Harvard Pilgrim Health Care | TUFTS Health Plan

Point32Health companies

Payment Policy:
Laboratory: Thyroid Disease Testing

Effective date: Nov. 1, 2025

Applies to:

Commercial Products

☒ Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Commercial products
☐ Tufts Health Plan Commercial products

Public Plans Products

☐ Tufts Health Direct – A Massachusetts Qualified Health Plan (QHP) (a commercial product)
☐ Tufts Health Together – MassHealth Accountable Care Partnership Plans
☐ Tufts Health RITogether – A Rhode Island Medicaid Plan
☐ Tufts Health One Care – A dual-eligible product

Senior Products

☐ Tufts Health Plan Senior Care Options (SCO) (a dual-eligible product)
☐ Tufts Medicare Preferred HMO/PPO (Medicare Advantage products)

Policy

Thyroid hormones are necessary for both prenatal and postnatal development, as well as metabolic activity in adults.

Thyroid disease includes conditions which cause hypothyroidism, hyperthyroidism, goiter, thyroiditis (which can present as either hypo- or hyperthyroidism), and thyroid tumors.

Thyroid function tests are used in a variety of clinical settings to assess thyroid function, monitor treatment, and screen asymptomatic populations for subclinical or otherwise undiagnosed thyroid dysfunction.

Terms such as male and female are used when necessary to refer to sex assigned at birth.

Indications and/or Limitations of Coverage

Application of coverage criteria is dependent upon an individual's benefit coverage at the time of the request.

1. Measurement of thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) **MEETS COVERAGE CRITERIA** in any of the following situations:
   a. No more than one test every six weeks for the following conditions:
      i. For individuals with signs and symptoms consistent with hypothyroidism (see **Note 1**) or hyperthyroidism (see **Note 2**).
      ii. For individuals with suspected secondary hypothyroidism.
      iii. For individuals capable of becoming pregnant who have experienced two or more pregnancy losses.
      iv. For individuals with a thyroid nodule
      v. For pregnant individuals
   b. Once every 3 months, for individuals undergoing immune reconstitution therapy (IRT):
      i. Individuals with active relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis (MS) undergoing therapy with alemtuzumab (Lemtrada).
      ii. Individuals with HIV undergoing highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).
      iii. Individuals following allogeneic bone marrow transplantation (BMT) or hematopoietic stem cell transplantation (HSCT).
   c. Once every three months for individuals taking medications known to cause thyrotoxicosis (e.g., amiodarone, interferon (IFN)-a, interleukin-2, lithium, tyrosine kinase inhibitors).
   d. Annual screening:
      i. For individuals with disease or neoplasm of the thyroid or other endocrine glands.
      ii. For individuals with chronic or acute urticaria.
      iii. For pediatric individuals diagnosed with short stature.
      iv. For pediatric individuals with a clinical finding of failure-to-thrive.
      v. For individuals with type 1 diabetes

2. When TSH testing results are abnormal, the following reflex testing **MEETS COVERAGE CRITERIA**:
   a. Free T4 (fT4) as a follow up to abnormal TSH findings.
   b. Total T3 (TT3), and free T3 (fT3) to confirm a diagnosis of hyperthyroidism when TSH levels are below the normal range.
   c. fT4 and fT3 for individuals undergoing IRT.
3. Monitoring of TSH and/or fT4 levels **MEETS COVERAGE CRITERIA** in any of the following situations:
   a. Once every four weeks for individuals who are pregnant or who are postpartum (see **Note 3**) and who have symptoms of thyroid dysfunction (see **Note 1** and **Note 2**).
   b. For individuals being treated for primary hypothyroidism:
      i. Every six weeks when dosages are actively changing.
      ii. Annually in stable individuals.
   c. For individuals being treated for primary hyperthyroidism:
      i. Every eight weeks for the first year.
      ii. Annual monitoring after the first year (even if asymptomatic for risk of relapse or late-onset hypothyroidism).
   d. At the following frequencies for individuals with hypothalamic-pituitary disease:
      i. Biannually for individuals less than 18 years of age.
      ii. Annually for individuals 18 years of age or older
   e. Annually for individuals diagnosed with primary mitochondrial disease.
4. For individuals who are pregnant or who are postpartum and who have symptoms of thyroid dysfunction (see **Note 1** and **Note 2**), TSH and fT4 testing (once every 4 weeks) being treated for secondary hypothyroidism, monitoring of fT4 every six weeks when dosages are actively changing and annually in stable individuals **MEETS COVERAGE CRITERIA.**
5. For individuals who are pregnant or who are postpartum (see Note 3) and who have been diagnosed with hyperthyroidism, total T4 (TT4), antithyroglobulin antibody (Tg-Ab), thyrotropin receptor antibodies (TRAb), and antithyroid peroxidase antibody (TPOAb) **MEETS COVERAGE CRITERIA**.
6. For individuals with hypothyroidism or hyperthyroidism who have not been diagnosed with autoimmune thyroid disease (e.g., Hashimoto disease, Graves disease), testing once every three years for thyroid antibodies (i.e., Tg-Ab, TPOAb, TRAB, thyroid-stimulating immunoglobulins [TSI]) **MEETS COVERAGE CRITERIA**.
7. For individuals with thyroid cancer, testing for serum thyroglobulin and/or Tg-Ab levels for the detection of tumor recurrence, post-surgical evaluation, surveillance, and maintenance for differentiated thyroid carcinomas **MEETS COVERAGE CRITERIA**.
8. Testing for thyrotropin-releasing hormone (TRH) or thyroxine-binding globulin (TBG) **DOES NOT MEET COVERAGE CRITERIA**.
9. For all other situations not mentioned above, testing for any thyroid function markers discussed in this policy (e.g. testing for thyroid dysfunction during a general exam without abnormal findings **DOES NOT MEET COVERAGE CRITERIA**.

