ZOETIS DIAGNOSTICS

GetWell

Feline hyperthyroidism

Guidance on diagnostic decision-making when testing for hyperthyroidism in cats

zoetis

Signs, symptoms and diagnostic indicators

Hyperthyroidism is the most common feline endocrine disease in older cats:[1]

Affects >10% of felines[2]

Slowly progressive with severe consequences when left untreated

How can you spot hyperthyroidism?

Clinical presentation varies significantly and may be very subtle initially, becoming more severe as the cat's condition progresses. Common signs can include any combination of:

- Weight loss
- Increased appetite
- Increased thirst and urination
- Enlarged thyroid gland
- Tachycardia
- Systolic murmur
- Poor body and muscle condition scores

When does clinical pathology point to hyperthyroidism?

~90% of hyperthyroid cats have a total T4 (TT4) above the reference interval[1]

Changes in the minimum diagnostic database are non-specific[3]

Usually includes mild increases in hepatobiliary enzymes[3]

Can include mild increases in HCT[3]

Watch outs: Testing and treatment

1. Enlarged thyroid glands are not 100% sensitive or specific for clinical hyperthyroidism
2. Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a common co-morbidity and hyperthyroidism can mask diagnosis by increasing the glomerular filtration rate (GFR)
3. Cats with a test at the high end of normal with subtle or no clinical signs (if they are 9 and older) should be retested within 3 months
4. Always consider other factors, such as the cat's overall health status, when determining the optimal treatment plan
5. When CKD is present, stage cases according to the IRIS system prior to, and during treatment. IRIS CKD Staging and Treatment guidelines can be found at **www.iris-kidney.com**
6. Treating hyperthyroidism is recommended in cases of pre-existing CKD
   - If CKD is unmasked during treatment, these cases should be concurrently managed for their CKD per IRIS guidelines, and care should be taken not to cause hyperthyroidism. Only the minimum therapeutic dose should be used.

Tailored treatment plans start with thorough diagnostic workups

What are the treatment options?

- Radioactive iodine therapy
- Medical management with carbimazole or methimazole
- Dietary changes to restrict iodine intake
- Thyroidectomy

What kind of monitoring is necessary in medical management cases?

For treatment plans with oral medication, regular monitoring will be necessary for at least the first 3-6 months.

Goal: Maintain TT4 levels in the lower half of the reference interval

Treatment Timeline

	Initiation or dose change
2 WEEKS	Repeat TT4 every 2 weeks until dosage is stable
3 MONTHS	Monitor chemistry, complete blood count and urinalysis within the first 3 months of treatment when adverse events are most common.
6 MONTHS	Monitor TT4 every 6 months once dosage is stable

If surgery or radioactive iodine are selected for treatment, testing is recommended at 30, 60, 90, and 180 days after treatment. Minimum testing requires a TT4, but chemistry and urinalysis should be included as well. Monitoring needs can also change if CKD develops or is unmasked, or if there are other concurrent diseases that require monitoring.[1]

Explore additional resources for sick pet testing in your **GetWell toolbox**

References: 1. Scott-Moncrieff, J.C., Feline Hyperthyroidism, in Canine and Feline Endocrinology, E.C. Feldman, et al., Editors. 2015, Elsevier Saunders: USA. p. 7136-212. **2.** Hyperthyroidism in cats. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23087006; Accessed Janua28, 2025. **3.** Daminet, S., Hyperthyroidism in cats, in Ettinger's Textbook of Veterinary Internal Medicine-eBook: Ettinger's Textbook of Veterinary Internal Medicine-eBook, S.J. Ettinger, E.C. Feldman, and E. Cote, Editors. 2024, Elsevier Health Sciences. p. 1940-1952.

