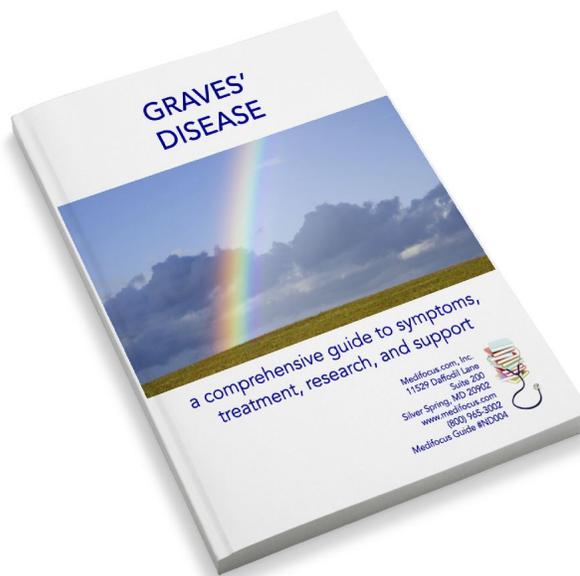


Preview of the Medifocus Guidebook on: Graves' Disease

Updated January 5, 2015



This document is only a SHORT PREVIEW of the **Medifocus Guidebook on Graves' Disease**. It is intended primarily to give you a general overview of the **format and structure** of the Guidebook as well as select pages from each major Guidebook section listed in the Table of Contents.

To purchase the COMPLETE Medifocus Guidebook on Graves' Disease (136 pages; Updated January 5, 2015), please:

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1 - Background Information

Introduction

Chronic or life-threatening illnesses can have a devastating impact on both the patient and the family. In today's new world of medicine, many consumers have come to realize that they are the ones who are primarily responsible for their own health care as well as for the health care of their loved ones.

When facing a chronic or life-threatening illness, you need to become an educated consumer in order to make an informed health care decision. Essentially that means finding out everything about the illness - the treatment options, the doctors, and the hospitals - so that you can become an educated health care consumer and make the tough decisions. In the past, consumers would go to a library and read everything available about a particular illness or medical condition. In today's world, many turn to the Internet for their medical information needs.

The first sites visited are usually the well known health "portals" or disease organizations and support groups which contain a general overview of the condition for the layperson. That's a good start but soon all of the basic information is exhausted and the need for more advanced information still exists. What are the latest "cutting-edge" treatment options? What are the results of the most up-to-date clinical trials? Who are the most notable experts? Where are the top-ranked medical institutions and hospitals?

The best source for authoritative medical information in the United States is the National Library of Medicine's medical database called PubMed®, that indexes citations and abstracts (brief summaries) of over 7 million articles from more than 3,800 medical journals published worldwide. PubMed® was developed for medical professionals and is the primary source utilized by health care providers for keeping up with the latest advances in clinical medicine.

A typical PubMed® search for a specific disease or condition, however, usually retrieves hundreds or even thousands of "hits" of journal article citations. That's an avalanche of information that needs to be evaluated and transformed into truly useful knowledge. What are the most relevant journal articles? Which ones apply to your specific situation? Which articles are considered to be the most authoritative - the ones your physician would rely on in making clinical decisions? This is where *Medifocus.com* provides an effective solution.

Medifocus.com has developed an extensive library of *MediFocus Guidebooks* covering a wide spectrum of chronic and life threatening diseases. Each *MediFocus Guidebook* is a

high quality, up- to-date digest of "professional-level" medical information consisting of the most relevant citations and abstracts of journal articles published in authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This information represents the latest advances known to modern medicine for the treatment and management of the condition, including published results from clinical trials. Each *Guidebook* also includes a valuable index of leading authors and medical institutions as well as a directory of disease organizations and support groups. *MediFocus Guidebooks* are reviewed, revised and updated every 4-months to ensure that you receive the latest and most up-to-date information about the specific condition.

