

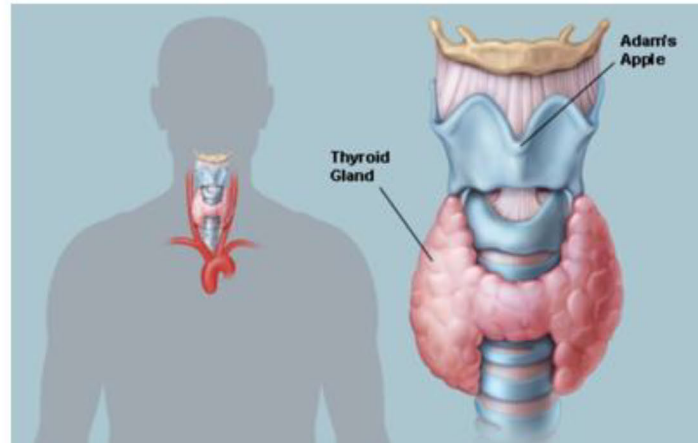


# Tips from Training



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## Thyroid Cancer and the Firefighter's Protective Hood



The fact is that thyroid cancer is **currently one of the most common cancers for FDNY firefighters that were not exposed to 9/11 toxins**. While correlation does not necessarily imply causation, our protective hood directly contacts our skin in the neck area. This is the same area where our thyroid is located. A protective hood that is not maintained clean allows any contaminants on our hood to be absorbed by or through our skin EVERY TIME the protective hood is worn.

- Predictable is preventable - **Wash your protective hood following every exposure to minimize your risk.**
- Use medical gloves while washing the protective hood to minimize absorption through your hands.
- While all members have several department issued hoods, a recently washed hood can be safely worn while wet.
- Exposure to a food on the stove response is enough to contaminate the protective hood to a degree where it should be washed. Overheated pots and pans often release carcinogens in the soot and gasses that are produced.
- We must change the practice of always wearing the protective hood around our neck such as during a non-fire response.
- Your thyroid is shaped like a small butterfly, and is usually found inside the lower front of your neck. It is a gland that controls your metabolism. It also releases hormones that direct many functions in your body, including how you use energy, how you produce heat, and how you consume oxygen. Thyroid cancer develops when cells change or mutate. The abnormal cells begin multiplying in your thyroid and, once there are enough of them, they form a tumor.
- If it is caught early, thyroid cancer is one of the most treatable forms of cancer.
- **In the early stage there are very few symptoms, however as it grows the following may be symptoms: Neck, throat pain, a lump in your neck, difficulty swallowing, vocal changes, hoarseness and or cough.**

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