ZOETIS DIAGNOSTICS

Individualized care starts with comprehensive diagnostic insights

Diagnostic Decision Making: Routine monitoring

STEP 1

Analyze thyroid hormone levels routinely in patients older than 8 years

- ✓ Always review patient history and clinical exam in conjunction with monitoring tests

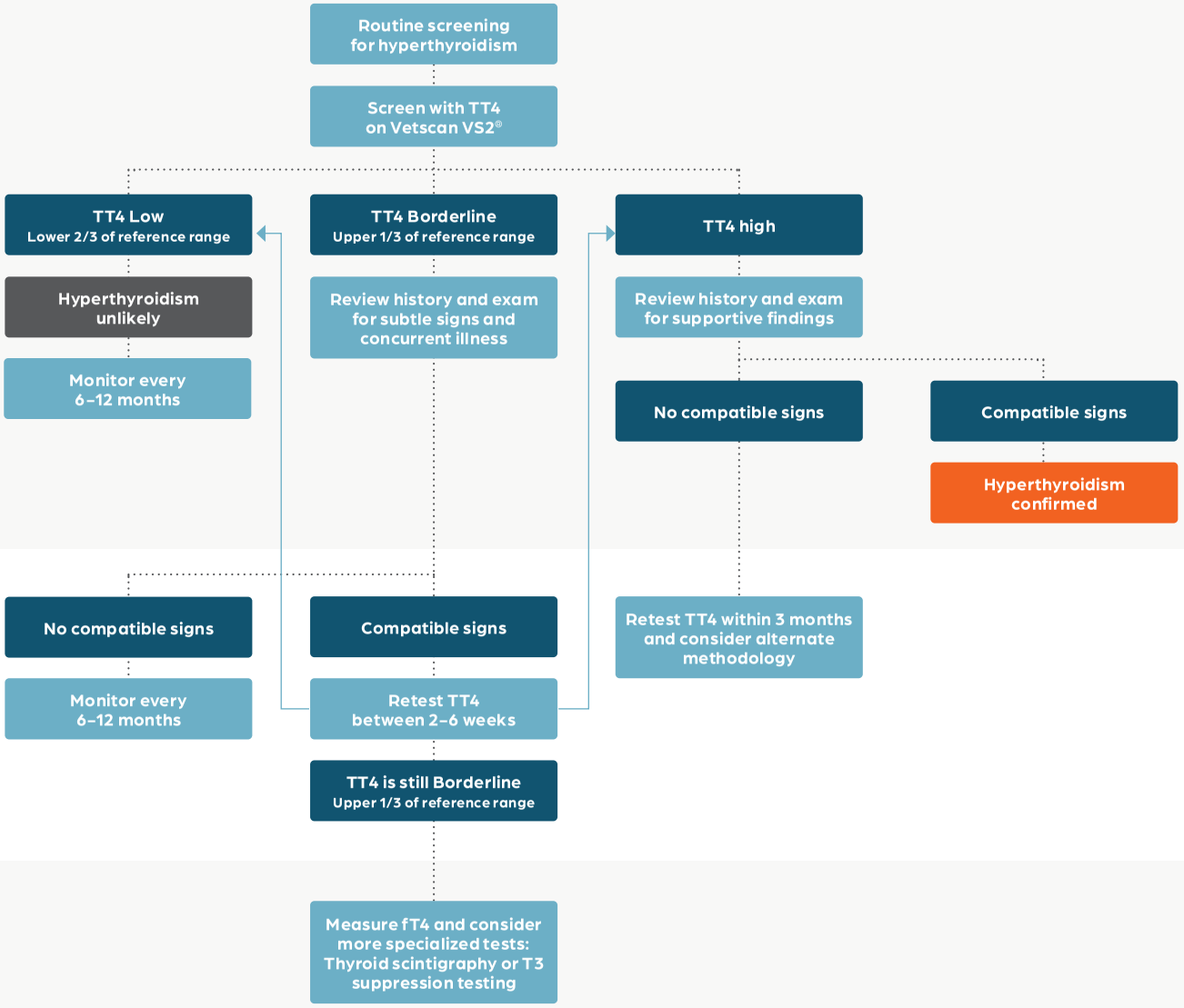
STEP 2

Complete repeat testing based on TT4 results, history and clinical signs

- ✓ Schedule a complimentary consultation with a board-certified specialist anytime* via Zoom or email for guidance and support

