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**Original article**

**Prevalence of hypothyroidism in Kolkata: An epidemiological pilot study**

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**Abstract**

**Context:** Hypothyroidism is believed to be a common health problem in India but there is a paucity of data on its prevalence in the country.

**Objective:** A pilot study to estimate the prevalence of hypothyroidism (subclinical & overt) in Kolkata and its associated epidemiological factors.

**Methods:** 148 voluntary participants (students, parents, and teachers of a girls’ school in central Kolkata) were screened for serum TSH & FT4 and clinically examined for the presence of goitre.

**Results:** 14% (21 cases) of participants were known hypothyroid on treatment. 17.5% (26 cases) of participants were newly diagnosed with hypothyroidism (6 with overt and 20 with subclinical hypothyroidism) and 5% (8 cases) of them had a TSH > 10 mIU/L. Among known hypothyroid individuals, 38% (8 patients) had a family history of thyroid disease while it was present in only 7.7% (2 patients) of newly diagnosed hypothyroid patients. 42% (9 patients) of known hypothyroid individuals and only 7.7% (2 patients) of newly diagnosed hypothyroid individuals had a goitre. The overall prevalence of hypothyroidism in the study population was 31.75% and the overall prevalence of goitre was 22.3% (33 individuals). A significant number of patients (17.5%) were detected to have hypothyroidism for the first time which could be due to absence of associated goitre and family history in them.

**Conclusion:** The prevalence of hypothyroidism is very high, affecting approximately 3 in 10 individuals in the study population of Kolkata and more than half of them were previously undetected.

**Key words:** Hypothyroidism, Subclinical hypothyroidism, Goitre.