasgow.ac.uk
www.trustthyroidtrial.com



From left to right: Patricia Kearney, University of Cork; Nicolas Rodondi, University of Berne; Jacobijn Gussekloo, Leiden University Medical Centre; David Stott, University of Glasgow; Rudi Westendorp, Leyden Academy on Vitality and Ageing

For more information visit www.trustthyroidtrial.com.