STEP 3

Advance to specialized testing for suspected cases



TT4, total T4; fT4, free T4; THS, thyroid-stimulating hormone.
* Dependent on consultant availability

ZOETIS DIAGNOSTICS

Individualized care starts with comprehensive diagnostic insights

Diagnostic Decision Making: Suspected hyperthyroidism

STEP 1

Analyze thyroid hormone levels on patients with clinical signs

- ✓ Simultaneously, exclude other differentials and assess for concomitant disease with a full diagnostic workup, including comprehensive blood count, urinalysis and chemistry:

  Vetscan Opticell™
  Vetscan Imagyst®
  Vetscan VS2

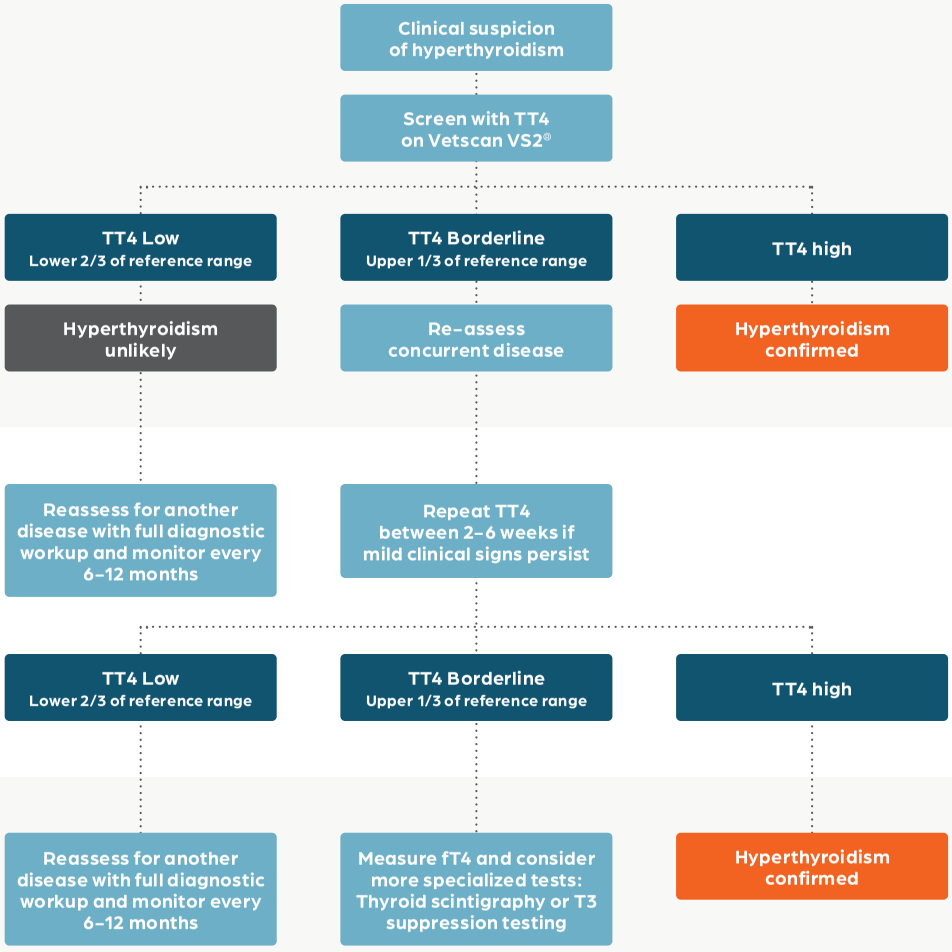
STEP 2

Monitor routinely and repeat TT4 results as needed

- ✓ Schedule a complimentary consultation with a board-certified specialist anytime* via Zoom or email for guidance and support

STEP 3

Develop a fully-informed treatment plan



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