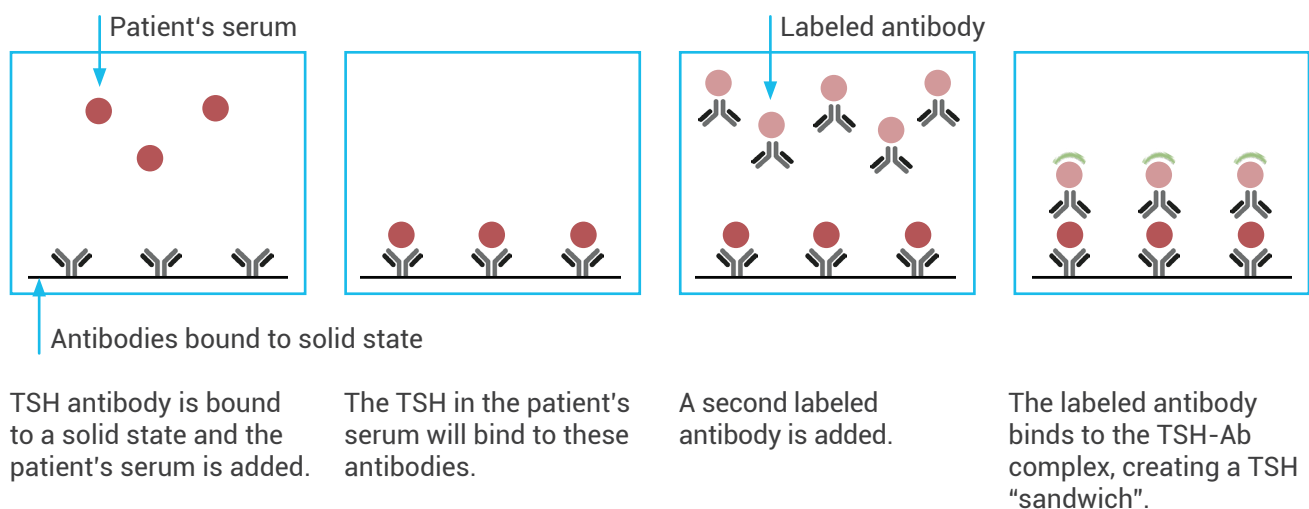


THYROID LAB ASSAYS

Mastering TSH assays

TSH is a sensitive means for measuring thyroid function—it changes logarithmically in response to changes in thyroid hormone levels. For instance, a small decrease in thyroid hormone levels results in a significant increase in TSH.

TSH levels are measured via immunoassays, typically a sandwich assay.



Benefits of TSH as an indicator of thyroid function:

- Is sensitive to small changes in thyroid hormone
- Demonstrates low intra-individual variability

Limitations of TSH as an indicator of thyroid function:

- Lags behind changes in thyroid hormone, so not useful if thyroid hormone levels are changing rapidly
- Increases with age
- Demonstrates ethnic variation (i.e., normal ranges may be slightly different for different ethnic groups)