This diagnostic algorithm is intended for baseline assessments only and may not be accurate for patients on thyroid medications.

### SPECIMEN DATA

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**Methodology:** Chemiluminescent Immunoassay
The analysis of thyroid hormones and antibodies together may improve the accuracy of diagnosis and clinical success. The American Thyroid Association estimates that approximately 20 million Americans have thyroid disease, and approximately 60% of those with thyroid disease are unaware of their condition. The analysis of thyroid stimulating hormone, free thyroid hormones and thyroid antibodies may best distinguish thyrotoxicosis from hypothyroidism and the euthyroid state. Less than one percent of thyroid hormone is free unbound hormone; this one percent is the biologically active fraction. Total T4 and T3 values cannot be reliably used to diagnose conditions due to inherited and acquired variations in the concentration of thyroid hormone binding proteins. The recognition of auto-immunity as a leading cause of thyroid dysfunction has led to the evaluation of auto-antibodies in thyroid testing. Thyroid antibody tests are used to distinguish autoimmune thyroid disorders from other thyroid dysfunction.

The synthesis and metabolism of thyroid hormone requires the precursor amino acid tyrosine, iodine, selenium and vitamin A. Abnormal results on the Thyroid Profile may prompt additional testing to evaluate nutrient status. Commentaries are presented in this report when abnormal results have been detected.

References:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Joshi, Shashank R. (2011)
Laboratory Evaluation of Thyroid Function.


Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) High

The level of thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) is higher than expected in this sample. Serum TSH is considered the single best test of thyroid function, and with thyroid hormone measurements, provides the most comprehensive assessment of thyroid function. TSH is secreted from the pituitary gland when the pituitary is stimulated by thyrotropin-releasing hormone (TRH), which is released from the hypothalamus. The release of thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3) from the thyroid gland into circulation is controlled by the secretion of TSH. T3 and T4 control the synthesis and secretion of TSH and thyrotropin releasing hormone (TRH) at the level of pituitary and hypothalamus, through a negative feedback loop. Normally, if T3 and T4 increase, TSH decreases. Conversely, if T3 and T4 decrease, TSH increases. Small changes in thyroid function result in logarithmic amplification of TSH.

High TSH with low or normal T3 and T4 indicates hypothyroidism. It may also occur from medications, intermittent hormone replacement, inherited disorders or thyroid hormone resistance (receptor defects).

High TSH with high T3 or T4 may occur for a variety of reasons, including medications, hormone receptor defects, inherited disorders, pituitary tumors or acute psychiatric illness.

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Elevated levels of TSH may occur in primary hypothyroidism, with generalized hormone resistance, or from a pituitary thyrotrophic adenoma. Under-dosing of thyroid hormone replacement, old age, or recovery from severe non-thyroid illness may increase TSH levels. Elevations of TSH have also been documented in patients with hepatitis.

References:
Fournier, Jean-Pascal; Yin, Hui; Yu, Oriana Hoi Yun; Azoulay, Laurent (2014)
Metformin and low levels of thyroid-stimulating hormone in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus

Joshi, Shashank R. (2011)
Laboratory Evaluation of Thyroid Function.

Skugor, Mario (2014)
Hypothyroidism and Hyperthyroidism
The Cleveland Clinic Foundation Center for Continuing Education
http://www.clevelandclinicmeded.com/medicalpubs/diseasemanagement/endocrinology/hypothyroidism-and-hyperthyroidism/#cesec6
Accessed 09 January 2015

Thyroid peroxidase Antibodies (Anti-TPO) High

The level of thyroid peroxidase (TPO) is higher than expected in this patient sample. TPO antibody levels are considered the most sensitive measure for autoimmune thyroid disease, including Hashimoto’s disease, idiopathic myxedema, and Grave’s disease. TPO may also be elevated if other autoimmune diseases are present. Good association between elevated anti-TPO and the confirmation of thyroiditis by histology. Up to 90% of Hashimoto’s patients and 60-80% of Grave’s disease patients will have elevated anti-TPO antibodies. Anti-TPO Elevated anti-TPO levels increase the risk of hypothyroidism in sub-clinical hypothyroid patients, and increases the risk that other autoimmune diseases may develop.

TPO is an enzyme on the thyroid hormone synthesis pathway; it is normally found only in the follicular cells of the thyroid gland. Congenital hypothyroidism occurs when mutations in the DNA coding for TPO cause defective enzyme function. Thyroid follicles may be destroyed by inflammation, goiter, or rarely, cancer. The release of TPO into the blood causes an antigenic response, and anti-TPO is formed. Anti-TPO enzymes activate complement, and may contribute to thyroid dysfunction and the development of hypothyroidism.

References:

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Thyroid Antibodies

Thyroid antibody tests are used to distinguish autoimmune thyroid disorders from other thyroid dysfunction. Thyroid antibody tests are most important in patients with other, pre-existing autoimmune conditions such as systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis, Celiac disease, etc. Autoimmune thyroid antibodies may result in high or low thyroid hormone levels.

Thyroxine (T4) is converted to triiodothyronine (T3) in the peripheral tissues. Most T4 is converted to T3 by selenium-dependent iodothyronine deiodinase enzymes. Iodine is essential for the synthesis of thyroid hormones. The thyroid gland expresses several selenoproteins as protection against the hydrogen peroxide and oxidative stress generated during thyroid hormone synthesis. Individuals with mutations in the DNA that codes for selenoprotein synthesis factor have an increased risk of thyroid function defects. Iodine deficiency may be exacerbated by selenium, iron or Vitamin A. Low selenium levels have been associated with goiter and thyroid nodules in European women. Several randomized controlled trials have found that selenium supplementation decreases thyroid-disease-specific antibody levels, and may improve time to remission. The effects of selenium supplementation appear to be dependent on the patient’s initial selenium status; those with the lowest selenium levels demonstrated the greatest responses to selenium supplementation. If thyroid antibodies are elevated, consider:

- Iodine status and presence of goitrogenic halides (Urine Iodine or Urine Halides)
- Mineral status (RBC Elements)
- Digestion and absorption of nutrient minerals (Comprehensive Stool Analysis with Parasitology x 3)

References:

1. American Association for Clinical Chemistry (2014) Thyroid Antibodies
   www.labtestsonline.org Accessed 08 January 2014


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