About Your MediFocus Guidebook

Introduction

Your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a valuable resource that represents a comprehensive synthesis of the most up-to-date, advanced medical information published about the condition in well-respected, trustworthy medical journals. It is the same type of professional-level information used by physicians and other health-care professionals to keep abreast of the latest developments in biomedical research and clinical medicine. The *Guidebook* is intended for patients who have a need for more advanced, in-depth medical information than is generally available to consumers from a variety of other resources. The primary goal of a *MediFocus Guidebook* is to educate patients and their families about their treatment options so that they can make informed health-care decisions and become active participants in the medical decision making process.

The *Guidebook* production process involves a team of experienced medical research professionals with vast experience in researching the published medical literature. This team approach to the development and production of the *MediFocus Guidebooks* is designed to ensure the accuracy, completeness, and clinical relevance of the information. The *Guidebook* is intended to serve as a basis for a more meaningful discussion between patients and their health-care providers in a joint effort to seek the most appropriate course of treatment for the disease.

Guidebook Organization and Content

Section 1 - Background Information

This section provides detailed information about the organization and content of the *Guidebook* including tips and suggestions for conducting additional research about the condition.

Section 2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* represents a detailed overview of the disease or condition specifically written from the patient's perspective. It is designed to satisfy the basic informational needs of consumers and their families who are confronted with the illness and are facing difficult choices. Important aspects which are addressed in "The Intelligent Patient" section include:

- The etiology or cause of the disease
- Signs and symptoms
- How the condition is diagnosed
- The current standard of care for the disease
- Treatment options

- New developments
- Important questions to ask your health care provider

Section 3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

This is a roadmap to important and up-to-date medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest developments and breakthroughs in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new clinical developments, and advances in research. To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles are grouped by specific categories. A typical *MediFocus Guidebook* usually contains one or more of the following article groupings:

- *Review Articles*: Articles included in this category are broad in scope and are intended to provide the reader with a detailed overview of the condition including such important aspects as its cause, diagnosis, treatment, and new advances.
- *General Interest Articles*: These articles are broad in scope and contain supplementary information about the condition that may be of interest to select groups of patients.
- *Drug Therapy*: Articles that provide information about the effectiveness of specific drugs or other biological agents for the treatment of the condition.
- *Surgical Therapy*: Articles that provide information about specific surgical treatments for the condition.
- *Clinical Trials*: Articles in this category summarize studies which compare the safety and efficacy of a new, experimental treatment modality to currently available standard treatments for the condition. In many cases, clinical trials represent the latest advances in the field and may be considered as being on the "cutting edge" of medicine. Some of these experimental treatments may have already been incorporated into clinical practice.

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Article title
- Author Name(s)
- Institution where the study was done
- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)

- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the corresponding URL address that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of a *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the article abstracts online by entering the individual URL address for a particular article into your web browser.

Section 4 - Centers of Research

We've compiled a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of the specific medical condition. The "Centers of Research" directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of the condition.

Inclusion of the names of specific doctors, researchers, hospitals, medical centers, or research institutions in this *Guidebook* does not imply endorsement by Medifocus.com, Inc. or any of its affiliates. Consumers are encouraged to conduct additional research to identify health-care professionals, hospitals, and medical institutions with expertise in providing specific medical advice, guidance, and treatment for this condition.

Section 5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver high-level, quality medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it. This section of your *Guidebook* offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Section 6 - Directory of Organizations

This section of your *Guidebook* is a directory of select disease organizations and support groups that are in the business of helping patients and their families by providing access to information, resources, and services. Many of these organizations can answer your questions, enable you to network with other patients, and help you find a doctor in your geographical area who specializes in managing your condition.

