Referral Algorithm: Goiter

Enlargement of thyroid (goiter) → Suspicion for thyroid mass/nodule?

- **YES**: Check TSH, free T4 and thyroid peroxidase and thyroglobulin antibodies and order ultrasound
  - **Abnormal ultrasound?**
    - **YES**: Refer to Otolaryngology
    - **NO**: No referrals indicated, monitor
  - **NO**: Abnormal labs?
    - **YES**: Compressive symptoms? (Difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, voice changes)
      - **YES**: Compressive symptoms? (Difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, voice changes)
        - **YES**: Elevate TSH or low free T4? follow hypothyroidism algorithm
        - **NO**: Normal TSH, normal free T4 and positive antibodies? Recheck TSH and free T4 in 3 months*
      - **NO**: Compressive symptoms? (Difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, voice changes)
        - **YES**: Refer to Otolaryngology and Endocrinology
        - **NO**: No referrals indicated, monitor
      - **NO**: Abnormal labs?
        - **YES**: Compressive symptoms? (Difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, voice changes)
          - **YES**: Compressive symptoms? (Difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, voice changes)
            - **YES**: Elevate TSH or low free T4? follow hypothyroidism algorithm
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        - **NO**: Compressive symptoms? (Difficulty swallowing, shortness of breath, voice changes)
          - **YES**: Refer to Otolaryngology and Endocrinology
          - **NO**: No referrals indicated, monitor

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*The presence of thyroid antibodies alone does not usually warrant treatment. However, the presence of antibodies can be a sign of developing thyroid dysfunction; therefore, monitoring the TSH is recommended.

Note: It may take months to years for the TSH to become significantly elevated.

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Seattle Children's Hospital Research Foundation
Endocrine Referral Algorithm: Goiter
www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics/endocrinology/refer-a-patient
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