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### Newsletter - July 2006

A goiter means an enlarged thyroid characterized by a plump roll round the bottom of the neck – could be the first sign revealing you have to start alert your thyroid gland.

In US, most goiters are due to autoimmune thyroiditis (ie, Hashimoto disease.). Autopsy studies suggest a frequency of greater than 50% for thyroid nodules; with high -resolution ultrasound, the value approaches 40% of patients with nonthyroidal illness. In the Whickham study from the United Kingdom, 16% of the population had a goiter. In the Framingham study, ultrasonography revealed that 3% of men older than 60 years had thyroid nodules, while 36% of women aged 49 -58 years had thyroid nodules.

In worldwide, the most common cause of goiter is iodine deficiency. It is estimated that goiters affect as many as 200 million of the 800 million people who have a diet deficient in iodine. (*fig.:emed 0916*)

If you detect any unusual lumps or swelling problems, schedule an appointment with your doctor immediately for checkup. You may now follow steps below to perform self-assessment. Find a closed friend to help you or do it at home with family members.

#### Thyroid Gland - Start with a Healthy Neck Check

1. Hold the mirror to the position where you can see your neck.
2. Focus the neck area below the Adam's apple and above the collarbone. This is where your thyroid sits.
3. Keep your eye on your thyroid in the mirror while tipping your head back.
4. Take a sip of water and Swallow.
5. Watch your neck carefully for any bulges, enlargement, protrusions, or unusual appearance when you swallow.  
(Do not confuse your Adam's apple with your thyroid gland. The thyroid gland is very close to your collarbone.)
6. Repeat several times.
7. Report unusual protuberance to your doctor as soon as possible.