NOTES:

Note 1: Signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism include:

- Fatigue
- Increased sensitivity to cold
- Constipation
- Dry skin
- Unexplained weight gain
- Puffy face
- Hoarseness
- Muscle weakness
- Elevated blood cholesterol level
- Muscle aches, tenderness, and stiffness
- Pain, stiffness or swelling in your joints
- Heavier than normal or irregular menstrual periods
- Thinning hair
- Slowed heart rate
- Depression
- Impaired memory

Note 2: Hyperthyroidism can mimic other health problems, which may make it difficult for doctors to diagnose. It can also cause a wide variety of signs and symptoms, including:

- Sudden weight loss, even when your appetite and the amount and type of food you eat remain the same or even increase
- Rapid heartbeat (tachycardia) — commonly more than 100 beats a minute — irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia) or pounding of your heart (palpitations)
- Increased appetite
- Nervousness, anxiety, and irritability
- Tremor — usually a fine trembling in your hands and fingers
- Sweating
- Changes in menstrual patterns
- Increased sensitivity to heat

- Changes in bowel patterns, especially more frequent bowel movements
- An enlarged thyroid gland (goiter), which may appear as a swelling at the base of your neck
- Fatigue, muscle weakness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Skin thinning
- Fine, brittle hair

Note 3: Due to significant changes in thyroid physiology during pregnancy, measurement of hormone levels should only be performed at labs that have trimester-specific normal ranges for their assay(s). While fT4 is the preferred test, TT4 may be useful if the TSH and fT4 results are discordant or when trimester-specific normal ranges for fT4 are unavailable.

Applicable CPT/HCPCS Procedure Codes

Procedure codes appearing in policy documents are included only as a general reference tool for each policy. They may not be all-inclusive.

Coding

Code	Description
80438	Thyrotropin-releasing hormone (TRH) stimulation panel; 1 hour This panel must include the following: Thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) (84443 x 3)
80439	Thyrotropin-releasing hormone (TRH) stimulation panel; 2 hour This panel must include the following: Thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) (84443 x 4)
83519	Immunoassay for analyte other than infectious agent antibody or infectious agent antigen; quantitative, by radioimmunoassay (e.g., RIA)
83520	Immunoassay for analyte other than infectious agent antibody or infectious agent antigen; quantitative, not otherwise specified
84432	Thyroglobulin
84436	Thyroxine; total
84439	Thyroxine; free
84442	Thyroxine-binding globulin (TBG)
84443	Thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH)
84445	Thyroid stimulating immune globulins (TSI)
84479	Thyroid hormone (T3 or T4) uptake or thyroid hormone binding ratio (THBR)
84480	Triiodothyronine T3; total (TT-3)
84481	Triiodothyronine T3; free
84482	Triiodothyronine T3; reverse
86376	Microsomal antibodies (e.g., thyroid or liver-kidney), each
86800	Thyroglobulin antibody

Evidence-based Scientific References

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Publication History

08/01/2026	Annual policy review; administrative edits
09/01/2025:	Policy created to support coverage guidelines, effective for dates of service beginning Nov. 1, 2025

Background and Disclaimer Information

This policy applies to the products of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and Tufts Health Plan and their affiliates, as identified in the check boxes on the first page for services performed by contracted providers.

Payment is based on member benefits and eligibility on the date of service, medical necessity review, where applicable, and the provider's network participation agreement with the Plan. As every claim is unique, this policy is neither a guarantee of payment, nor a final indication of how specific claim(s) will be adjudicated. Claims payment is subject to member eligibility and benefits on the date of service, coordination of benefits, referral/authorization, and utilization management requirements (when applicable), adherence to Plan policies and procedures, and claims editing logic. An authorization is not a guarantee of payment.

Point32Health reserves the right to amend a payment policy at its discretion. CPT and HCPCS codes are updated as applicable; please adhere to the most recent CPT and HCPCS coding guidelines.

We reserve the right to conduct audits on any provider and/or facility to ensure accuracy and compliance with the guidelines stated in this payment policy. If such an audit determines that a provider/facility did not comply with this payment policy, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and Tufts Health Plan will expect the provider/facility to refund all payments related to noncompliance.