2 - The Intelligent Patient Overview

GRAVES' DISEASE

Introduction to Graves' Disease

The *endocrine system* consists of several organs and glands that produce specialized proteins called *hormones* that control and regulate the body's critical metabolic functions. The endocrine system is comprised of the following glands and organs:

- Pancreas - a gland located near the stomach that secretes digestive fluids into the intestine and also produces a hormone called *insulin* that helps control blood glucose levels.
- Pituitary gland - a gland located at the base of the brain that secretes a variety of hormones that control many body functions, including reproduction.
- Testes - male gonads that secrete the male hormone *testosterone* and also produce sperm.
- Ovaries - female sexual glands in which the eggs (*ova*) develop; the ovaries also produce the female hormones *estrogen* and *progesterone*.
- Parathyroid glands - four small kidney-shaped glands that lie in close proximity to the thyroid gland and produce a hormone called *parathyroid hormone* (PTH) that controls the amount of calcium in the body.
- Thyroid gland - a gland located below the voice box that produces thyroid hormones and helps regulate growth and metabolism.

The Thyroid Gland

The thyroid gland is located in the front part of the neck below the *larynx* (voice box) and just above the *clavicle* (collarbone). Its shape resembles that of a "bow tie" consisting of two *lobes* (right and left) that are joined together in the middle by a narrow band of tissue called the *isthmus*. The thyroid is one of the most important endocrine glands because it regulates the body's metabolism, growth, and development.

Among its many functions, the thyroid gland takes iodine found in the food we eat and combines it with an amino acid called *tyrosine* to make two hormones called:

- Triiodothyronine (T3)
- Thyroxine (T4)

Most of the thyroid gland consists of *follicular cells* that produce and store these hormones. The proportion of hormones produced by the follicular cells is approximately 80% (T4) to 20% (T3).

Thyroid hormones perform several important functions including:

- Controlling the rate of metabolism of every cell in the body (conversion of oxygen and calories to energy)
- Maintaining body temperature

The thyroid gland produces hormones in response to stimulation by *thyroid stimulating hormone* (TSH), which is produced by the pituitary gland. TSH operates through a feedback system with the thyroid gland - when there is a drop of thyroid hormone levels in the blood, TSH stimulates the thyroid gland to produce more thyroid hormones. When the level of thyroid hormones increases, the pituitary gland decreases its production of TSH.

Thyroid hormone production is dependent upon an adequate intake of dietary iodine. The thyroid gland takes up the amount that it needs for hormone production and the kidneys excrete the remainder. In the United States, most people ingest adequate amounts of iodine due to the iodine enrichment of many foods.

What is Graves' Disease?

Graves' disease (GD), a form of *hyperthyroidism* (overactive thyroid gland) was named for Robert Graves who first described the symptoms in 1835. It is an *autoimmune disease* meaning that the body produces antibodies against itself that infiltrate and attack the thyroid gland. The antibodies attack the follicles where the thyroid hormones are stored and also stimulate the production of more hormones leading to increased levels of thyroid hormones in the blood. As a result, the production of T3 and T4 is no longer under the control of the normal TSH feedback system, but rather as a response to the stimulation by the autoantibodies. Accordingly, TSH levels are usually very low or even undetectable in patients with Graves' disease, while the T4 and T3 levels are elevated.

The incidence of *hyperthyroidism* (overactive thyroid gland) in the general population is estimated at 1 per 1000 people, with women being up to 10 times more likely to develop the syndrome than men. Hyperthyroidism can be caused by several different disorders.

Graves' disease is the most common form of hyperthyroidism (approximately 60-80% of cases) in individuals who are not taking thyroid hormones. The symptoms of Graves' disease result from body tissue being exposed to excessive levels of thyroid hormones. The presence of *diffuse toxic goiter* is a common occurrence and refers to an enlarged thyroid gland which overproduces thyroid hormone.

Graves' disease may also be associated with:

- Graves' ophthalmopathy - an autoimmune disease that affects the extraocular muscles (the

muscles that rotate the eyes up/down and to the sides). Inflammation causes the tissue behind the eyeball to swell, forcing the eyeball to bulge.

- Dermopathy (disease of the skin) - *Pretibial myxedema* is characterized by thickened, raised areas of skin that often resemble an orange peel. It is found on the shins below the knees. The lesions are usually asymmetric and often accompanied by *non-pitting edema* (when you press a finger against a swollen area for 5 seconds and then quickly remove it, no indentation is left in the skin). This is usually found in patients with severe Graves' Ophthalmopathy.
- Acropachy - soft tissue swelling of hands and feet causing "clubbing" or a bulbous-like appearance. This is rare.

