

HYPERTHYROIDISM

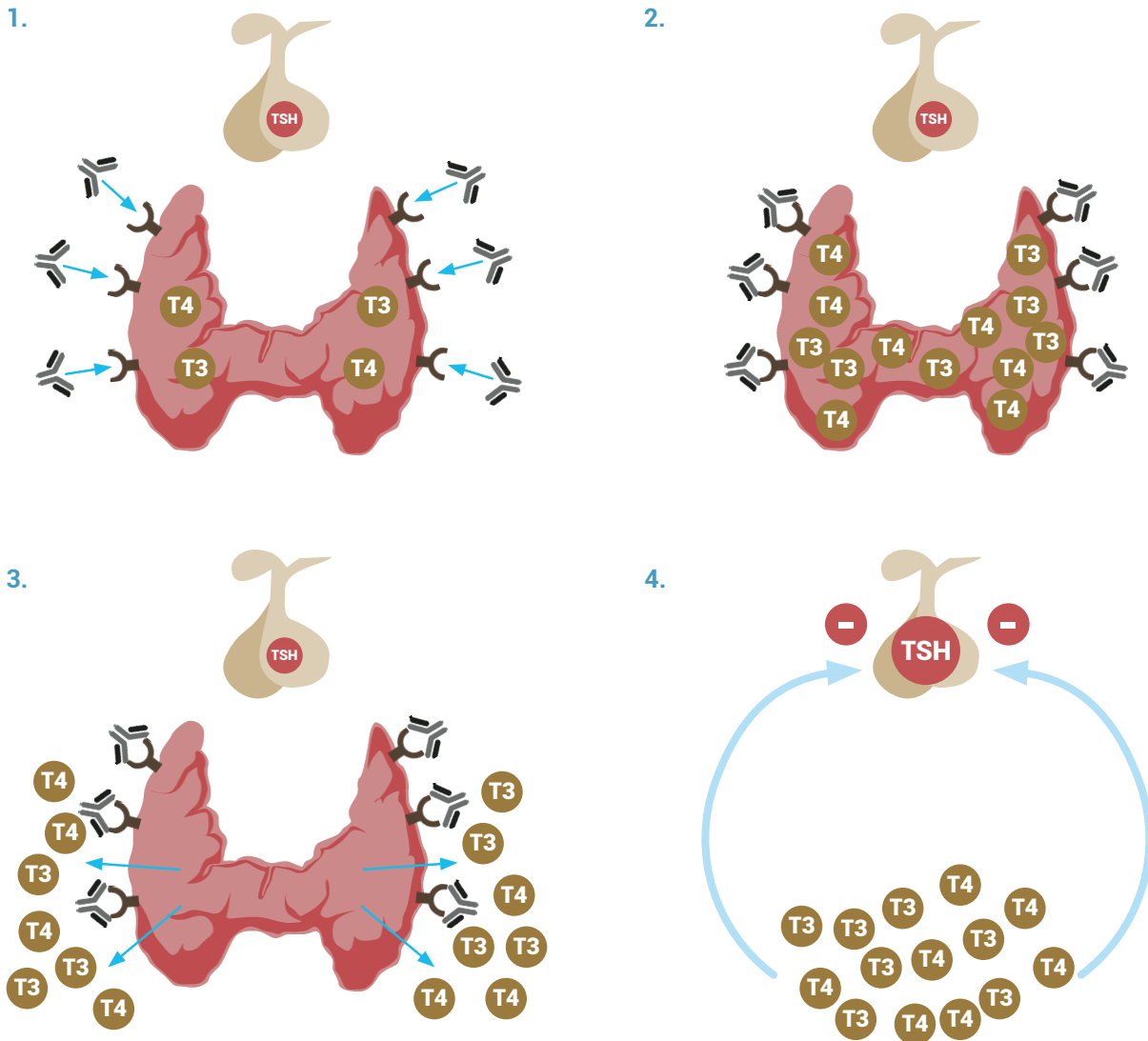
Diagnosing Graves' disease

Graves' disease is an autoimmune disease in which patients produce antibodies that stimulate the TSH receptor.

The excess stimulation of the thyroid leads to increased vascularity and diffuse enlargement of the thyroid, with a smooth, symmetric goiter. The antibodies can also affect the extraocular muscles, causing swelling. This leads to proptosis and may limit extraocular movements.

DIAGNOSIS CAN BE MADE SEVERAL WAYS:

- Elevated levels of anti-TSH receptor antibodies (TRAb)
- Increased diffuse vascularity on ultrasound
- Diffuse increased uptake on radioiodine uptake and scan



Further reading

Brent GA. Graves' disease. *New England Journal of Medicine*. 2008. 358:2594–2605.