

## Thyroid

Low thyroid is very common in the Boston breed and many times is overlooked by both the owner and the vet.

The most common signs of **low thyroid** in **dogs** include

- A lack of energy and enthusiasm
- Mental dullness
- Weight gain without a change in appetite
- Obesity, difficulty losing weight
- Cold intolerance
- Loss and thinning of fur, increased shedding
- Thickening of the skin
- Slow / difficulty recovering from an injury or surgery



**How to diagnosis** – the only way to know what your dog's thyroid levels are is through bloodwork. The recommended test is a T4. Some vets will include a TSH level test as well.

The first thing MABTR looks at is the coat and hair along the back of the legs. A thin coat and bald back legs is a key sign for us to test the thyroid.

Normal range starts at 1.0. Many vet will see test results between 1.0 and 1.4 and state that the thyroid is fine. It is important to note that thyroid levels vary throughout the day and when the blood is drawn. MABTR rule, especially when presented with the above symptoms, is if we have a test result of 1.4 or lower we automatically place the dog on medication because more likely there are points in the day that it drops below 1.0.

For bostons with juvenile cataracts we always test the thyroid event when symptoms do not present themselves as low thyroid and juvenile cataracts are usually paired up.

**Treatment:** Levothyroxine, the same medication humans take for low thyroid, is used. Given either once or twice a day. Strongly recommended that once the medication is started that you retest in 30 days to ensure proper dose. If thyroid is in the normal range then retesting is only required once a year.

This medication can be purchased through your vet or at a human pharmacy with a prescription from your vet. It is a very inexpensive drug to give your dog and some pharmacy have a discount program that will include this drug

**If not treated:** There is no excuse not to treat low thyroid. The drug cost on avg \$10 a month. Low thyroid impacts your dog's body to heal in a timely manner after an injury or surgery. If not treated your dog will eventually face mental decline, heart disease, decreased lung function, and abnormal enlargement of the thyroid gland.