The onset of Graves' disease is usually gradual and develops between the ages of 20 and 40. It can occur in children but this is very unusual. It is considered a rare disorder with occurrence estimated at approximately 5 cases per 10,000 people.

Graves' disease is not a life-threatening condition if treated but when left untreated, it can lead to numerous health problems. Long-term exposure to excessive thyroid hormone levels can lead to:

- Osteoporosis
- Neonatal hyperthyroidism (if a pregnant woman with Graves' disease is not treated)
- Progression of Graves' ophthalmopathy
- Progressively severe cardiac problems (e.g., atrial fibrillation) especially in the elderly
- Severe acropachy
- Weight loss
- Anxiety
- Thyroid storm

Thyroid Storm

Thyroid storm is a rare complication of Graves' disease and is characterized by an exaggerated form of the symptoms of hyperthyroidism. It is a medical emergency and requires immediate treatment. Symptoms include:

- Significant tachycardia - rapid heard beat
- Very high fever
- Neurological symptoms (e.g., tremor, temporary paralysis)
- Congestive heart failure
- Gastrointestinal or hepatic (liver) dysfunction
- Shock
- Disorientation

The exact cause of thyroid storm is not clear, however, some precipitating factors may include:

- Infection

- Trauma
- Thyroid surgery
- Radioactive iodine treatment
- Childbirth

Risk Factors for Graves' Disease

There is limited substantial information regarding risk factors for Graves' disease (GD). The following are believed to be risk factors for the development of Graves' disease:

- Female gender - Women are 5-8 times more likely to develop Graves' disease than men.
- Age 20 and above
- Stress - The onset of Graves' disease sometimes follows a significant life-altering event, (e.g., divorce, job loss, or death of a loved one).
- Post-partum period
- Genetic predisposition - having family members with a history of Graves' disease, other thyroid conditions, or autoimmune disorders
- Smoking - this elevates the risk for Graves' ophthalmopathy

Pathogenesis of Graves' Disease

Graves' disease (GD) is an autoimmune disorder, meaning that the body produces antibodies which attack the patient's own tissue. Why the body produces these autoantibodies in patients with Graves' disease, however, remains unknown. The abnormal production of autoimmune antibodies can cause overstimulation of the thyroid gland leading to:

- Diffuse toxic goiter
- Overproduction of thyroid hormone
- Graves' ophthalmopathy
- Graves' dermopathy

The pathogenesis of Graves' disease is associated with several types of autoantibodies, including:

- Thyroid stimulating hormone receptor antibodies
- Thyroid peroxidase antibodies

Graves' Ophthalmopathy

Graves' ophthalmopathy occurs in approximately 50% of patients diagnosed with Graves' disease.

It is associated with inflammation and edema in and behind the *orbit*, the bony cavity containing the eyeball. There is also an increase of connective tissue and fat around the eyes. This causes the eyeball to bulge (*exophthalmos*) since the excess of tissue, fat, and muscle pushes it out from behind.

The severity of Graves' ophthalmopathy is not related to the severity of hyperthyroidism or to the treatment of Graves' disease. Graves' disease does not necessarily improve the state of Graves' ophthalmopathy. Symptoms of Graves' ophthalmopathy usually appear within 12-18 months before or after being diagnosed with Graves' disease. Computerized tomography is the most effective modality for imaging any changes behind the eyes related to Graves' ophthalmopathy. Imaging studies may reveal subclinical signs of Graves' ophthalmopathy even before clinical symptoms appear.

Risk factors for Graves' ophthalmopathy include:

- Male gender
- Older age
- Cigarette smoking
- Diabetes

The **Intelligent Patient Overview** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Graves' Disease** also includes the following additional sections:

- **Diagnosis of Graves' Disease**
- **Treatment Options for Graves' Disease**
- **Quality of Life Issues in Graves' Disease**
- **New Developments in Graves' Disease**
- **Questions to Ask Your Doctor About Graves' Disease**

To Order the Complete **Guidebook on Graves' Disease** [Click Here](#)
Or Call 800-965-3002 (USA) or 301-649-9300 (Outside USA)

3 - Guide to the Medical Literature

Introduction

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a comprehensive bibliography of important recent medical literature published about the condition from authoritative, trustworthy medical journals. This is the same information that is used by physicians and researchers to keep up with the latest advances in clinical medicine and biomedical research. A broad spectrum of articles is included in each *MediFocus Guidebook* to provide information about standard treatments, treatment options, new developments, and advances in research.

To facilitate your review and analysis of this information, the articles in this *MediFocus Guidebook* are grouped in the following categories:

- Graves' Ophthalmopathy Articles - 1 Articles
- Review Articles - 61 Articles
- General Interest Articles - 23 Articles
- Drug Therapy Articles - 3 Articles
- Surgical Therapy Articles - 18 Articles
- Clinical Trials Articles - 22 Articles
- Radioiodine Therapy Articles - 7 Articles
- Graves' Ophthalmopathy Articles - 30 Articles

The following information is provided for each of the articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook*:

- Title of the article
- Name of the authors
- Institution where the study was done
- Journal reference (Volume, page numbers, year of publication)
- Link to Abstract (brief summary of the actual article)

Linking to Abstracts: Most of the medical journal articles referenced in this section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* include an abstract (brief summary of the actual article) that can be accessed online via the National Library of Medicine's PubMed® database. You can easily access the individual abstracts online via PubMed® from the "electronic" format of your *MediFocus Guidebook* by clicking on the URI that is provided for each cited article. If you purchased a printed copy of the *MediFocus Guidebook*, you can still access the abstracts online by entering the individual URI for a particular abstract into your computer's web browser.

Recent Literature: What Your Doctor Reads

Database: PubMed <January 2010 to December 2014>

Graves' Ophthalmopathy Articles

1.

Quality of life improves after strabismus surgery in patients with Graves' orbitopathy.

Authors: Jellema HM; Merckel-Timmer E; Kloos R; Saeed P; Mourits MP
Institution: Department of Ophthalmology, Academic Medical Centre, University of Amsterdam, Meibergdreef 9, 1105 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
Journal: Eur J Endocrinol. 2014 Apr 10;170(5):785-9. doi: 10.1530/EJE-13-0973. Print 2014 May.
Abstract Link: <http://www.medifocus.com/abstracts.php?gid=ND004&ID=24493116>

The **Guide to the Medical Literature** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Graves' Disease** includes the following sections:

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- Review Articles - 61 Articles
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4 - Centers of Research

This section of your *MediFocus Guidebook* is a unique directory of doctors, researchers, medical centers, and research institutions with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition. The *Centers of Research* directory is a valuable resource for quickly identifying and locating leading medical authorities and medical institutions within the United States and other countries that are considered to be at the forefront in clinical research and treatment of this disorder.

Use the *Centers of Research* directory to contact, consult, or network with leading experts in the field and to locate a hospital or medical center that can help you.

The following information is provided in the *Centers of Research* directory:

- **Geographic Location**

- United States: the information is divided by individual states listed in alphabetical order. Not all states may be included.
- Other Countries: information is presented for select countries worldwide listed in alphabetical order. Not all countries may be included.

- **Names of Authors**

- Select names of individual authors (doctors, researchers, or other health-care professionals) with specialized research interest, and in many cases, clinical expertise in the management of this specific medical condition, who have recently published articles in leading medical journals about the condition.
- E-mail addresses for individual authors, if listed on their specific publications, is also provided.

- **Institutional Affiliations**

- Next to each individual author's name is their **institutional affiliation** (hospital, medical center, or research institution) where the study was conducted as listed in their publication(s).
- In many cases, information about the specific **department** within the medical institution where the individual author was located at the time the study was conducted is also provided.

Centers of Research

United States

CA - California

<u>Name of Author</u>	<u>Institutional Affiliation</u>
Douglas RS	Division of Rheumatology, Department of Medicine, David Geffen School of Medicine, University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90095, USA.
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Yoo SH	Jules Stein Eye Institute, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095, USA.

CT - Connecticut

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DC - Washington D.C.

<u>Name of Author</u>	<u>Institutional Affiliation</u>
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Burman KD	Division of Endocrinology, Department of Medicine, Georgetown University Hospital, Washington, DC 20010, USA. geanina.popoveniuc@medstar.net

The **Centers of Research** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Graves' Disease** includes the following sections:

- Centers of Research for relevant states in the United States
- Centers of Research listed for relevant countries outside the United States

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5 - Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor

Introduction

One of the most important decisions confronting patients who have been diagnosed with a serious medical condition is finding and choosing a qualified physician who will deliver a high level and quality of medical care in accordance with currently accepted guidelines and standards of care. Finding the "best" doctor to manage your condition, however, can be a frustrating and time-consuming experience unless you know what you are looking for and how to go about finding it.

The process of finding and choosing a physician to manage your specific illness or condition is, in some respects, analogous to the process of making a decision about whether or not to invest in a particular stock or mutual fund. After all, you wouldn't invest your hard earned money in a stock or mutual fund without first doing exhaustive research about the stock or fund's past performance, current financial status, and projected future earnings. More than likely you would spend a considerable amount of time and energy doing your own research and consulting with your stock broker before making an informed decision about investing. The same general principle applies to the process of finding and choosing a physician. Although the process requires a considerable investment in terms of both time and energy, the potential payoff can be well worth it--after all, what can be more important than your health and well-being?

This section of your Guidebook offers important tips for how to find physicians as well as suggestions for how to make informed choices about choosing a doctor who is right for you.

Tips for Finding Physicians

Finding a highly qualified, competent, and compassionate physician to manage your specific illness or condition takes a lot of hard work and energy but is an investment that is well-worth the effort. It is important to keep in mind that you are not looking for just any general physician but rather for a physician who has expertise in the treatment and management of your specific illness or condition. Here are some suggestions for where you can turn to identify and locate physicians who specialize in managing your disorder:

- **Your Doctor** - Your family physician (family medicine or internal medicine specialist) is a good starting point for finding a physician who specializes in your illness. Chances are that your doctor already knows several specialists in your geographic area who specialize in your illness and can recommend several names to you. Your doctor can also provide you with information about their qualifications, training, and hospital affiliations.

The **Tips on Finding and Choosing a Doctor** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Graves' Disease** includes additional information that will assist you in locating a highly qualified and competent physician to manage your specific illness.

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Or Call 800-965-3002 (USA) or 301-649-9300 (Outside USA)

6 - Directory of Organizations

American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists

245 Riverside Avenue, Suite 200 Jacksonville, FL 32202

904.353.7878

www.aace.com/

American Thyroid Association

6066 Leesburg Pike Suite 550; Falls Church, VA 22041

800.849.7643; 703.998.8890

thyroid@thyroid.org

www.thyroid.org

Endocrine Society

8401 Connecticut Avenue; Suite 900; Chevy Chase, MD 20815

301.941.0200

www.endo-society.org

National Graves' Disease Foundation

877.643.3123

www.ngdf.org

National Women's Health Information Center; U.S. HHS Office on Women's Health

800.994.9662; 888.220.5446 (TDD)

www.4woman.gov/faq/graves.htm

New York Thyroid Center; Columbia Presbyterian Hospital

161 Fort Washington Avenue; New York, NY 10032

212.305.0442

cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/thyroid

The Hormone Foundation

8401 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 900 Chevy Chase, MD 20815

800.467.6663

hormone@endo-society.org

www.hormone.org

The **Directory of Organizations** in the complete **Medifocus Guidebook on Graves' Disease** includes a list of selected disease organizations and support groups that are helping people diagnosed with Graves' Disease.

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